

St. Thomas and Existentialists: Links in Epistemology

Status Quaestionis and the Epistemological Endeavour:

Without supposing its validity, one cannot deny the principle of non-contradiction: *idem nequit simul esse et non esse sub eodem respectu*. Positions that may appear as contradictories, however, may not always in fact be so. This is specially true of philosophical judgements which, by the very nature of the philosophical enterprise, express some fundamental, abstract insight on reality. Thomism is the product of a theocentric milieu, a fruit of the 13th century. Existentialism is the expression of an age that refers to itself as secularized, a phenomenon of the 20th century. The span of centuries, however, disappears in the light of the transcendence of truth.

It will be our concern in this study to discover and to explore the links between St. Thomas and representatives of existentialism, (K. Jaspers, G. Marcel and M. Heidegger) in epistemology. Epistemology is an investigation linking the metaphysics of knowledge and truth with the psychology of knowing. It concerns itself with the origin, processes and conditions of human understanding.¹ Thus it must be that although one ought to avoid confusing the *what* and the *how* of knowledge, bifurcation is hardly possible nor is it wise. Piaget considers epistemology as a necessarily inter-

¹ Frederick Wilhelmsen: *Man's Knowledge of Reality: An Introduction to Thomistic Epistemology*. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956) p. 5.

disciplinary affair, a study that raises questions both of fact and of validity.² As a department of metaphysics, it is concerned with knowledge, with man's attempt to express to himself his attachment to being.³

By taking St. Thomas' doctrine and the reflections of our representative existentialists separately, we hope to point to the peculiarities of each presentation. In line with our objective, we will discuss more extensively the points of correlation.

We do not aspire to re-write existentialism as contemporary Thomism or to read Thomism as 13th century existentialism for what inspires us is precisely the community of thought great minds in whatever age, under whatever label share!

I. *St. Thomas and Human Knowledge*

It is a fact uncontested except by those given to quibbling that we have knowledge of corporeal things. This ability to know corporeal things, we attribute to the intellect. One's very knowledge of material bodies is indicative of the impossibility of the intellect's corporeality. Were it, itself, a body, it would be impeded from the knowledge of anything else. This intellectual principle then has an operation per se apart from the body. Only that, however, which subsists can have an operation per se. Therefore, the principle of intellection or the human soul is incorporeal and subsistent.⁴

In this life, man exists as a composite of body and soul. Neither co-principle is man. Man is man only insofar as he is body informed by a rational soul. In this state, then, does he exercise his faculties and endowments. In every discussion on human knowledge then, one may never leave off consideration of the role of the senses. By the action of the sensible objects on his senses, a transition from man's potency for knowledge to act is effected.⁵ In the effort to delineate between sense knowledge and

² Jean Piaget: *Psychology and Epistemology, Towards a Theory of Knowledge*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1971) p. 8.

³ Kenneth Gallagher: *The Philosophy of Knowledge*. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964) p. 13.

⁴ *Summa Theologica* I, Q. 75, a.2 (New York: Benziger Bros., Inc., 1947), hereinafter indicated by S. T., this edition.

⁵ S. T. I, Q. 84, a.3.

intellectual knowledge, between proper functions of the soul and those of the body, it has been asserted, to the extent of being misleading, that sensation is a bodily function. The organic sense faculties are stimulated by material objects. This tends to give the impression that there are things the body can do independently of the soul. St. Thomas must have anticipated such dualism for he warns quite repeatedly: The actions or operation of the sensible parts are not attributable to the body alone but to the composite.⁶ At the outset of the psychological description of knowledge, St. Thomas makes it exceedingly clear that the act of knowing is one that involves two inseparable though distinguishable terms: the subject and the object, the knower and the thing known. The observation that the external objects act on the senses and thus commence the process of knowing is to deny any affinity with idealism that would prefer to view man as a self-locked interiority. Nowhere is this more succinctly asserted than when St. Thomas says:

Our knowledge is received from things, and by its nature comes after them. Hence our knowledge of natural things cannot be had unless these things previously exist.⁷

This corporeality of man is the very reason for the certainty of the principle: *Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu*. Once the doctrine on the sensible origins of human knowledge is accepted, any innatist theory is denied. There are no in-born ideas that assert their presence at some given occasion. But to say that there is nothing in the intellect which was not first in the senses is not saying that the mind knows only sensible realities. That the mind is capable of rising from the sensible to the supra-sensible is partly evidenced by the abstract principles to which we give unhesitating assent. "Everything that changes is limited" is a principle that cannot be attributed in its entirety to the activity of sensation. In such a statement, we pass on to knowledge beyond that primarily supplied by sense perception. Is

⁶ S. T. I, Q. 84, a.6.

⁷ *De Veritate*, Q 2, a.8, Robert Mulligan trans. (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1952), p. 96.

the principle, then, independent of sense perception so that the doctrine on the sensible origin of all knowledge may be vitiated? The principle is not independent of sense perception and instead of vitiating the aforementioned doctrine, it rather confirms it. The fact of change is one that is sensibly observed and empirically verifiable. The idea of limit finds its roots in experiences with the limits of a pail of water, the limits of a room and the limits of one's capacity for food. The intellect does its share by analyzing the concepts of change and of limit and is able to judge that one is necessarily involved in the other. It is rightly said then:

Once we realize that the change and motion in external reality are effects of casual activity, we have surpassed the information of our senses. Only the intellect can grasp the meaning of the term effect and apply it to a being.⁸

The internal sense of immediate interest in the psychology of human knowing is the "phantasy" or imagination. It is because the proper object of the human intellect united to a body is quiddity or nature existing in matter that there is necessity for a phantasm in knowing. The phantasm may be defined as the material, concrete and individual representation of an external object in the imagination. By speaking of the phantasm as "in the imagination", it might be erroneously concluded that inasmuch as the thing has already been represented by the phantasm, it is the phantasm that the person knows. Nothing is farther from the truth. Instead of sealing the subject in its immanence, the phantasm "opens" the subject to sensible reality. Thus it is said quite plainly:

The phantasm from which the intellect abstracts the species is the medium, not the object of knowledge. Consequently, from the species which it receives, our intellect is *not applied directly to knowing the phantasm but rather the thing whose phantasm is represented.*⁹

It is through the phantasm that the knowing subject is open to its objects. Intellectual knowledge may thus be viewed as the

⁸ Robert Preston: *Causality and the Thomistic Theory of Knowledge* (An abstract of a Dissertation, Catholic University of America Press, 1960) p. 3.

⁹ De Veritate, Q. 2, a.6, p. 93, underscoring ours.

synthesis of sensible encounter with reality and the inherent powers of the human intellect.

The human intellect has been seen to be a power of the soul, the form or vital principle of the person. The human intellect being immaterial, it is in such a mode that it knows in accord with the principle: *Quidquid recipitur, ad modum recipientis recipitur*. We therefore come to know in a mode proper to the intellect. If we do not always know, then we are sometimes in potency to know. The human intellect is first in potentiality to things intelligible and later, we actually understand. Insofar as the intellect is in potency to know or to things intelligible, it is passive. The passivity of the intellect is not the passivity of a *tabula rasa* on which intelligible things are very simply stamped, that way completely explaining knowledge. While we say that the intellect is passive, to identify this condition of the intellect with the sense impressionist's *tabula rasa* is erroneous.¹⁰ St. Thomas' realism is once more made explicit when he discusses the receptivity of the intellect. He says:

Since the speculative intellect is receptive in regard to things, it is, in a certain sense, moved by things and consequently measured by them.¹¹

This is why Fr. Manuel Piñon includes in the consideration of truth as an attribute of being the thing as measure of the truth of the mind. This he holds to be the proper explanation of truth taken as attribute of being.¹²

The soul, of which the intellect is a power, is immaterial. The form of a thing, insofar as it does not exist apart from matter, is not actually intelligible.¹³ The image does not suffice. It bears impressions of material, individuating notes which are not the mode of the faculty that perfects the knowing act. There is an intellectual power that makes things actually intelligible inasmuch as a thing is intelligible in the proportion that it is separable from matter. Things which we come to know by abstracting from

¹⁰ cf. S. T., Q. 79, a. 2, Ia.

¹¹ De Veritate, Q. 1, a. 2, p. 11.

¹² Manuel Piñon: *Being and Reality* (Manila: U.S.T. Press, 1972) pp. 121-122.

¹³ S. T. I, Q. 79, a. 3.

material conditions become intelligible through the light of our *agent* or *active* intellect.¹⁴ In such a process, we recognize the indispensable two-fold role of the active intellect: it is *illuminative* because, from the phantasm or the image, it makes clear the intelligible species, and *separative* because it actually "extracts" the general meaning from the condition of materiality and particularity as found in the phantasm.

We mentioned in passing the process of abstraction. More attention should now be turned to it since its end result sets a concept apart from an image, intelligible species apart from sensible species. In general, abstraction is the process by which some aspects of a given reality are left out while others are considered. In the formation of an idea, it is the general meaning (i.e., essential features) that is abstracted. Of the active intellect's separative or abstractive role, St. Thomas says:

Likewise, the things which belong to the species of a material thing, such as a stone or a man or a horse can be thought of apart from the individualizing principles, which do not belong to the notion of the species. This is what we mean by abstracting the universal from the particular, or the intelligible species from the phantasm.¹⁵

In this perspective does it become evident why Kant first thought of his doctrine of a priori forms as a Copernican revolution in epistemology. It also becomes clear that, in this regard, Kant and St. Thomas could have never walked hand in hand. Abstraction then "de-materializes" and universalizes in the truest sense. Therefore it creates a real possibility, a strict universality which permits predication. It furnishes the foundation for necessary and eternal truths which are valid at all time and place.¹⁶ This assures us that the relativist's protestations are founded on self-inflicted injuries. We must agree with him that, as man is a spatio-temporal being whose horizon is necessarily limited, he encounters objects of the extra-mental world "hic et nunc". This

¹⁴ *Commentary on Sensation*, I, Lect. 1 in "An Aquinas Reader". Mary Clark, ed. (New York: Image Books, 1972) p. 227.

¹⁵ S. T. I, Q. 95, a.1, ad 1.

¹⁶ Van Riet: *Thomistic Epistemology*, (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1962) p. 250.

is where the relativist stops and starts to bawl about his failure to know things as they are independent of circumstances of place and time. But he is far from the end of the process; his analysis is incomplete, making his troubles more imaginary than real. The active intellect abstracts the intelligible species from individual, material conditions and from the "hic et nunc" character of perceptions. By the further process of *judgement* it becomes possible, contrary to the unfounded claims of the relativist, to arrive at assertions of absolute value, knowledge that is true absolutely. The very judgement, "It is impossible to arrive at propositions that are absolutely true", is one that prescind from the here and now. It is one that aspires at absoluteness itself and pathetically sounds its own death-knell. Relativism thus shares in the theoretical absurdity of every short-sighted epistemological doctrine.

The intellect then abstracts from this image the general meaning or essential notes of the object imagined, separating these from the individualizing and materializing notes as are in the phantasm. By the process of judgement, it affirms or denies something of its concepts. In either case, if and when it judges, the mind assents to an enunciative proposition and expresses this assent to either an affirmation or a denial of something of its concepts in the judicative proposition that may properly be called the external expression of a judgement. And when man arrives at knowledge by passing from what is known to what is unknown through the premises of a syllogism in a deduction or through the enumeration of particular instances in induction, he employs the intellect in the operation of reasoning.

What is the impressed species that is produced by the active intellect on the passive intellect? The impressed species is the likeness of a form which takes the place of an object and *determines a cognitive power to know*. This way, knowledge derives from an object. Together with the cognitive power, the impressed species constitutes the principle of knowledge. Just as the railroad tracks determine the route a train takes, so does the impressed species direct the mind towards knowing a thing. Kant assigned this determinative role to the categories of pure reason, prior to the matter received in sensation, making it really impossible to prove that the ideas so formed were objectively valid. It is this role of the impressed species St. Thomas referred to saying:

Therefore it must be said that the intelligible species is related to the intellect as that by which it understands, which is proved thus: there is a two-fold action, one which remains in the agent and another which proceeds to an external object.... and each of these actions proceeds in virtue of some form. And as the form from which proceeds an act tending to something external is the likeness of the object of the action.... so the *form from which* proceeds an action remaining in the agent is the *likeness of the object*. Hence the likeness of the thing understood, that is the intelligible species, is the form by which the intellect understands. But since the intellect reflects upon itself, by such reflection it understands both its own act of intelligence and the species by which it understands. Hence the intelligible species is that which is understood secondarily but that which is primarily understood is the object of which the species is the likeness.¹⁷

As an immaterial faculty, the intellect demands an immaterial principle by which to attain cognitively material objects. Thus an intelligible species, the impressed species determines the intellect to know. As the impressed species is the principle of knowing or that which determines the intellect to this or that particular object, there can be no intellection without it. It is not pointless to stress that "we are said to understand, properly, when we apprehend the quiddity of things or when we understand the truths that are immediately known by the intellect, once it knows the quiddities of things."¹⁸

From the fact that the impressed species determines the cognitive faculty and specifies it to know one object rather than another, it may be rightly deduced that, although the impressed species is the object's similitude as abstracted from the phantasm, it is not yet the term of knowledge; there still is one process that completes the act of intellection. Because Thomistic epistemology affirms that in knowledge there is a relation of conformity between the mind and reality, it is often called the "correspondence theory". Although this label tends to simplify the act of knowing, it is helpful because of its realistic tenor. The mind does not

¹⁷ S. T., I, Q. 85, a.2, underscoring ours.

¹⁸ De Veritate, Q. 1, a.12, p. 51.

conform to its ideas, for if it did, how could any relation of conformity or difformity ever arise between the mind and its own modification? The object has a determinative role, an active part to play in the act of knowing. It does not stand indifferent to knowledge so that the subject is left to its own modifications. At the same time, the subject is not the recipient of the seal's impressions. It acts and it grasps the meaning of the object. Its abstractive function explains why the object is grasped in a certain way in relation to the intellect, i.e., grasped in its general meaning. The limitations of an intellect that depends on the testimony of the senses, that composes and divides, that abstracts and reflects should belie the claims of anyone who sets out to establish his intellect or the intellect of any other human person, for that matter, as the adequate criterion for all that is and that is real. That he can really grasp aspects of reality without exhausting the fulness of reality is one of the facts a realist must face.

Finally, the intellect expresses to itself the understanding it has of the object. This is when it expresses the mental word, the *verbum mentis*, the expressed species or the concept. After having been determined to know its object, it acts on the determination and expresses, first to itself, the general meaning it has grasped of the object in the concept. Considering that through the separative function of the active intellect, the impressed species as received in the passive intellect, it might well be said that the *verbum mentis* is the reaction of intellect to the impression of the intelligible species. Thus while the impressed species is the principle of knowledge, the concept is the *term of intellection*. While the impressed species is impressed from without, the expressed species is expressed from within. It is necessary to quote St. Thomas in whole as he makes elucidating distinctions:

In knowing the agent may be related to four things: namely, to what is understood, to the intelligible species whereby his intellect is made actual, to his act of knowing and to his intellectual concept.

This concept is distinguished from the three others. It differs from what is known insofar as the latter is often outside the intellect, whereas the intellectual concept is only within the intellect; also the intellectual concept is

ordained to what is known as to its end, since the intellect forms the concept of it so that it may understand what is known. It differs from the intelligible species insofar as the latter, which makes the intellect actual, is recognized as the principle of the intellect's act, because only insofar as it is actual does any agent act; and it is form as principle of action which makes it actual. And it differs from the act of the intellect because it is recognized as the end of the action and achieved by it. For by its motion, the intellect forms a definition of a thing or even an affirmative or negative proposition.¹⁹

The act of simple apprehension enables us to grasp the general meaning of a thing without affirming or denying anything about it. It is the act of simple apprehension that allows the intellect to grasp essences. But the term "grasping essences" should not be taken to mean that the intellect grasps everything about a thing or has precise knowledge of the essences of things. Says Fr. Piñon:

We do not know the particular essence of a dog, or of a cat, aside from the common and analogous pattern of irrational animality. Neither do we know the precise essence of the potato plant, or of the rice plant aside from the analogous and common formal pattern of insentient organism. We may obtain particular descriptive definitions of them, but these do not reveal to us the particular essence of each.²⁰

This is pregnant with epistemological ramifications foremost among which is that man's open-ness to being is never exhaustive of being so that, in a sense, being eludes man's total grasp. Man's understanding is never complete and here the experimental sciences become marks of man widening frontiers, but not only the sciences but other stand-points as well.

The limitations of the human intellect, however, do not confine man to materiality for although all knowledge must somehow find its origins in sensory apprehension, the human mind is not denied the possibility to know immaterial substances. If being is what is, and what is is so independent of my knowing it, there is no reason to deny the possibility of imperceivable being. What-

¹⁹ *On the Power of God*, Q. 8, a. 1, c, in "An Aquinas Reader", op. cit., pp. 253-254.

²⁰ Piñon: op. cit., p. 293.,

ever imperfect idea we may form of an immaterial reality comes in a mode marked by our limitations, i.e., by analogy, comparison and negation. The fundamental epistemological principle is summarized in the Thomistic doctrine that holds that "the intellect is related to its object under the common nature of being, since the intellect is that by which we know all things."²¹

Our capacity then to know is, for the Thomist, a fundamental truth and Card. Mercier's three truths are familiar: the first fact: the existence of the knowing subject; the first principle: the principle of non-contradiction, and the first condition: the ability of the mind to acquire truth.²² These primitive truths are implied in all judgements and so impose themselves that no one can deny them or even call them into doubt without affirming them thereby. In Marechal's words, "you affirm the existence of a relationship of truth in the very act with which you attempt to deny that relationship universally."²³

In contrast to the position of the Thomist is the critical realist's who seeks to establish the truth about the universe of things by some critique of knowledge.²⁴ This implies, of course, that there are some judgements or principles whose truth is prior to and more certain than the truth about being itself. Of course we do not refer here to the explication of being and of its transcendental attributes when we say that the truth about being itself is prior to any other. We refer rather to that affirmation of being contained (or implied in) any judgement of reality. The insurmountable travails of critical realism, seen this way, are apparent for what is more immediately evident than that "being is"?²⁵

II. *Existentialist Thinkers on Knowledge:*

Karl Jaspers

It is a peculiar mark of Jasper's approach to recognize a discontinuity of being that is realized in three forms: *being there*, *being oneself*, and *being in itself*.

²¹ S. T. I, Q. 79, a.7.

²² Van Riet, op. cit., p. 80.

²³ Cahier V, p. 39 in Van Riet, p. 252.

²⁴ Wilhelmsen, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

²⁵ cf. Fernand von Steenberghen, *Epistemology*, trans. Flynn (New York: Joseph Wagner, Inc., 1949) p. 93.

- a) *Being oneself* (subjective being): This is the subject, the "I". It is then the thinker in his transcendence insofar as he transcends himself unto the object.²⁶ Any attempt to objectify Being oneself would make it an object, the knower as object for himself or of another subject.
- b) *Being there* (objective being): This is the world I get to know, the empirical world. Insofar as a thing is known, it is being there.
- c) *Being-in-itself*: Being insofar as it escapes my comprehension is being-in-itself; it is that in beings and Being that escape my objectification.²⁷ This is the world in its transcendence, as that which eludes me. There really is transcendence involved. If it is borne in mind that man always takes stand-points before reality, then the idea of being-in-itself as being transcending my standpoint should become clearer.

These three recognitions are distinguished from the continuum that is being. However it would be a fatal error to take any one of them exclusively for, as Blackham says, "each is irremediably false, save in tension with the other."²⁸

To inquire about being oneself, subjective being, is to inquire about consciousness. Jaspers describes it in the following manner:

To be conscious is not to be the way a thing is. It is a peculiar kind of being the essence of which is to be directed at objects we mean. This basic phenomenon — as self-evident as it is nevertheless — has been called intentionality.²⁹

The reason for distinguishing between being-there and being-onself is here also implied. At the same time the relation between consciousness and self-consciousness is set. I know that I am not a thing because I am conscious (reflexively) of being

²⁶ H. J. Blackham, *Six Existentialist Thinkers* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1959) p. 49.

²⁷ Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy*, trans. E. B. Ashton (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), Vol. I., pp. 47-48.

²⁸ Blackham, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

²⁹ Jaspers, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

conscious, and know what consciousness consists of. Aside from being intentional, consciousness is self-reflexive. At the core of the process, be it subjective self-reflexion or intentional consciousness, there is the *I* which makes the subject stand out. In a sense it may be said that the intentional character of consciousness persists, even in self-reflexion. Consciousness is so basic a phenomenon that, for the conscious individual, it is not deducible.

As basic as the phenomenon of consciousness is the acknowledgement of an opposition of subject to object. What does this imply? To be aware of the fact that I *know something* is to be concomitantly certain that the "I" which knows is different from that which is known. This knowledge I have of the *I* that is not the object known is self-consciousness. If it is concomitant with and implied in every intentional act, then self-consciousness and consciousness of objects constitute the noetic structure.

Jaspers next introduces us to the somewhat abstruse concept of consciousness-at-large. The experience of the "I" as a subject interchangeable with other subjects is the springboard for understanding this concept. The *I* is consciousness-at-large, meaning that, like all other conscious individuals (subjective beings), I am a subject whose objects are the things of reality with general validity.³⁰ The expression, *at large*, divests that to which it is attached of any particularity.

Another concept to which attention must be drawn is the concept of the subject as *possible existenz*. For existentialism, man is not an accomplished fact. Man, the subject, is possible existenz because there are choices to make, possibilities to realize, projects to fulfill, in summary, a horizon to pursue in life. In existentialist thought, existence does not only mean first act (entitative perfection); it suggests that particular way by which man relates with others and lives in the world. Hence, existence taken this way, is proper only to man. The stress given this point accounts for the label existentialism. In the subjective being thus is implied:

Consciousness-at-large: shared with all subjects. Its objects are the things of reality generally (i.e., publicly) known.

³⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

Empirical individuality: the objectified subjectivity, the unique and singular occurrence that I am; my empirical existence; *this* individual consciousness at large.

Possible existenz: a being related to its potentialities; myself as I can be; escapes objectification by the other; my existentiality. I recognize that others are also possible existenz. It is also that by which my existence is, for me, primordial.³¹

The study of the object is more involved because of the distinction between being-there and being-in-itself. It might then be helpful to recall that things appear to us in profile; it is also that we take standpoints with regard to things. For the farmer, water is that indispensable factor in the growth of plants and a condition for a bountiful harvest; for the chemist, water is that compound resulting from the fusion of two hydrogen atoms with one of oxygen; while for the theologian, water is that outward sign by which God's power of spiritual cleansing is signified. Thus it is not uncommon to identify a thing with the role it plays, in other words, with the standpoint we assume towards the thing. But there still is a farther aspect. Man's knowledge is not, so to speak, totally exhaustive of the being of the object. As soon as a thing is known, it becomes an object, i.e., it is objectified, *attaining a relation with a subject*. There shall always be, however, an un-appropriated, un-comprehended transcendence of being. In a sense, it may be said that while things can be known, there is also a transcendence proper to them as beings. Regardless of the standpoint we take with regard to the objects of knowledge, they exist in modes proper to them.³² It is because things appear to us and we conceive of an underlying addendum to the object that we come to know of being-in-itself. It is in the sense that our knowledge is accompanied by an assent to our objects' transcendence that the underlying objectivity appears in the phenomena. An assumption of Jaspers should be properly noted.

Jaspers starts with the assumption that there is a given external world in which the thinker has a foothold, a world of stable objects which compel and control the adherence of knowledge.³³

³¹ cf. *ibid.*, p. 55.

³² *ibid.*, p. 60.

³³ Blackham, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

In knowledge, one encounters the not-I, and very simply, the not-I is whatever is outwardly, other than I. In Jasper's own words, it is "what my senses see, hear or feel, what resists me; what I consume as food, turn into tools or manipulate as material — in short, whatever I perceive, covet or process is not-I."³⁴ Furthermore:

I cannot be without facing what is not-I. It is what makes me exist, and it is what makes me conscious. I live by interacting with the world around me; I am conscious only insofar as, aimed at something other, I come to be conscious of myself.³⁵

The precision therefore made between consciousness and the world is not precision that detaches one from the other, but one that thinks across the conjunction.³⁶ The detachment is never complete for when I attempt to detach it and think it apart, it acquires a perspective for me of being apart.

For consciousness-at-large, being is what can become objectively known. It is that which is implied in general validity. The knowledge of existing is indicative of world orientation. It is because subjective being orients himself to the world that existing objects are known. Objective being, being-there, for its part, consists not of itself but of being for a knowing subject. Knowledge is an encounter between the subject and the object so that in this cognitive encounter, the being of the object is constituted by its being for a knower.³⁷

Being-there is therefore the order of the universally intelligible. The empirical world, in other words, is the world insofar as it is understood, or insofar as it can be grasped by the human mind. The modifier, universally, is of moment for it sets the tone of objectivity for the empirical world. Being-there is the world as intelligible, as object of men. One will inevitably have to face the question of the reconciliation between being-in-itself and being-there. It is always to be a guiding principle in any attempt at

³⁴ Jaspers, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

³⁵ *loc. cit.*

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 100

³⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 68-70.

"reconciliation" that Jaspers does not speak of the realms of being as opposed to one another, or as different layers of appearances and reality but as different realms of being from the standpoint of the human situation. On this point, very close to Jaspers, Sartre speaks of the self as the hodological center.

To the extent that the objects of the world indicate me as an absolute center of reference, this perceived ear indicates certain structures as form which I exist on my body-as-a-ground

Thus we have here in the first place the original connection between designation and the lived. The things perceived designate that which I subjectively exist.³⁸

This world as we know it is object and objectified. Being-in-itself, nevertheless, can be known only in this world, for it is in this world that "I" realize that there is reality that eludes the complete grasp of the I, a reality which nevertheless manifests itself as transcendent, elusive, being-in-itself.

The objective world, being-there, is not being-in-itself, the ultimate reality; but this reality is not to be looked for anywhere else, nor need it be abandoned as a hopeless quest. It is not revealed to consciousness in general to whom the public objective world is scientifically intelligible, nor is it revealed to pure subjectivity, cultivating states of mind: it is revealed to the embodied world with the intention to transcend both subject and object, to gain in relation to being-there the transcendence of being-oneself and being-in-itself.³⁹

Between being-there and being-in-itself there can be no disjunction. This we must stress and vigorously maintain. Because we do not admit of an either being-there or being-in-itself reduction, we must rest assured that being-there, objective being, the empirical world has real existence. In resume, we may, although rather simplistically, distinguish being-there as the objective world known by observation and experiment from being-

³⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre: *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1973) p. 462.

³⁹ Blackham, op. cit., p. 56.

in-itself as the transcendence of the world, manifested in the world and inseparable from it.

Clearly involved in the phenomenon of knowledge is transcendence. The orientation of myself, of my choice is transcendence. It carries with it the assertion that I am more than being-there. In other words, it is the confirmation of my uniqueness as a person and is my "seeing-across" the subject-object conjunction. Transcendence is possible only when we have reached being-there and have experienced our solitude. The consciousness of its liberty which awakens the self to personal existence in the realm of being-Oneself is bound to a consciousness of itself as a self-in-the-world, limited inescapably by its situation in the world.

Gabriel Marcel

Consistent with his attack on idealism, Marcel asserts that the essence of man is to be in a situation.⁴⁰ What he means was not totally unknown to previous philosophers for whom man was a rational animal who, as a corporeal substance, was naturally apt to be in a place, subject of the accident "ubi". "Situation" for Marcel, however, means much more than mere circumscription in place. Saying that man is a being-in-the-world is not the same as saying that the match-stick is *in* the match-box. Man, aside from being physically contiguous to the world, relates with the world in a meaningful manner, a being in comportment. Situation then refers to *intersubjectivity*, *historicity* and *project*. What Marcel, however, desired to drive home was the fact that the awareness of my existence is not one that gives the body as an object. Rather awareness conveys to me the intrinsic participation of my body in my life, in the world such that one understands the genitive case "my body" in a special manner that is not to be confused with the way one uses *my* when he speaks of clothes as his clothes.

Primary reflection is objectivating thought. It is that kind of reflection that reifies (or thingifies) existence.⁴¹ In primary reflection, distinctions are made that result in the separation of

⁴⁰ Blackham, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

⁴¹ Thomas Busch, "Gabriel Marcel: An Overview and Assessment", *Philosophy Today*, 19:1 (Spring, 1975) 6.

subject from object. It is reflection on this level where some reference is made to subject as "it is by itself" and objects as things devoid of any relation to the subject. Science treats things indifferently, i.e., without considering the relation they bear to the thinking subject. Reification of existence means nothing more than narrowing existence to any or to some existents. Because of its analytic and separative nature, it compartmentalizes existence so that the unity of existence is foregone. *Secondary reflection* is necessarily critical of objective thinking. It is secondary reflection that restores the unity of subject and object and makes participation intelligible. It is a bringing to consciousness of the "irreflechi", the pre-reflexive experience. Existence as the fundament of existing beings is upheld after attempts of primary reflection to render participation piece-meal.⁴² If philosophy then is to be true to man's participation and to the unity of existence, the philosopher's reflections must be one more step farther from the reflection of the scientist. Secondary reflection will unveil individual nature of my body. In this reflective level, my body is not an object that may be viewed indifferently for it is my way of being, it is my mode of participation which allows me to interact with other physical realities. This is my body as it is bound to my consciousness.⁴³ This is the more important consideration for my body as my manifestation and the key to my participation (i.e., physical manifest-ness) is that by which I relate and interact with the world. In sum, it is the physical presence of man in the world that makes it a primordial fact that he is in situation, that he is essentially a being in relation to things other than himself, that human existence is not meant to be a game of solitaire. Perception, then, which is a function of man as incarnate is one of the manifold relations man carries on with other realities. Primary reflection would have the perceiver in one end and the perceived in another, but an "I-to-the-world", not an "I" and a world, is what secondary reflection renders. The perceiver is therefore immediately open to the world.⁴⁴ Because I perceive, it comes to

⁴² *ibid*

⁴³ Gabriel Marcel: *Metaphysical Journal* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1952) p. 19.

⁴⁴ Clyde Pax, "Marcel's Way of Creative Fidelity", *Philosophy Today* 19:1 (Spring, 1975), 16.

be that the reality of the world is reality which is towards consciousness.

Apart from the knowledge of things or objective knowledge is knowledge of the "thou". It differs from the former kind of knowledge in some ways but is like it in that the subject opens up and responds to the Thou. To know my friend is not the same thing as knowing the street his house is on. Every person is a mystery for he is also a being of liberty, one who escapes the massive and impenetrable determination of the thing. Sartre then rightly says:

The Other is not originally bound to me as an ontic reality appearing in the midst of the world among "instruments" as a type of particular object; in that case he would be already degraded, and the relation uniting him to me could never take on reciprocity.⁴⁵

It is this very intimate personal exercise of his liberty that I come to know when I know him. This is a point of moment for personalism and for phenomenology for it asserts the fact that man is, in the most basic of his relations, an existential interiority with a transcendental range, a being that opens out and reaches to others.

Primary reflection on one's knowing renders a subject separate from its objects such that the subject is given as a "subject-by-itself" and objects, by themselves. Further reflection ought to unveil the artificiality of such a bifurcation and draw attention to the primordial experience of participation in being. Mentioning *participation in being* lures us into discussing the metaphysics of knowing that we have reserved for discussion a little later. However, although secondary reflection renders the unity in being of subject and object, it must also be as clear that it does not unite subject and object; it recognizes, rather, the pre-reflective fact of their one-ness. (It should be evident that the oneness we refer to is distinct from the one-ness conceived of by Hegel, Fichte and the Identity philosophers.) That subject and object are united not because of an abstraction is then evidenced by the possibility of secondary reflection that dissolves the barriers set up by pri-

⁴⁵ Sartre, op. cit., p. 331.

mary, objectifying reflection. Existence is a fact and that subject and object exist and are in contact because of existence is equally factual. It must also be asserted that the participation of beings in a common foundation, in Being, is no mere abstraction. Man always participates in an existence that he does not exhaust, for others do exist and participate in their own ways in that common foundation. Since subject and object are beings by participation in a common foundation *both are indissolubly united*.⁴⁶ Marcel refuses to treat the knowing subject (of the public object of knowledge) as the concretely existing individual for knowing or apprehending a public object of knowledge is merely a function or an activity of the existing man, and is therefore not the primordial datum.⁴⁷ Knowing is knowing something, being oriented towards a being. The note underlying the theme of knowing is therefore Being. Marcel then says:

Knowledge is within being, enfolded by it. The ontological mystery of knowledge. We can only arrive at it by a reflection which depends upon an experience of presence.⁴⁷

and also:

Normally, or (if you prefer it) usually, I find myself confronted with things: and some of these things have a relationship with me which is at once peculiar and mysterious. These things are not only external: it is as though there were a connecting corridor between them and me; they reach me, one might say, underground. In exact proportion as I am attached to these things, they are seen to exercise a power over me which my attachment confers upon them and which grows as the attachment grows.⁴⁸

Participation might be an over-used term in the reflections of Marcel but it is the term that best suits his purposes in presenting the mystery of being and of existence. We take part in

⁴⁶ *Gabriel Marcel's Notions of Being*, Thomas Anderson *Philosophy Today*, 19:1 (Spring, 1975), 32

⁴⁷ Gabriel Marcel: *Being and Having*, trans. Farrer (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1949) p. 115.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

existence, we participate in being. But to participate in being is to take one's place on ground that is commonly shared; exploiting being is therefore inconceivable. To know beings is not to be a "spirit hovering over the waters", a detached I over-seeing others. To know beings is to recognize participation in being and participants with whom I am. Marcel then warns: Every affirmation is thus not the originator of reality of what it affirms but affirmation is possible because something is.⁴⁹

Aware that the thinking on man has often proceeded according to the objectifications of primary reflection, Marcel proposes to commence secondary reflection, a return to things as they have always been but not so thought of. Thus he says:

If you posit the primacy of subject-object — the primacy of the category subject-object, or of the act by which the subject sets up objects somehow in the other within itself, the existence of others becomes unthinkable.⁵⁰

In similar fashion he who seeks to assure himself of his existence would do best by returning to the source of one's primary notion of existence: the existence of the other.

The core of Marcel's metaphysical assertions with regard to knowledge can then be summarized as follow:

1. *Being cannot be affirmed.* Being, we have seen, is lost when it is qualified. But in affirmation, a this or a that of Being is affirmed, and this is precisely qualification. Of course, we say, Being is, but we take Being not as *ens* but as *esse*. What then have we affirmed in *Esse est*? There is a more fundamental point that is confirmed in our inability to affirm Being. Because it is ground, Being is the basis of affirmation and is presupposed by every affirmation. One affirms what is, and anything is only because of Being so that one's gaze is focused on that affirmed, every step made presupposing Being.

2. Knowledge is, as it were, environed by Being, it (Being) is interior to it (Knowledge) in a certain

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 140.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 105.

sense.... knowledge is contingent on a participation for which no epistemology can account because it continually presupposes it.⁵¹

In the light of what has been said, previously, this assertion can easily be understood. We must therefore underscore that basic givenness of Being, not in the sense that totality is open to man. As Levinas says, the metaphysical desire is beyond anything that can simply complete it.⁵² Rather it supports man who in no way makes it be or accounts for it. Epistemology must first of all be recognized as a presupposition of Being. Berkeley wanted to do more: he wanted to make epistemology account for it and as could have only been expected, the rapport between experience and formulation disappeared.

3. *All thought takes place within an affirmation of Being*, an affirmation which I am rather than make, my very reality founded upon our participation in Being as foundation.⁵³ To call man the questioning animal is to define him for his very existence is a question to Being. Music in its sublimity is an affirmation of Beauty. So too, man's questioning presence is the affirmation of Being. The being of man is the affirmation of Being, and the affirmations he makes arise from and only because of the affirmation that he is. Man is founded upon Being but his very foundation in Being is a "questioning founding", a founding that supplies thought its context. The reflection on the self that leaves out the self as founded in Being and as a radical affirmation of Being is more a museum piece of surrealism than an authentic starting point of inquiry. In man's Being then is the reference to Being, the reference point that makes it absurd to look for a firm assurance of reality.

4. *All knowledge is knowledge of Being, not of the knower's state of consciousness*; all affirmations ultimately refer to Being.⁵⁴ All knowledge is centrifugal and one who realizes this cannot but see the inconsistency of subjectivism. X and Y are affirmed

⁵¹ Gabriel Marcel: "The Philosophy of Existence", cited by Anderson, op. cit., p. 33.

⁵² Emmanuel Levinas: *Totality and Infinity* (The Hague: Duquesne University Press, 1969) p. 34.

⁵³ Anderson, op. cit., pp. 31-33.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

because X and Y are. Every act of knowing pulls me from myself. This centrifugal characteristic of knowledge is one manifestation that man's Being is to be not what he is. Man always goes beyond himself and even when he doubts, he is already beyond himself. Descartes missed this but as this is a core consideration, he lost his way. As the mind doubts, it is not really preoccupied with its doubting or with itself but with what is doubted. In fact, Descartes was confused by his own game of skip-and-hop. From doubting, Descartes started thinking about doubting, conferring on this reflective procedure the founding stone of his whole edifice. But even the reflective procedure applied to knowledge, thinking on thinking, will unveil quite different landmarks than those Descartes claimed to have found for the intellect knows itself as a capacity for truth, as reaching out to the other. It is a basic fact then that Being is intelligible (although this writer would not refer to the inter-legere etymology because man does not read into or through Being). We have a fundamental awareness and understanding of it.

We will conclude with a note on mystery since we have referred to the mystery of knowing. In traditional theological parlance, a mystery was thought of as a divinely revealed truth that could neither be explained satisfactorily by the feeble human intellect nor completely understood. Marcel, by differentiating between the mystery and the problem, proposes a different connotation. While a problem is that which is understood by all men in the same way, a mystery escapes such a reduction because of the "interpenetration" and inseparability of subject and object. On the level of mystery, the mystified is personally involved in the mysterious so that this understanding is incommunicable; he constitutes part of the mystery. Aside from stressing the pre-reflexive bond between subject and object, the phenomenology of mystery indicates univocally that knowledge and thinking on knowledge must be actually a thinking *sui generis*. This means that it demands an open-ness, participation different from the acumen of a physicist who solves problems of momentum, a procedure different from the proofs the geometrician advances to establish the congruence of two triangles, reveals truths and insights different from the prognosis proffered by medical examiners. We then have not really analyzed knowledge; neither have we grasped

Being. We have touched the mystery of Being and of knowing. Questioning about the validity of knowledge, or better of its origins and evidence, is primarily not an academic exercise in demonstration. It springs from an intense desire on the part of man to confirm his link with Being. Raising questions on one's contact with reality is a necessary consequence of reflecting on one's existence. But one's existence, as Marcel would have us remember, is not a problem; it can never be for there are questions connected with it which spring from the depths of oneself encountered only in the mystery that man is. Knowledge attains a perspective that may allow us to view it from clearer light, a participation in the inexhaustibility of Being.

Martin Heidegger

No other philosopher of the century has addressed himself to the mystery of Being more than has Heidegger. What follows will be further discussed in the correlative portion of our study. An opening statement from one of Heidegger's own discourses should set the tone for our discussions.

When we understand thinking to be the distinctive characteristic of man, we remind ourselves of a belonging together that concerns man and Being.⁵⁵

Thinking about authentic thinking cannot leave out the basic reciprocity between subject and meaning that is the original source from which the cognitive grasp proceeds. The unity of subject and meaning is man himself, as intentional being, i.e., tending to others, and as ex-istence. *Dasein* is an intriguing feature of Heideggerian ontology and any student of existential phenomenology who misses *Dasein* has missed Heidegger. *Dasein* can hardly be translated; it is usually barbarically rendered in English as "there-being" or as "the there of being". This caption applies only to man, because only he exists as *logos*. The metaphysical approach of Heidegger, therefore, is to Being through the *there* of Being, for what could be more reasonable than to approach reality by that through which reality is manifest or unconcealed? For this

⁵⁵ Martin Heidegger: *Identity and Difference* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957) p. 30

reason, this writer disagrees with Heinemann who, in *"Existentialism and the Modern Predicament"* attributes many of the failures of Heidegger's enterprise to what he thought was Heidegger's obsession of jumping over subjectivity in approaching Being. In fact, it could very well be said that while St. Thomas chose to have Being without bringing into foreground the subject, Heidegger found it indispensable to proceed by Dasein analysis to Being.⁵⁶ Though Heidegger reacts against definitions that attempt to categorize human reality, he does admit that Dasein has a structure: being-in-the-world.⁵⁷ This is so basic a structure that it may really be called "ontological". The existence of man is the existence that is an irrevocable link with the non-self. All his pre-occupations, tasks, concerns are implicative of the world and even his doubts of the world cannot but invoke the world.

Dasein is dwelling close to meaning or is existing in meaning as unconcealedness.⁵⁸ In ex-istence, thus, meaning is unconcealed. The choice of the words "unconcealed" and "unveiled" is not arbitrary; they are pregnant with Heideggerian insight on truth. Being is never forced by us, never subdued. That which for man is knowledge is the unveiling of Being and its disclosure to us in the very moments of truth. How is this possible? That man is a peculiar being, no one will deny, and in the fact that only with us can Being be present as Being may that peculiarity be found. Thus it is rightly said that "Being itself, however, belongs to us for only with us can Being be present as Being, that is to become present."⁵⁹ There is truth, or an unveiling of Being because there is Dasein for whom Being can be unveiled. But Dasein is no mere spectator, no silent witness. Being appears and evokes a corresponding response which is the basis of determination, and in language as that which Being determines, one will find the correspondence between man and meaning.⁶⁰ By modifying his tools, pursuing his projects and using his time, Dasein constitutes an

⁵⁶ cf. John Caputo, "The Problem of Being in Heidegger and Aquinas" *The Thomist*, 41:1 (January, 1977), 90-91.

⁵⁷ Blackham, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

⁵⁸ William Luijpen: *Phenomenology and Metaphysics* (Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1965) p. 68.

⁵⁹ Heidegger: *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ Martin Heidegger: *What is Philosophy?* trans. Jean Wilde (New Haven: College and University Press, 1955) p. 77.

intelligible world. While at first glance, this might present itself as a later edition of Kant's imposing intellect with its a priori structures, a more attentive review will make it obvious that Heidegger is not susceptible to the same attack. The world is indeed a world of things among which I find myself existing. That is why he calls man a being-in-the-world. Man exists in the world, among other things. It is true, as he insists, however, that the things of the world, firstly, are not things and distant from and opposed to the subject. Things are and do attain a certain usefulness or significance for me. Thus the tree, one among the billions of trees in the world, in my backyard is a source of delicious fruit for me, trouble because of its leaves for the person who sweeps the yard, a temptation for my neighbor, etc. It is the same tree that is constituted into several meaningful relations with different people for whom it may be a tool. This is what Heidegger means: the subject does not produce its objects, as Berkeley erroneously suggested. Dasein, in his comportment with the world, constitutes his world of meaningful relations, constitutes the toolness of tools and in short, constitutes his world, for the world is not simply the whole of extra-mental reality but the system of instruments or tools for Dasein. Tools are a significant point in Heidegger's ontology as they are in Marx's materialism. When one speaks of objects, one readily calls to mind that pole of the relation that is other than and alien to the subject. But Heidegger insists that objects or things which concern me, immediately are tools. A tool is anything of specific use to me. As tools, they have reference to other objects and are not really estranged from me who use them. Objects are then primarily tools, and with these I am concerned. Objects refer to and end in Dasein. This is an approach quite different from the abstract approach most common to any philosophical study of the real. Its method is quite simple: starting from the concrete.

Being presents itself to man and man does not only affirm this presence but also asserts the appropriation that marks logos or "that realm vibrating within itself through which man and Being reach each other in their nature, achieve their active nature by losing those qualities which metaphysics has endowed them with."⁶¹ The categories of Aristotle do not completely convey the

⁶¹ Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, op. cit., p. 37.

reality man, for man is, to him, a being to whom Being is present. Thus there is a context within which man is situated and just as a man misses the point who perorates on a line quoted out of context, so does any category that does not adequately refer to man's dwelling close to meaning or existing in meaning as unconcealedness fail to engender Dasein.

There is transcendence to reckon with. It is because of transcendence that, although Dasein is being-in-the-world, he can raise questions. He stands as question to Being. He does not detach himself from Being, for this is impossible. He relates to it in a way that creates the existential space, allowing him to raise the question. In fact, he need not raise a question. He is the question. It is by this primordial stance of transcendence that I am able to locate myself as a being-in-the-world, as the center or fundament of a world of intelligibility. It must however be stressed that "man constitutes meanings but not natures."⁶²

In such a context, what should *meaning* mean? Especially in the earlier Heidegger, it was emphasized that because of Dasein, there was meaning, not so much because Dasein constitutes the things or even imposes meaning but because meaning presupposes the constituting activity of the subject as natural light. But this is also problematic because Dasein, if it be the natural light, would make Being intelligible, a position hopelessly opposed to the position of the later Heidegger for whom Dasein itself stood in the light of Being. Again, if Dasein is itself the light, then the context within which we have discovered Dasein disappears. The solution to the problem rests on the role of Dasein as the "reason" for meaning. It is the constituting activity of the subject that is natural light. Because a spoon holds a mouthful of food by which hunger is satiated, it acquires meaning as an eating instrument. It must be noted, however, that the constituting activity of Dasein presupposes that, in some way, Being has already unveiled itself to Dasein, so that instead of really constituting meaning, the subject lets meaning be what it is, showing Dasein's sensitivity to meaning. It is within the encounter that knowledge is that meanings reveal themselves. Thus it is said: "Genuine thinking is Dasein itself in all its richness, it is standing in truth as uncon-

⁶² Blackham, op. cit., p. 103.

cealedness."⁶³ It is understandable therefore why, with regard to the encounter between man and Being, mutual challenge should be spoken of. Man is challenged to the planning and calculating of everything, and Being is itself challenged to letting things appear.⁶⁴

Our abode, the abode of Dasein, is the correspondence to the Being of being.⁶⁵ The essence of thinking should then be nothing other than letting be-ing Be. From the many clause-summaries of Charles Malik, this writer has selected some points cogent to our study. The more important Heideggerian themes are:

- a) The fact that we are always in-the-world and are always concerned with this or that thing including our very being and not being;
- b) The fact that there is a primordial existential knowing in which all perception, scientific knowledge, determination of nature are founded;
- c) The fact that we are always there, always outside ourselves and always outside others;
- d) Being there as mood and Being there as understanding, so that we are always in some mood or other and we always understand something or other.⁶⁶

We shall also quote Luijpen's summing-up which has briefly yet adequately included the main epistemological points of Heidegger:

His (Heidegger) doctrine implies: 1. the denial of the natural attitude, i.e., the denial of the isolated subject; 2. the denial that knowledge is the mirroring of an external world; 3. the denial of the 'in itself'; 4. the denial of scientism. Positively, it contains: 1. the affirmation of intentionality, that is, the affirmation of the reciprocal implication of subject and meaning; 2. the affirmation of knowledge as immediate presence to a present reality; 3. the affirmation of reality as 'in itself for me'; 4. the affirmation of the existent subject as the most primordial affirmation of being.⁶⁷

⁶³ Luijpen, op. cit., p. 71.

⁶⁴ Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, p. 35.

⁶⁵ Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 75.

⁶⁶ Charles Malik, "A Christian Reflection on Martin Heidegger", *The Thomist*, 41:1 (Jan., 1977), 9-10.

⁶⁷ Luijpen, op. cit., p. 105.

Correlation

The recognition Jaspers makes of the three realizations of Being, the insistence of Marcel on participation and Heidegger's Dasein analysis that sees man as *und-der-welt-sein* all reject the reduction of object as subjective modification or the subject as immanence aware only because of its mirroring of reality within its immanence. There is subject, and there is object and precisely because the being of the subject is not the being of the object, speaking of their participation in Being is meaningful. Neither St. Thomas nor the existentialists make of the existence of objects a problem for the predominance of existence in consciousness is that which spells consciousness as consciousness, that on account of which problems are raised at all. It is not satisfactory, though, to rest content with the existence of the subject and of the object, there must be some reason in the being of the subject that constitutes it as subject in contrast to the thing known. Again the history of philosophy provides the justification for pointing out that the being of the subject involves the nature that allows us to distinguish it as subject. It may be mentioned without any reference to any particular system of thought that if the subject is in a way that objects are not, then the being of the subject involves the perfection of being able to possess in a peculiar manner the things cognitively grasped. There then is a principle to be found in the very nature of a subject that accounts for its subjectivity. In the terms of phenomenology, the subject, in order to be faithfully described, must of necessity include a reference to its openness to realities other than itself. St. Thomas, as do the existentialists today, recognized the uniqueness of the human being especially manifested in subjectivity. Because man is capable of knowing material bodies as well as of reflecting on himself, as purely material bodies manifestly do not, St. Thomas speaks of man as a composite of body and soul, a spiritual, subsistent form. Within the context of the hylemorphic doctrine, it is because man is determined by a rational soul that he is able to possess in an intentional manner the forms of other things. In phenomenology, there is no less a recognition of subjectivity: Meaning cannot be represented, posited, or affirmed unless there is a subject who represents, posits and affirms.

It is the subject that makes the affirmation possible, and so Jaspers recognizes being-oneself (being subject) as distinct from being-there. Marcel says:

When I affirm that something exists, I always mean that I consider this something as connected with my body, as able to be put in contact with it, however indirect this contact may be.⁶⁸

The subject then is incarnate, not really a body, simpliciter, as one would call a stone a body, for the subject is that capable of recognizing his incarnate nature and of the existence of objects that are in some way in contact with his body. More explicitly, Heidegger speaks of thinking as "the distinctive characteristic of man" and observes that "only with us can Being be present as Being, that is to become present."⁶⁹

There is considerably more work to face when one tries to study the act of knowing which is really more a psychological problem than an epistemological one. We shall briefly touch on this question as it might be beneficial to an appreciation of the link points now in focus. We shall first glance at the phenomenology of knowing. Phenomenologists speak of pre-reflexive consciousness which is simple presence to one's existence. In this stratum, it is very fitting to say that the subject is really outside the self, totally engrossed with the other-than-the-self. Let us look more closely at such an everyday activity as counting coins. While one is counting, the coins and the succession of cardinal numbers lay complete hold on one's attention. One's consciousness is most vividly out-with the coins, while knowing at the same time what counting is. It is then said that consciousness is consciousness of that which is not consciousness itself. There is, however, a second level, that aspect of human consciousness philosophy dwells on and has for so long been confused. Reflective consciousness is consciousness that thematizes. When, from being engrossed with the coins, he who counts should make himself as counting the theme of his occupation, the center of his awareness, he would shift from pre-reflexive consciousness to reflexive consci-

⁶⁸ Marcel, *Being and Having*, p. 10.

⁶⁹ Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, p. 33.

ousness and it is of utmost importance to remember that this consciousness is reflexive, what Marcel calls "at one remove."⁷⁰ It is the other-orientedness of consciousness that is immediate, that allows that consciousness also be reflexive. Consciousness is being-with-reality which concurrently affirms the existence of reality other than consciousness. There is also a dialectic unity involved in consciousness that phenomenology brings to the fore; the dialectic unity of *noesis* and *noema*. Noesis is the act of consciousness; it is perceiving consciousness, implying of necessity, the noema, perceived reality. Consciousness is therefore noetic-noematic because there is no consciousness that is not a *consciousness* of just as it is unreal to speak of a something without consciousness of it. Though these concepts are differentiable, they are meaningful only when considered jointly.⁷¹

The ideogenesis of Thomism will uncover the same insights. The potency of the intellect to knowledge is reduced to act by the in-formation of the species of the thing known. Man is the center in which the unity of subject and object is realized for the intellect is determined by the thing known itself in its intentional existence.⁷² Since it is the substantial form that gives actuality and reality to a thing, it is the principle of cognoscibility. If, in some way in knowledge, we know things as they are, then the form of a thing is assimilated, making it still clearer that there is unity between subject and object, underlying all knowledge. This is the dialectic of noesis and noema. Pola explains, however, that this assimilation must be distinguished from the assimilation spoken of in the vegetative plain, so that really, in Pola's words, "quien conoce se convierte formalmente en el objeto conocido, haciendose, en el plano intencional, una misma cosa con el, en lo que consiste propiamente el conocimiento."⁷³ Herein is evident the contrast between the idealism of Kant and Thomistic realism. Inasfar as Kant could see, knowledge was brought about by an admixture of matter and form. This is not the case for Thomism. While, in the order of existence as well as in the

⁷⁰ William Luijpen: *Existential Phenomenology* (Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 1960) pp. 75-76

⁷¹ *ibid.*, p. 96

⁷² John Peifer: *The Concept in Thomism* (New York: Bookman Associates, Inc., 1952) p. 33; also Wilhelmssen, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

⁷³ Juan Gonzalez-Pola: *El Idealismo Tomista* (Valladolid: Graficas Andres Martin, 1957) p. 34.

order of thought, the form is a determinative factor, the difference lies in the manner that the cognitive powers receive form and the manner by which matter receives form. There is, however, identity in a certain respect between the reception of form in matter and the reception of form by the intellect that justifies the use of the term *information* in both cases. Heidegger speaks of Being as revealing itself, of reality as being present for man, so that it is not the subject alone that makes objects present; they also present themselves to man. The same thinking will be found in Thomism. It is the doctrine of St. Thomas that "the thing known communicates its form or makes impressions of its form on the knower."⁷⁴ And very like Heidegger, a Thomistic commentator concludes that "*to be* is the light in which everything that is immediately inferable in Being becomes ontologically intelligible."⁷⁵ Being is the light in which man stands, the light, that in one way, accounts for man's being-with-objects, and in another way depends on man to be really "light".

Thomism also recognizes that first, consciousness is "outside", engrossed with the other-than-the-self. In inquiring on the soul's knowledge of itself, the Angelic Doctor finds it impossible for reflection to take place unless the intellect has first acted, i.e., tended to its objects. By perceiving that I understand, I am able to grasp though imperfectly the nature of my soul. Understanding is firstly the understanding of extra-mental reality. Thus St. Thomas says:

Intellectual substances return to their essences with a complete return: knowing something external to themselves, in a certain sense *they go outside of themselves*, but by knowing that they know, they are already beginning to return to themselves, because the act of cognition acts between the knower and the thing known.⁷⁶

When the noetic-noematic dialectic tension earlier spoken of is really central in the epistemological study, it does not come as

⁷⁴ Peifer, op. cit., p. 55

⁷⁵ Masiello, Ralph: *The Intuition of Being According to the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas*. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, Doctoral Abstract, 1955) p. 17.

⁷⁶ *De Veritate*, Q. 1, a. 9, Mulligan ed., p. 42, also cf. S.T. I, Q. 87, a. 1.

a surprise that existential phenomenology should refer to objects as co-constitutive of the subject, for if Being is ground, participation is real and the encounter with being-in-itself is true, as Jaspers claims, there can be no other reasonable conclusion. Thomism shares the same position. The idea has an existence that is "esse ad", i.e., "not fixing the subject within itself but *making him tend to what is outside himself* by drawing what is outside within him."⁷⁷

Concepts said to be immutable are produced by me and by my world. One seizes reality and fixes it in concepts. This being so, one's immutable concepts transcend the changeable character of the concrete and serve as the basis which makes it possible to speak of absolute truth.⁷⁸ What we have just stated makes us pass on to the interesting subject of truth. When St. Thomas in Question 16 Article 1 of the Summa asserts that truth is first in the intellect, this writer thinks him to be expressing the same insight existentialists have had in reference to man as the being because of whom there is truth. In scholastic terminology, we refer to logical truth. St. Thomas even speaks of things as having an ordination to the intellect per se, in their dependence upon the Divine Intellect and "per accidens autem ad intellectum a quo cognoscibilis est." For him then as for existentialists, truth is possible, noetically considered, because of the unveiling of things by logos (Dasein) and noematically considered, because of the unconcealedness of the unveiled things themselves.

The Intimacy of Subject and Object

It is in no way an easy matter to understand why St. Thomas, quoting Aristotle, calls knowledge the process by which the knowing mind becomes the other, as other. As the Angelic Doctor elaborates on his theory of knowledge, however, the reasons behind such a description of the knowing relation are brought to the fore. The mind is really potentially all things because it is informed by the intelligible species of other things. His limitations may not allow him to know everything but he retains the potentiality to know all things; he is open to Being. Some psycho-

⁷⁷ Peifer, op. cit., p. 167, underscoring ours.

⁷⁸ Peifer, op. cit., p. 167.

logists, aided by results of concrete observations, may find reason to doubt the validity of some points in Thomistic ideogenesis but the core of St. Thomas' gnoseology, the knower's *becoming the other* as other retains its status as a succinct interpretation of the phenomenon of knowing. The knower receives the forms of the things he knows without causing the corruption of his objects nor inducing his own substantial transformation. It is an *esse intentionale*, an entity proper to the relation between subject and object that is invoked.

Marcel's metaphysics of participation, realizable in secondary reflection, is an attempt to remind the reflecting man that prior to and sustaining any abstractive treatment of subject apart from object and vice-versa is the fact of participation in Being as ground. Current phenomenologists reject any consideration of man as an *in-itself* (the Sartrean *en soi*), a solid, opaque entity. Thoughtful reflections on experience draw attention to the radical open-ness of man to things, to the world, to Being. Existentialists seem to be agreed that man is not in himself, neither is he himself. Man is not in himself because he lives and has his cares in the world; he invokes the other, he extends his powers through tools and instruments and stands as the question to Being. It really is the case that he can only reflect upon himself when he acts on and relates to what is other than himself. This phenomenology of man, this metaphysics of participation may explain the becoming-other of man in knowledge. He is the other because it is present to him; in scholastic terminology, he is informed by the other. Under the hylemorphic doctrine, it is form that sets a thing in its determination; it is what specifies a thing (physically). And if it is the form of the thing itself in an intentional existence that informs the knower, indeed the knower is suffused with the object, by what is other. Of course the *esse intentionale* is not a wand that makes the knower disappear so that the raven known may be him; but there is hardly any better language by which to express the fact that the subject is intimately involved and irrevocably unified with the other that is present to him. Although a first impression may be repulsive, it is said by existentialists of man that his essence is not to be himself. When we inquired into Jasper's philosophy of knowledge, man was presented as possible existenz; he does actually exist but his exis-

tence of necessity involves his multifarious relations with what is other than him. Once a man comes to be, he starts becoming. It was not existentialism, however, that pioneered the cause of man's dynamism. St. Thomas, although categorizing knowledge as an accidental perfection, nevertheless pointed to the intellect as first in potentiality to know and later perfected by its knowledge. There then is a passage from potency to act, a becoming that man undergoes in knowing, and it is significant that the *ens* that man knows is, in virtue of man's knowing it, being with it, co-constitutive of his perfection. The aliquid which man encounters and conceptualizes makes it possible for him to be said to know, to be more perfect. St. Thomas makes it clear that to know is to be more perfect, to be further removed from nothingness, to be nearer infinity. Fulfilling one's role as Dasein is to witness to Being and it is precisely this that happens, a testimony to Being, when one knows. Gabriel Marcel says:

When I think of a being, I restore in a manner between him and myself a community, an intimacy, a with (to put it crudely) which might seem to have been broken.⁷⁹

But in the thought of Marcel, as with other existentialist it is the co-esse, the participation, the community that is the existential and thinking of something restores that existential level, that milieu that really sustains me in my being. Co-esse being my esse, and thinking of something, knowing another as restoring or invigorating this co-esse is then realizing myself, being myself more fully.

In the realm of *knowledge by connaturality* that still is relatively unexplored, the intimacy between subject and object that is the underlying note in existentialism is central. In Thomism, knowledge by connaturality is defined as that kind of knowledge that is produced in the intellect not by virtue of conceptual connections or by way of demonstration but through inclination.⁸⁰ In love, the lover knows the beloved in a way beyond the ordinary

⁷⁹ G. Marcel: *Being and Having*, pp. 31-32.

⁸⁰ Robert O'Shea, *Truth of Being Through Knowledge by Connaturality* (An Abstract of a Doctoral Dissertation, Catholic University of America Press, 1956) p. 3.

operations of the intellect. The more the lover loves, the more the loved one is unveiled for him, and the more the lover knows him. Although this knowledge is not primarily expressed in judgements nor in ideas, it is truly human knowledge, for only human knowledge could give a human notion of a human end.⁸¹

That the intellect is open to Being, that in fact consciousness is first of all outside, with objects, is the central point of this study. Drawing the conclusions of Thomistic epistemology, Maritain also speaks of the transcendental range of human existence and of the transcendence of knowledge:

To know does not consist in doing something nor in the receiving of something but in a degree of existence greater than that of being removed from nothingness: it is an active, immaterial, super-existence, by which a subject exists no longer only in an existence limited to what it is as a thing included in a certain kind as a subject existing in itself, but with an unlimited existence in which it is or becomes so by its own rightful activity and that of others.⁸²

and in the words of St. Thomas:

That which the intellect first conceives as, in a way the most evident and to which it reduces all its concepts, is being.⁸³

Thomism does not propose an immanent-representationalism theory. We have seen it insisted that it is not the idea nor the phantasm that we know; it is the thing itself that we grasp for it engulfs us in its intentional existence, and we are open to it by our cognitive faculties and operations. Sartre then had a very good point to make when he contrasted the *en-soi* with the *pour-soi* in terms of the massivity, fixedness of the former, and the dynamism, indeterminateness of the latter. Man is not what he is because in knowledge, as St. Thomas observed, the knower in

⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 8.

⁸² Jacques Maritain: *The Degrees of Knowledge* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938) p. 136.

⁸³ *De Veritate*, Q. 1, a.1.

a certain way becomes another insofar as that which he knows is other.

Physical Presence and Knowledge

Man, being a material body, shares in the composite nature of all hylemorphic substances. In the light of Thomistic thought, then, man is a composite of body and soul. He is unique however, because he is possessed of a subsistent, rational soul. For as long as man exists, therefore, he exists as composite. (This is not dualism for neither moment is man; man is the whole.) Being united with the body in this life, however, the soul, as an intellectual principle, knows according to the conditions imposed by man's corporeal nature. It is therefore only logical that the proper object of the human intellect be the quiddity of the material substance, and that knowledge, being proportionate to man's existence is possible because of the existence of material bodies whose essences it grasps. In fact, St. Thomas is quite explicit:

In the present state of life in which the soul is united to a body, it is impossible for our intellect to understand anything actually, except by turning to the phantasm.⁸⁴

Thus, the existence of man, qua rational, is possible because of his own corporeality and of the existence of material bodies that in some way initiate the knowing process. About corporeality or "incarnation", Marcel had much to say, in more points than one, in common with St. Thomas. Man is an incarnate being, a being that exists *next to* and *within* the world because of his body. Sensation is what allows me to participate, to be involved in and with the world.⁸⁵ A person is manifest to the world, manifest to others because of his body and to affirm the existence (and by existence, Marcel means the being of corporeal reality) of other beings is to affirm them as manifest, as incarnate and as belonging to the same world.⁸⁶

For both St. Thomas and Marcel, man's bodily being is a fundamental datum. Man exists as (and Marcel would say be-

⁸⁴ S. T. I, Q. 84, a.7.

⁸⁵ Busch, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁸⁶ Marcel, *Being and Having*, p. 10.

cause of) "being incarnate". Both realized that it is my corporeal nature that keeps me in contact with the world. Sensation is possible, says St. Thomas, because there are organic faculties, faculties that primarily depend on my body. It is also important to remember that for him, sensation is not an operation of the body alone but of the composite. Marcel asserts that man's involvement in the world, including his cognitive participation therein, is on account of corporeality.

It is useful to remember that for St. Thomas, the soul is not an interior principle, it is not something that resides within the body; in fact there is a human body (in first act) only because matter has been informed by the soul. The body is then not the dwelling of the soul; it is the *expression* of the soul for it is that which has been informed. Consistently then, in Thomistic thought, the problem of knowledge is not the problem of making an "internal principle" reach objects external to it.⁸⁷ Sensation, which is the level of immediate corporeal encounter with beings, so directly renders the world to us that Marcel made the following entry for May 4th in his *Metaphysical Journal*:

Realized this evening with prodigious lucidity:

1. that sensation (Immediate consciousness) is infallible. There is no place in it for error.
2. that in this way faith ought to participate in the nature of sensation (the metaphysical problem here lies in rediscovering by thought and beyond thought a new infallibility, a new immediacy.)⁸⁸

Again the bond that unites St. Thomas with Marcel is unmistakably clear. In effect, both assert that there is no room for error in sensation because of its immediacy. For scholastics, this would mean that sensation is to be distinguished from the act of affirming or denying where error may vitiate the truth of a judgement. In Marcel's terms, the level of sensation is the level bereft of any reflection; in other words, there is no turning on the data of sensation that would allow error to creep in. Both, too, St. Thomas and Marcel realize that sensation is not enough.

⁸⁷ That which is intrinsic is internal in a metaphysical and not in a physical sense.

⁸⁸ Marcel, *Metaphysical Journal*, pp. 131-132.

Marcel says it must be perfected in the interpretation and reflection; for St. Thomas, the act is perfected in the intellect in conception and judgement.

Fulgor Veritatis, the Light of Being

Formal certitude is the state of mind characterized by a firm assent that is based on objective grounds that are true and known to be true. This is the typical Thomistic definition of certitude.⁸⁹ At once, the definition denies any subjective state as the ultimate criterion or motive of formal certitude for it makes the mind depend on objective grounds which it must know to be true. When asked about the ultimate and infallible criterion of properly known truth, St. Thomas, concurring with the philosophers of old, referred to "*Fulgor veritas assensum mentis rapiens*". For St. Thomas it is the brilliance of the object, the transcendental truth of being that forces the assent of the intellect. Being is true but this means that it is the ground and the measure of the truth of the mind.⁹⁰ At first, one may attribute certitude to the perception of true objective grounds but it indeed is the *fulgor* of the object that "coerces" the mind to assent. The intimacy between this Thomistic reflection and Heidegger's insights cannot be missed. Heidegger says:

But man's distinctive feature lies in this, that he, as the being who thinks, is open to Being, face to face with Being; thus man *remains referred to Being and so answers it*. Man is *essentially the relationship of responding to Being* and he is only this. This 'only' does not mean a limitation but rather an excess. A belonging to Being prevails within man, a belonging which listens to Being because it is appropriated to Being. And Being? Let us think of Being according to its original meaning as presence. Being is present to man neither incidentally nor only on rare occasions. Being is present and abides only as it concerns man through the claims it makes on him. *For it is man, open towards Being, who alone lets Being arrive as presence.*⁹¹

Especially in the later phase of Heidegger's life and philosophy, the light of Being itself in which things are made visible

⁸⁹ cf. De Veritate, *Questiones Disputatae*, Q. 14, a.1.

⁹⁰ Piñon, op. cit., p. 121.

⁹¹ Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, p. 31 underscoring ours.

to Dasein was a central theme for his reflections. Everything stands within Being and Being does emerge into presence, at least for Dasein when he is sensitive enough to note it. Because man is himself within Being although he may be said to occupy a special position, as he is the "there of Being", the approach to Being can never be direct, never objectifying, for at the same time that man attempts a detached grasp of Being, at such time does it slip from his presence. The approach therefore, as Marcel says, must be, at most, oblique. The oblique approach is one that does not detach a subject from an object; the relation is clearly referred to by Heidegger: *man is open towards Being, but he alone lets Being arrive as presence.*

In his principal work, *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger fuses certitude with seeing what is given itself, the experience of truth, as original givenness.⁹² When one beholds what is given itself, when upon awareness is cast the brilliance of the epiphany of being, one is certain. One experiences here the metaphysical care of the later Heidegger. In the light of Being, man is submissive in a most peculiar manner for it is also because his very presence is illuminating, his being-in-the-world is constitutive of world, that there is something to submit to. Things unveil themselves in the presence of the being that makes the unveiling possible and apprehends the unveiling. And certitude is precisely my reaction to Being as it imposes itself upon me and coerces my thought.⁹³ We can then understand what Thomists mean by conjoining *fulgor obiecti* with *assensum mentis*. St. Thomas then teaches:

The intellect assents to a thing in two ways: First *thru being moved to assent by its very object* which is known either by itself (as in the case of first principles which are held by the habit of understanding, or thru something else already known (as in the case of conclusions which are held by the habit of science).⁹⁴

The Thomistic point is clear: the firm assent of the intellect in certitude is consequent upon the "coercive light" of Being. From the terminology either of the Angelic Doctor or of pheno-

⁹² Luijpen, *Existential Phenomenology*, p. 166.

⁹³ Gallagher, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

⁹⁴ S. T. II-II, Q. 1, a. 4, c.; underscoring ours.

menologists pursuing Heidegger, it is evident that there is tension involved, one that makes it possible to speak of the intellect as "being moved" and as assenting and of the fulgor of the object. It is a dynamic relation we refer to.

In *De Veritate* as in other treatises on knowledge, the Angelic Doctor is quite clear about the mind's dependence on reality. In fact his words seem to have anticipated Heidegger's own.

Since the speculative intellect is receptive in regard to things, it is, in a certain sense, *moved by things* and consequently measured by them.⁹⁵

Heidegger's Dasein is one who bathes in the fulgor obiecti, the emergence of Being that constitutes truth. For both St. Thomas and Heidegger, this means something dynamic, emergent Being. To denote the Being of Heidegger, St. Thomas used *esse*, the act of to-be.⁹⁶ For both, man stands in the light of Being and the all-pervasive, plenary presence of Being engulfs man, nourishes every affirmation and justifies all certitude. The metaphysics involved in epistemological questions makes its presence extensively felt in similar points as these and we now better understand what Marcel meant when he thought of knowledge as within Being.

Speaking of the brightness of the object or of the truth shining forth makes sense only in reference to man who perceives this brightness and for whom truth shines forth. When scholastics say that the truth shines forth, they do not have in mind that notion of truth as the relation of conformity that exists between the intellect and reality. It is Being itself, its fulgor, that renders evidence for our assent.

Truth and the Subject

Realism is the position that maintains the ontological tension between subject and object. For Hegel, there can be no real tension. The same holds true for Identity philosophy. Subject exists, i.e., is one entity and the object exists, i.e., another entity,

⁹⁵ *De Veritate*, Q. I, a.2.

⁹⁶ Caputo, op. cit., p. 88.

so that the reality of either terminus is independent of the other. Realism therefore concerns itself with the ontological status of subject and object realizing meanwhile the epistemological bond that links the terms together. St. Thomas is often classed among realists. As our previous discussions have amply indicated, this label is not unjustified. It is, however, necessary to attend to the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor on truth in order to understand his realism better. The 16th Question of Summa Theologica I opens with an article on whether truth resides in the intellect only. The core of the article is in the following:

Since the true is in the intellect in so far as it is conformed to the object understood, the aspect of the true must pass from the intellect to the object understood so that also the thing understood is said to be true in so far as it has some relation to the intellect.⁹⁷

Primarily then, truth is said of the intellect and because a being is the source, object or measure of the truth of the mind, such a being is said to be true. As an attribute of being, truth is said by relation to the truth of the mind. It is standard procedure in traditional manuals to distinguish between logical truth, ontological truth and moral truth. Is the truth of the mind we have constantly referred to logical truth? When a proposition agrees with the objective order, it is said to be true. This is logical truth. Primarily then, logical truth is truth involved in logical propositions. The intellect, however, by affirming propositions that are logically true acquires the formal truth of the mind. By assenting to propositions that are logically true, the mind is formally true. In summary, we speak of the truth of a thing *because* of the formal truth of the mind. In no way does this jeopardize the realism of St. Thomas for though he refers to the truth of the thing in relation to the truth of the mind, the quality of the mind denoted as formal truth depends on the being of the thing. This is a fine distinction of importance for epistemology.

In the same way, the *being* of the thing, *not its truth*, is the cause of truth in the intellect.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ S. T. I, Q. 16, a.1, c.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, ad. 3

Heidegger's approach to metaphysics has been conveniently labelled — Dasein analysis. But understanding Dasein, the mode of existence proper to the human being, he endeavoured to attain an intuition of Being.⁹⁹ Man, as the being in whom Being is there, is the proximate goal of the Heideggerian enterprise. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger insists that the place of truth is not primarily in the judgement, but in man's existence insofar as being man is to exist consciously.¹⁰⁰ Human existence is then the logos, the meaning-giving event for the being-other-than-himself. The meaning, the understanding, the truth that comes about leads back to man whose very existence as consciousness, as Dasein is *lumen naturale*. Among phenomenologists in existentialism, *unconcealedness* is a favorite expression for the event that occurs when Dasein casts its light on the world. There is a consequent unveiling of reality; the logos takes being out of concealedness.

Note that we have not attributed the existence, the being of things other than Dasein to him, for though Dasein, as we have seen, constitutes meanings, he does not constitute things. The clarity of vision that characterizes St. Thomas' doctrine makes itself fully felt here. St. Thomas is definitely a realist in the sense that he acknowledges the ontological entity that is the object. Independently of the thinking mind, things are. In this sense, Heidegger is also a realist. For both, however, there is truth only because of the illuminating presence of man. Says St. Thomas: "But as good adds to being the notion of desirable, so the true adds relation to the intellect."¹⁰¹ Whenever we have truth, then we have logos, there, Dasein is. Man is then the being whose very being is "being unveiled" and "being unveiling".¹⁰² It is common to distinguish between an earlier Heidegger and a later Heidegger. The difference however is not a reversal but a change of emphasis. The earlier Heidegger laid considerable emphasis on Dasein as the explanatory basis for what Being means. The later Heidegger saw Dasein standing in the light of Being. It is the light of Being itself in which beings are made

⁹⁹ James Brown: *Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Buber and Barth* (New York: Collier Books, 1955) pp. 80-81

¹⁰⁰ Luijpen, *Existential Phenomenology*, pp. 143-145.

¹⁰¹ S. T. I, Q. 16, a. 3, c.

¹⁰² Luijpen, *Existential Phenomenology*, p. 143.

visible to Dasein.¹⁰³ Obviously, this change of emphasis does not negate the notion of Dasein as logos. Being unveils itself and Dasein stands in the light of Being as being (Dasein) that is *lumen naturale*. The epiphany of Being is possible only because man's being is openness for the light of Being. This openness is not the passivity of a wax tablet but the openness of a being that takes being out of concealedness. Noematically, there is unconcealedness, there is the light of Being; noetically, one must contend with the unveiling presence of man that allows the noematic light to be light.

In studies of the sort we are presently undertaking, there is menacingly present the danger of including into an earlier doctrine the reflections of a later period. Reflecting on the doctrine of truth by St. Thomas, however, one cannot but see the common ground shared by Thomism and Heideggerian phenomenology in certain aspects of epistemology. Apropos to our present concern, let us refer to the psychological description of conceptualization, specifically to the role St. Thomas assigns to the *intellectus agens*. Following St. Thomas develop his thesis on the active intellect should immediately suggest the link we seek to discover.

Obj. It would seem that there is no active intellect. For as the senses are to things sensible, so is our intellect to things intelligible. But Because sense is in potentiality to things sensible, the sense is not said to be active but only passive. Therefore, since our intellect is in potentiality to things intelligible, it seems that we cannot say that the intellect is active but only that it is passive

I answer that . . . since Aristotle did not allow that forms of material things exist apart from matter, and as *forms existing in matter are not actually intelligible* . . . we must therefore assign on the part of the intellect some power to make things actually intelligible by abstraction of the species from material conditions.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Caputo, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

¹⁰⁴ S. T. I, Q. 79, a.3, obj. 1 and c.

Intelligibility is a basic attribute of being but sensible things, the proper objects of the human intellect are not intelligible actually. Beings are apt to terminate cognition but they actually do not unless the intellect itself makes the things intelligible in act. Although we do not draw exact equations between this point of Thomistic ideogenesis with the Heideggerian concept of man as logos, it is nonetheless clear that St. Thomas here makes an important epistemological point: things are constituted in their intelligibility in actu by the human intellect that is both active and passive. From this perspective then, man's presence is meaning-giving not in the arbitrariness of a subject that imposes meanings but in the involvement of a subject that allows it to draw meaning from the objects themselves.

Dasein as possibility (the source of possibilities) and constituted by relation with objects as tools in a serviceable system (enabling possibility to be realized) gives intelligibility to the world as the realization of projects.

Since Dasein gives meaning to brute existence in terms of projects, it creates truth: it finds a place and a use in its intelligible world for what is in chaos, and thus uncovers what is there, allows the existent to manifest itself, to come into the world to show what it is. Dasein by its nature is *lumen naturale*, for its existence is to stand out from the world and to become something in the world, and in so doing it throws light on what is there and indeed makes it that there is a world. This creation of the truth is not subjective nor arbitrary because it proceeds from the nature of Dasein whose structure is universal, and because it is projected on and limited by the independently real: it is the meaning of existence which is created not existence itself.¹⁰⁵

It is hardly necessary to explicitate the common perspective. Things are there but, in Thomas' words, they are not yet intelligible in act, they await the illuminating presence of man. And because things are independently real, truth is independent of subject in the sense that subject is never independent of mean-

¹⁰⁵ Blackham, *ip. cit.*, pp. 89-93.

ing. It is an interesting fact that, in a language that strikingly anticipates Heidegger, St. Thomas speaks of the intellectual light in us by which we acquire knowledge of truth by discussion and apprehend, though partly, anything newly apprehended.¹⁰⁶

Thematic Review:

More profound studies and more capable minds may discover link points we have not discussed here. It is however the joy of every student of philosophy to participate in the awesome tradition of speculative thought. It has been our aim to discover some link points between St. Thomas' theory of knowledge and the stances of representatives of contemporary existentialism. We believe that we have found some in —

1. the assertion of man's ontological openness to Being and the irreducibility of the subject-object dialectic;
2. the analysis of consciousness as essentially intentional;
3. the immediacy of sensation and sense apprehension on account of physical presence (human corporeality);
4. the notion of man as standing in the light of Being;
5. truth as "subjectual" — a constant reference to the subject.

In his familiar work, *Essay on Man*, Alexander Pope exhorts:
 Know then thyself, presume not God to scan
 the proper study of mankind is man.

To the cause of knowing man more, this study has been dedicated.

RANHILIO CALLANGAN AQUINO
 University of Sto. Tomas

¹⁰⁶ S. T. I, q. 58, a.a. 3 and 4