**IN THE BEGINNING IS RELATION:**

**ENCOUNTER AS A HUMAN RELIGIOUS AWARENESS**

**IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF MARTIN BUBER**

1. INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of encounter which today is called the philosophy of dialogue is started in the twentieth century. This approach designated human person as a being that is called. Considering this calling, man is asked to acknowledge the other and not to be indifferent. To be in relation with the other is a necessity, it is a human ontological characteristic. Emmanuel Levinas (1905-1995), for example, points out that in relation to the other, a man leads to the question of a “beyond” and this justifies human freedom. Gabriel Marcel’s statement that *esse est co-esse,* being is always ‘being with’, is another concept that affirms that relation is essential in life.

In Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, the human being is defined ontologically as a being in a privileged position who can ask the question of his being and reality. The human being is *Da-sein* (being there), being thrown into the world, into the everydayness, in space and time. *Da-sein* explains in one way or another, and somehow always does relate, existence (*Existenz)*. *Da-sein* is Being-in-the-world: *Being-with* and *Dasein-with* (*Mitsein und Mitdasein*).[[1]](#footnote-1) The fact of being thrown into the everydayness indicates the human dependence to the other. Man is not a basis unto himself. His ontological condition is constructed in a relationship with the other. Being related with the other enables man to look for the basis of his existence, or for its *Urgrund* to use an expression of Jacob Böhme (1575-1624).

Martin Buber (1878-1965) is recognized as the father of the philosophy of dialogue with his masterpiece *Ich und Du* (*I and Thou)*. The work was written during the period of great intellectual and social tension in Germany between 1919 and 1922. It was published in 1923. Such tension can be seen in the situation of intense conflict between man and God, between man and his work and between man and man.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The development of technology and sciences in Germany at the time when *I and Thou* was written increased the spread of materialism, capitalism, individualism, and atheism. Man has turned away from the guidance of the religious values to science, technology, and wellbeing. Nietzsche understood this turning point as the death of God. Human religious awareness was decreasing because the development of science and technology led man to doubt about God, to doubt about spiritual values. Life had become meaningless. Buber recognized that the rapid rise of technology and science widened the gulf between man and God. It was easier for a man to doubt of God. The concept of God was too abstract for human life.[[3]](#footnote-3) The man being centred on himself. One can do everything without the consideration of God.

However, differing from Nietzsche, Buber thinks that God is not dead. Even if he admitted that the communication with God had been made more difficult by the *Zeitgeist*. For Buber, God is silent because humans are silent, but God is not dead. Accordingly, it is necessary to re-establish a relationship with God. Buber proposed to utilize the role of religion and to re-connect the human sense of life with God. He realized that the importance of the re-connection of the human of life with God was manifested in the *I -Thou* relation and in a dialogic community.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Buber’s philosophy of dialogue is an art that gives meaning to the human person, an art that provides a deep understanding of human existence and transcendence. To his mind, a human being is going to be a real man only when he treats the other person even natural as a subject and not as an object. Inter-subjectivity in the most general sense is an experienced sharing that occurs among subjects. Primarily the use of inter-subjectivity focuses on the recognition of the relationship between the self and others.

In his masterpiece, *I and Thou,* Buber introduced the meaning of inter-subjectivity in the interaction of *I-Thou*. He focuses on the dialogic interaction between men and how the using of language can construct human attitude including the awareness to Spiritual Being. In other words, in the dialectic of human interrelationship, the immanence and transcendence of human being are brought up. Differed from Buddha, who admitted the suffering and the project of releasing from *samsara* as a kind of human existence, Buber affirmed that the human existence is situated in the "between", in the reality of the spirit, which response to the other as *Thou*.[[5]](#footnote-5)

There are three spheres in which one can enter a relation: life with nature, life with human beings and life with spiritual beings.[[6]](#footnote-6) These spheres send out a call to say the primary word “I-Thou”. But the three spheres of relation manifest a two-fold attitude towards the world, which is indicated by the foundational concepts “I-It” (*Ich-Es*) and “I-Thou” (*Ich-Du*).[[7]](#footnote-7) In the beginning of *I and Thou,* Buber says:

To a man, the world is twofold, in accordance with his twofold attitude. The attitude of man is twofold, in accordance with the twofold nature of the primary words which he speaks. The primary words are not isolated words, but combined words. The one primary word is the combination *I-Thou*. The other primary word is the combination *I-It*.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Buber distinguishes between the *I-Thou* relation and the *I-It* relation. The *I-It* relation is an objective relation in which one looks at the other as an object. It is an indirect relationship. There is a distance between me and the other. The other becomes an object of my talking, my abstraction, my explanation, or my argumentation. I am not part of the other. The *I-Thou* relation, on the contrary can only be spoken to with the whole being.[[9]](#footnote-9) It is a relation of openness, directness, mutuality, and presence. The "I" only exists because of the presence of “Thou”. The mutuality (*Gegenseitigkeit*) character of human relationship is a deeper senseof human affiliation with the other*.* I do not reduce the other to an object. I do not see the other as a thing. I cannot use the other to satisfy my desire.

The ‘I-Thou’ phrase in the philosophy of Buber refers to a profound sense of human relation. It includes in the three spheres of human relation (with nature, men and spiritual being or God). “When Thou is spoken, the speaker has nothing, he has indeed nothing. But he takes his stand in relation”[[10]](#footnote-10), said Buber. What does he mean? Relation with the other is the very nature of man. It reveals the human being directedness to the transcendent being, a being that goes beyond man. The word ‘Thou’ as a primary word should be understood in position of relationship even to the transcendent being. Two profound aspects are displayed in the *I-Thou* relation: it indicates human orientation to God as the Supreme Being; and the fact that human orientation to God should be expressed in the responsibility for the other. From Buber's point of view, the responsibility for the other is expressed in love. Loving you means I am responsible for you.

Based on Buber’s concept of the *I-Thou* relation, it is important to reflect on the meaning of human directedness to the other being. The investigation of a human relationship with the other provides various insights. The *I-Thou* relation in the philosophy of Buber reveals human directedness to the transcendent Being and enables him to provide a religious awareness because human being is a spiritual being, thanks for their rational and relational dimensions.

In the third part of *I and Thou*, Buber introduces the necessary for people to move from encountering human beings and nature to encountering with the eternal *Thou*, God. “Every particular *Thou* is a glimpse through to eternal *Thou*; by means of every particular *Thou* the primary word addresses the eternal *Thou*”.[[11]](#footnote-11) He insists on the non-contradiction correlation of the *I* and *Thou.* There is a unity of being in which an individual maybe has an experience of God. As a living being people share some features of their existence with nature, and some with God. Buber insisted that, "He, who enters on the absolute relation is concerned with nothing isolated anymore, neither things nor beings, neither earth nor heaven; but everything is gathered up in the relation".[[12]](#footnote-12) Buber goes to affirm that human world (being and thing) is an access to bind up together with God. So, the question is, *is the dialogic conception of a human being able to provide a religious awareness which escapes to the illusion of self-made God*? This question will be dealt with under the following heading: *In the Beginning is Relation: Encounter as a Human Religious Awareness in the Philosophy of Martin Buber***.**

The rational argument to organize this theme can be seen in the following structure. This work is divided into four parts. The first is a short *Introduction*. In the second part, I will present *Buber: Among Religious Tradition and the Other Philosophers*. This will be a general information of Buber as a philosopher to comprehend his philosophical background. In the third part: *Encounter as a Human Religious Awareness in the Philosophy of Buber,* I will introduce Buber's dialogical essence of human being (the *I-Thou* relation) and how it could be considered to provide human religious awareness. The fourth part consists in critical notes to the philosophy dialogue of Martin Buber. The last part is the conclusion that holds some affirmation points.

1. MARTIN BUBER: AMONG RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AND THE OTHER PHILOSOPHERS
   1. **Exposition of Profile and Works**

Martin Mordechai Buber was one of the greatest religious thinkers of the twentieth century. He was interested in philosophy, Zionism, theatre, adult education, psychotherapy, and mysticism. Martin was a Jewish philosopher of religion and was nominated for the Nobel Prizes for both Literature and Peace. Born in 1878 in Vienna, his parents Carl Buber and Elise Nee Wurgast separated in 1882 and Buber was sent to live with his Grandfather, Solomon Buber, and Grandmother Adele, at Lvov (Lemberg), the capital of Galicia (Austria). Solomon Buber was an expert in Jewish culture. Under the guidance of his grandmother, Adele Buber, Martin learned to read and learn languages, whereas his grandfather Solomon introduced him into the world of scholarship, above all, by translating Hebrew texts. Thus, he had private tutors until his age of 10 years when he went to the “Franz Joseph Gymnasium” where he learned many languages such as Hebrew, Yiddish, German, French, and Polish. When his Father Carl Buber remarried in 1892 Martin moved to his Father’s house at Lemberg[[13]](#footnote-13).

Inspired by his father, Buber studied biology and developed a genuine interest in nature. In 1896, he moved from the Ukraine to Vienna and enrolled as a student of philosophy and history of art at the University of Vienna. During the winter semester of 1897/1898 he studied at the University of Leipzig, Germany, and in the summer of 1899 he moved to Switzerland and studied at the University of Zurich, where he got to know Paula Winkler, a writer and poet, who he married. With his family, Buber moved to Berlin and from Berlin to Heppenheim, near Frankfurt, Germany. Here, Buber be friended Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) who was dedicated to Jewish religious studies.[[14]](#footnote-14)

Since his younger years, Buber showed interest in Kant’s *Prolegomena*, a proposition that time and space are “mere forms” of our sensory perception.[[15]](#footnote-15) At the age of seventeen, he had already become passionately interested in Nietzsche's philosophy. His encounters with the philosophers Kant and Nietzsche was a catastrophic event in his life because it upset the presuppositions of all his genuine educational work.[[16]](#footnote-16)

In 1898, Buber had encountered Theodore Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement, who drew his interest in studying also Jewish education and culture. Thus, he deepened his knowledge in the Hebrew, Jewish and the Yiddish culture in general. In 1899, he was also a delegate to the third Zionist Congress, where he spoke about the importance of education. Through his connection to the Zionist community, he was appointed to become the editor of the weekly Zionist publication: "Die Welt" (the world) in 1901 and became a member of the Zionist Democratic Party. From 1903 onwards, he studied Hassidism and communicated its messages to the Jewish community in Western Europe.[[17]](#footnote-17)

 From 1906 -1911 Buber attended lectures by William Dilthey at the University of Berlin, where he showed special interest in Dilthey’s hermeneutic theory, which he used as an approach to interpret Hasidic writings and biblical works. In 1916, he published the magazine: *Der Jude*, a monthly publication to promote the Jewish cultural renaissance. In 1919, he became a member of the Hapoel Hazair (Young Worker movement), a Jewish organization in Palestine, which refused the establishment of a Jewish State and joined a settlement later known as Kibbutz.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Because of his special interest in Judaism in terms of literature, folklore, history and languages, Buber intensively researched Hassidism and tried to convince his people that the secret of true spirituality and sanity lay in the religious ideals and practices of the Hasidic community; something that was far from his abstract concerns about the God of his childhood. His re-encounter of Judaism as religiousness remarked the period of his career as a writer when he wrote following two works on Hasidism: 1906; *Geschichten des Rabbi Nachmann* (The Tales of Rabbi Nachman); 1908; *Die Legende des Baalschem* (The Legend of Baalschem). In 1913, he published: *Daniel, Gespraeche von der Verwirklichung* (Dialogues on Realization), a conversation with Daniel with his five partners about direction, reality, meaning, polarity and unity. This was Buber's first work on philosophy.[[19]](#footnote-19)

In 1923, after moving to Frankfort, Germany, Buber translated together with his friend Franz Rosenzweig, the Old Testament into German. He had to complete the translation alone because his friend Franz Rosenzweig died in 1929. In this period, he published also his most important and best known philosophical work about *Ich und Du* (I and Thou). His thesis about the *Ich und Du* relationship is, that there are two fundamental modes, which are relating to one another and are manifested in two fundamental attitudes: *Ich-Du* and *Ich-Es* (I-Thou and I-It). The essential attitude of *I-Thou* is an expression of a more fundamental bearing of the Self toward God, other persons or the world, namely trust.[[20]](#footnote-20)

From 1923–1933 Buber taught also Jewish Philosophy of Religion and the history of religions at the University of Frankfort. When Hitler became the leader of Germany in 1933 Buber moved to Palestine and became the professor of social Philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Buber’s creativity expressed itself in many and quite different ways, such as philosophical essays, books, anecdotes, poems, novels etc. His works are in general grouped in three editions, entitled: *Martin Buber Werke* (the works of Martin Buber). The first edition is about Philosophy, the second about the Holy Bible and the Jewish religion, and the third is about Hasidism.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Following are some other important works of Martin Buber: *Das Koenigtum Gottes* (the Kingship of God), published in 1932. This is his first scholarly study of the Hebrew Bible. In this work, he recognized that the kingship of God is actualized in communal life. Furthermore, his work: *Die Frage an den Einzelnen*, (The question of the individual) published in 1936. In this work, he criticizes Kierkegaard, who renounces marriage and the body as a true relationship with God. In contrast, Buber asserts that the relationship with God is only possible for those who love God and his neighbour. In 1942, *Torat ha-Neviim* (The prophetic faith) was published. This book speaks about God's servants: Job, Moses, David, and Isaiah, as partners in the revelation of God. A servant in Buber's mind is a perfect human being, who brings Israel back to serve God.[[22]](#footnote-22) During the following year, Buber established his approach to the Bible as a historical account of a people's response, as an *I-Thou* encounter with God (published as: "Moses, the revelation and the covenant”). In 1946, he published: *Or ha-Ganuz-Sippurey Hasidim* (The Tales of the Hasidim): two collections of legendary anecdotes about the great Hasidic Masters, which are useful for tracing the development of Buber’s hermeneutic. In 1947, he published: *Netirot be-Utopia* (Paths in Utopia) in which he pays attention to the social philosophy. The following year *Das Problem des Menschen* (The problem of man) was issued, then in 1950 follows the book *Zwei Glaubensweisen* (Two types of faith); one is Jesus’ conception of faith as “Emunah” (fidelity and trust) and the other is Paul’s conception of faith as cognitive, which entails belief in a proposition. In 1950, Buber was invited to lecture in the USA and Europe. In 1951, he was awarded the Goethe Prize by the University of Hamburg. In 1952, he published *Bilder von Gut Und Boese* (Good and Evil), as an anthropological analysis of evil based on both biblical text and Zoroastrian myths. The following year, he published *Gottesfinsterniss* (Eclipse of God), which is about studies concerning religion and philosophy, a collection of essays which criticize contemporary thinkers like Nietzsche, Bergson, Heidegger, Sartre, and Jung, who denied transcendence and thus contribute to the eclipse of God. In 1953, he received also the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade. In 1965, Buber still published essays with the theme: *Between Man and Man*, about the problem of man, education and the character of a man. And the 13th of June 1965 Martin Buber died at the age of 87 years.[[23]](#footnote-23)

* 1. **Martin Buber’s Philosophical Influences**

The philosophical thought of Buber was influenced by his life experiences. There are four historical moments of Buber's philosophical thought: the religious tradition of Judaism; Zionism; Mysticism; the German philosophy of life.

* + 1. Religious Tradition of Judaism

It was Buber’s grandfather (Salomon) who enabled him for the first time to meet the Jewish culture such as *Midrash* (the genre of rabbinic literature which contains early interpretation on the written Torah).As a true philologist, Salomon studied Midrash and made a critical edition of a special class of Hebrew literature.[[24]](#footnote-24) Also, he often brought Buber to pray with him in synagogue.[[25]](#footnote-25) In 1898, Buber was introduced to the Hasidic movement in Sadagora, the seat of a dynasty of *zaddikim.* That was the first time Buber met the Hasidic[[26]](#footnote-26) community, during his summer time at Galicia, not far from the Buber estate in Bukovina.[[27]](#footnote-27) As a child, Buber, at his first sight of the palace, was not so interested, excepting the community and leadership. He wrote:

The palace of the rabbi, in its showy splendor, repelled me. The prayer house of the Hasidim with its enraptured worshippers seemed strange to me. But when I saw the rabbi striding through the rows of the waiting, I felt,” leader”: and when I saw the Hasidim dance with the Torah, I felt, “community”.[[28]](#footnote-28)

There are three central virtues of Hasidic doctrine in which Buber was interested: love, joy and humility. Love is the only reason that God created the world and it is through love that humankind can be brought to the perfection. God is love and human capacity to love is man’s innermost participation in God. The capacity to love should be purified and to be raised to God Himself. It is oriented to God’s love but it is expressed by loving the other. God is immanent in humankind as in all His creation.[[29]](#footnote-29) Joy is related to the human knowledge of the presence of God in all things. The characteristic of joy can be affirmed both from the external world (physical aspect), in the sense of humans’ relation with the created world as part of God’s love; and it comes from the internal world (spiritual aspect). The perfect joy is the unity of the body and the soul. Since joy can drive out the ‘alien thought’ which distracts man from the love of God, Hasidim is demanded to cultivate joy. [[30]](#footnote-30)

For Hasidim, humility is understood as a denial of self. It means an attitude to overcome the pride which grows out of the human feeling of disconnectedness from others. It is a virtue to go beyond self and to break the separateness between men. Humility, therefore, is a calling to be aware that man is "the son of King", "a part of godliness".[[31]](#footnote-31) This awareness should be manifested in social life.

Buber’s concern about Hasidism empowered him to leave his political and journalistic activities and studied the Hasidic texts for five years until he published *The Way of Man According to the Teachings of Hasidism* in 1948. It is Buber's interpretation of Hasidism. It recognized a man as being created according to the image of God and that he has a task to proclaim it in the world.[[32]](#footnote-32) One cannot love God unless through his fellows. Love will be realized in the other, and the ‘otherness’ should be brought to the perfection, that could be achieved in a “simple piety and fervour more than intellectual subtlety or the attempt to schematize heavenly mysteries”.[[33]](#footnote-33) Furthermore, the Hasidic doctrine of the absolute transcendence of God is combined with His conditional immanence. The divine is alive in every being, especially in the human being. The task of the human being is “to affirm the God sake in the world”.[[34]](#footnote-34) Buber’s concern for Hasidism encouraged him to translate some of Hasidism’s sages to German, such as: *The Tales of Rabbi Nachman* (1906), *The Legend of the Baal-Shem* (1908), *The Great Maggid* (1922), *The Hidden Light* (1924), *Tales of Hasidim* (1928), *Gog and Mogog* (1940), *Teaching of the Prophets* (1942) and *Moses* (1944).

Buber’s encounter with the religious tradition of Judaism such as community life, the three central of virtues life (love, joy, humanity) and Hasidism’s doctrine of transcendence and immanence of God influenced him to develop the philosophy of dialogue.

* + 1. Zionism and the Jewish Renaissance

Until he was 20 years, Buber was still doubting with the modern age in Germany. He felt that he lived in the “world of confusion”. In 1928 he wrote, "Here, I lived, in the variegated richness of spirit, but without Judaism, without humanity, and without the presence of the divine".[[35]](#footnote-35) He worried about the modern world and peoples' lifestyle such as materialism, capitalism, individualism, and atheism. He wished for a human world with its religious content. This is the reason why he participated actively in social-political activities.

Buber encounters with Alexander Eliasberg (1878-1924)[[36]](#footnote-36), and Theodore Herzl (1860-1904)[[37]](#footnote-37) was an important moment in which he was seduced to know more about Zionism. From the mouth of Eliasberg, he often heard the “really Jewish” expression as a disparagement[[38]](#footnote-38). Buber also read Herzl’s journal *Die Welt* and discussed Zionist questions with him. In the winter of 1898 Buber decided to move to Leipzig. He became an active politician for Zionism[[39]](#footnote-39) until he was elected as a first president of the union of Jewish students and the representative to the Zionist Convention in Cologne in March 1898. In 1916, he founded *Der Jude,* an independent journal for the Jewish Renaissance in Germany and became editor of it. In 1926, he formed an ecumenical movement to foster Jewish-Christian dialogue and choose a Protestant and a Catholic as his co-editors of *Die Kreatur.*[[40]](#footnote-40)

Buber’s knowledge about Hasidim, however, encouraged him to oppose Herzl on Zionism. Buber recognized Zionism as a returning to Jewish roots. Herzl, on the contrary, acknowledged Zionism as a direct reaction to anti-Semitism. It was a political orientation. Herzl, in Buber’s point of view, created a negative effect i.e. *ghetto*: “the ghetto of unfree spirituality and the compulsion of tradition divorced from the life of the essence, and *gholus* (*exile*)- the slavery of an uncreative making of money and the hollow-eyed homelessness that destroy all unified will”.[[41]](#footnote-41) While Buber understood Zionism as a spiritual rebirth movement to convince the Jewish comprehension of people’s being and work. “Zion must be reborn”.[[42]](#footnote-42) The soul of Zion must exist. At the Third Zionist Congress at Basel in 1899, Buber stated that Zionism was no party matter but a *Weltanschauung* – a worldview. From Zionism and the Jewish renaissance Buber was inspired to concern on treating man as subject. He demanded not to separate people as Zionists, as one is a conservative or a liberal, but as one in a man or an artist. The treatment of people as man can be accomplished through the nourishment of Jewish culture, the spirit of the people, their history, their national literature and their education.[[43]](#footnote-43)

* + 1. Mysticism

Mysticism is one of important aspects that mark the period of Buber’s thought from 1900-1922. In this time, the mysticism of the Western culture was more vivid. Firstly, mysticism was used as a part of a reaction to against determinism and to increase the specialization of knowledge. Secondly, Buber took part in a continuation of the mystical tendencies of the German romantics which could trace their ancestry back through Goethe and Shelling to the Pietists and Jacob Böhme, a German Christian mystic and theologian.[[44]](#footnote-44)

Understanding the mysticism deeply, Buber explains existentialism as his apprehension about the problem of the relations between the individual and the world. There are two reasons of using mysticism in Buber’s elucidation of existentialism: recognition of the division between the ‘I’ and the world and the duality within man on the first; and the position of unity of the ‘I’ and the world in both intellectual and emotional terms on the second.[[45]](#footnote-45) Regarding mysticism, Buber’s thought was influenced by German mystics such as Meister Eckhart (1260-1327), Jacob Böhme(1575-1629), and Nicholas of Cusa (1404-1464)[[46]](#footnote-46); and eastern mysticisms such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Buber wrote:

Since 1900 I had first been under the influence of German mysticism from Meister Eckhart to Angelus Silesius, according to which the primal ground (*Urgrund*) of being, the nameless, impersonal godhead, comes to “birth” in the human soul, then I had been under the influence of the later Kabala and of Hasidim, according to which man has the power to unite the God who is over the world with his *Shekinah* dwelling in the world. In this way, there arose in me the thought of a realization whose existence the Absolute, resting in its truth, can gain the character of reality.[[47]](#footnote-47)

Buber’s encounter with western mysticism (German) arose for the first time when he met Gustav Landauer, the leader and teacher at the *Neu Gemeinschaft* (New Community) which was founded by the brothers Heinrich and Julius Hart in Berlin, in 1899. The Community tried to emphasize the divine aspect in beauty, art, and religious dedication. But Landauer’s publications of the great German mystic, Master Eikchart in 1906, influenced Buber strongly in his attempt to translate Hasidic writings. This publication, in Hans Kohn’s witnesses, provides many resemblances for the basic principle which guided Buber in his translation. Buber, according to Kohn, had made insight of Landauer’s idea of Nietzschean and Cartesian scepticism. Interpreting Landauer, Buber explained that Descartes’ certainty reduced things to the status of unreal phantoms.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Among the German mystics, Meister Eckhart and Jacob Böhme were two most important mystics whom Buber called ‘the greatest thinkers of Western mysticism'. Eckhart's concept of the eternal birth of God in the soul inspired Buber to claim that God is the first motivator who want to unite with human beings. This unity is described as a ‘dialogue between God and soul in which God laughs at the soul and the soul laughs back at God’.[[49]](#footnote-49) The moment of unity with God is love. Buber extended this idea in his philosophy of dialogue, quoting Feuerbach's sentences: ‘Man with the man-the unity of I and Thou is God'.[[50]](#footnote-50)

Another German mystic who inspired Buber is Jacob Böhme. Buber was bidden to give a lecture on Jacob Böhme's mysticism and on "Old and New Community". Quoting Böhme, Buber, in his lecture, underlined the reality of human individuality and the solitude of the world. He insisted that the only way to overcome the human ego and human solitude is creating a loving relationship with the other. Böhme recognized the world as a harmony of individual life. He wrote, "It is not enough that the "I" unite itself with the world. The "I" is the world".[[51]](#footnote-51) Buber, combining Böhme’s doctrine of humankind’s harmony with the spiritual life of Saint Francis of Assisi, who called the trees, the birds, and the stars his brothers, stressing the human relation with nature in the third part of *I and Thou.*

From Nicholas of Cusa, Buber was interested in the concept of *coindentia oppositorum* (the coincidence of oppositeness). Appreciating this, Buber said, “The seeing of your eye cannot be the seeing of any other eye. The individual is the centre point of an infinite world process”.[[52]](#footnote-52) Buber demonstrates that in God all things, even the opposites, are included without losing their opposition. God is the *complication contradictoriorum,* the *coindentia oppositorum*”.[[53]](#footnote-53) The real thing attains rest in God as its perfection. Even each creature has its line of realization, but God is the point in which all lines of perfection is met. God unites different things and makes them perfect.

From the eastern mysticism, Buber took the teaching of Tao about the central person. Tao (the way) is a universal principle that every creation interacts to human being. There is process of changing and transformation for a unity. The perfect revelation of Tao is those who combine the greatest change with the purest unity. Consequently, Tao is the united force that overwhelms all deviation from the ground of life. Interpreting Tao as path to unity and harmony in human life, Buber, in his early mystical philosophy, underlines that any form or attempt to separate human being from thing surround them is an evil. Evil is a negative force that interacts with the good in a process of leading back to unity. Evil, as St. Augustine’s definition, is no essence but a lack of the throne of the good. It must be redeemed through the wholeness and purity of human being.[[54]](#footnote-54) Buber acknowledged how important the unity in human life is. This unity played an increasingly significant role in Buber’s philosophy. In *Daniel: Dialogues of Realization*, for example, he strongly recommended living mystically, in the sense of living fully of conscience of reality. “The mystic’s demand for a life lived in terms of the highest reality and the existentialist’s demand for self-realization and genuine existence meet in spirit”.[[55]](#footnote-55) Buber used mysticism to explain existentialism. He is really influenced by mysticism.

2.2.4.The Germany Philosophy of Life

As a great thinker in the fields of philosophy of religion and biblical interpretation, Buber’s thought was influenced also by German philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, Wilhelm Dilthey, George Simmel, and Soren Kierkegaard. Buber, since the age of 15 years, had read Kant’s *Prolegomena* and Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*. From his early reading of Kant, he was concerned with transcendental idealism[[56]](#footnote-56), in particular, the nature of time. Time and space were recognized by Kant as pure forms (conditions) of sensory perception. They pertain to things only as they appear to us (i.e., to phenomena) and not to things-in-themselves (noumena). The sensation is a direct perception of the appeared object. It stimulates the sensory perception. The stimulus of space is grasped through the external sensory perception and the stimulus of time is grasped through the internal sensory perception. Kant acclaimed that perceived reality is just intuition that belongs to the human being. But God has a rational intuition. The human’s contacts with an object are through sensory perception and not with mind.[[57]](#footnote-57)

Kant spoke of space and time as the formal condition of human sensory faculty, and not real properties that adhere to the things in themselves. Buber, on the contrary, insisted, “Time was not a sentence hanging over me; it was mine. For it was “ours”.[[58]](#footnote-58) Buber’s question was how people could reach ‘reality’ without returning to the objective view of the universe? How could the other be experienced at all; was it necessary to reduce the scope of human phenomenal knowledge to what Buber later called the *I-It* relation? For Buber, reality through perceiving could bring a man to his contact with another man, with nature and with God. Thus, it is necessary that human knowledge of whatever object should be experienced by a human both as an observer and as a participant. Buber’s notion in this context was really influenced by his teacher Wilhelm Dilthey who taught him to distinguish between the way of knowing the human studies (*Geisteswissenschaften)* like philosophy, the social sciences, and psychology; and the way of knowing the natural science (*Naturwissenschaften*). Through participation one can discover both the typical and the unique aspects of human life that he is studying.[[59]](#footnote-59)

Whereas Kant had a calming influence on Buber’s mind which was troubled by the aporia of infinite versus finite time, Nietzsche's doctrine of “the eternal recurrence of the same” constituted a powerful negative seduction. Buber, in his article “Ein Wort uber Nietzsche und die Lebenswerte", called Nietzsche ‘the first Pathfinder of the new culture', ‘the awakener and creator of new life-values and a new world feeling' because of Nietzsche’s concern on the developing of the concrete and actual aspect of philosophy. Also, for Nietzsche’s stressing on the value of life and wholeness of being as opposed to detached intellectuality.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Buber admitted that Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* had worked on him as an invasion which deprived him of his freedom.[[61]](#footnote-61) There are some ideas that Buber enlarged in his philosophy, such as: humans’ direct relation to God as *Thou*, the insecure and exposed state of every person as an individual, the notion of ‘knight of faith’, the necessity of becoming a true person before going out to relation, and how to realize one’s belief in life.[[62]](#footnote-62)

Regarding Feuerbach's influence, Buber in "What Is Man" noted that Feuerbach had helped him to understand philosophy not only for its cognitive aspect but also as involving human being as whole. Feuerbach reminded him to recognize the human relation between I and Thou.

As well as that of Feuerbach, Simmel’s contribution for Buber was in the notion of the relationship between man and God, man and man, and man and nature. To Simmel’s mind, believing in God is not merely ‘trust in God’s existence but it is a definite inner relation to Him, a surrender of feeling and direction of life’. Believe the others means having a good relationship with them, trusting them and being concerned with them[[63]](#footnote-63), as Buber underlined in *I and Thou*.

**3.** ENCOUNTER AS A HUMAN RELIGIOUS AWARENESS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF BUBER

3.1. **Meeting and Dialogue: axiological experiences**

Dialogue implies a conversation and a necessity to listen to the other. As a father of the philosophy of dialogue, Buber has really put dialogue as the pivotal aspect of his thought, especially his philosophical anthropology. The dialogue was not merely an idea; it constituted the very form of Buber's experiences. He developed a philosophy of the dialogue by analysing human relationship in real situation. Buber in somehow, lifted his experiences into the sphere of thought.[[64]](#footnote-64)

In *Meeting; Autobiographical Fragments*[[65]](#footnote-65) Buber noted some moments in which he was really touched by his lifetime, and that influenced him in the philosophy of dialogue. His first meeting with a girl several years older than him, the daughter of a neighbour whom his grandmother had asked to look after him in his grandmother’s house had impressed Buber intensely. He wrote:

We both leaned on the railing. I cannot remember that I spoke of my mother to my older comrade. But I hear still how the big girls said to me: "No, she will never come back". I know that I remained silent, but also that I cherished no doubt of the truth of the spoken words. It remained fixed in me; from year to year it cleaved ever more to my heart, but after more than ten years I had begun to perceive it as something that concerned not only me but all men. Later I once made up the word "*Vergegnung”–* “*mismeeting*”, or “*miscounter*” to designate the failure of a real meeting between men.[[66]](#footnote-66)

Buber declared that the phrase “No, she will never come back” had strongly enthralled him. It remained with him and it became indelibly fixed. Twenty years later, when he married and had children, he was astonished when one day his mother came to visit him. He recognized that his mother has still beautiful eyes. This experience made him realize how strong this word *Vergegnung* (inability to meet) had been.[[67]](#footnote-67) It taught him that the *Vergegnung*, mismeeting, designated the failure of a real meeting (*Begegnung*) among man. It could happen to all human beings. It is correlated to a human attitude, how someone gives a meaning to life.

Moreover, the sense of human life depends also on how one communicates with the others. A good communication opens the way to understand the content expressed by language. At the time of his boyhood, Buber had the talent to learn new languages, even he testified how difficult to learn them: the structure, nuance of meaning, the difference in utterance, the way of thinking. All these exercises influenced on his life and thought.

I followed time after time an individual word or even structure of words from one language to another, found it there again and yet had time after to give up something there as lost that apparently only existed in a single one of all the languages. That was not merely "nuance of meaning": I devised for myself two-languages conversation between a German and a Frenchman. Later between a Hebrew and an ancient Roman and came again, half in play and yet at times with beating heart, to feel the tension between what was heard by the one and what was heard by the other, from his thinking in another language.[[68]](#footnote-68)

Reflecting on the difficulty of learning the languages Buber discovered the power of every single word in a language. A word has a sense only if it is uttered , if it is sounded. Every single uttered word contains a powerful message: to do something, to ask a question, to give a command, to answer a question, to give an information, to put a curse on, etc. Every single word is a communication form. It is not just a tool of a relation, but it is a relation itself. Buber said," What does it mean and how does it come about that one explains something that was written in one language? The world of the *Logos* and of the *Logoi* opened itself to me, darkened, brightened, and darkened again”.[[69]](#footnote-69)

Being together with his grandmother (Adele) and his father (Carl) Buber was helped to reflect on dialogue. Since she was 15 years old his grandmother set up for herself a storehouse. After having married she continued to keep the books on a shelf, handled the large-size, read it and made a comment on it. From his grandmother, Buber discovered the continuation of reflection and experience. He testified:

That undoubtedly came from the fact that with her, experiencing and reflecting on experience were not two stages but, as it was, two sides of the same process: when she looked at the street, she had at times the profile of someone meditating on problem, and when I found her all alone in meditation, it seemed to me at times as if she listened. To the glance of the child, however, it was already unmistakable that when she at times addressed someone, she really addressed him.[[70]](#footnote-70)

Experience and reflection are two sides of the same process which integrates human life in a mutual relation with the other and the world.

From his father, Buber recognized three things that urged him to develop the notion of dialogue: a friendly technique to greet animals and to look at the ripening fields, a participation in social life and as a story-teller in the sense of reporting a conversation with people he encountered.

When I stood with him in the midst of splendid herd of horses and observed him as he greeted one animal after the other, not merely in a friendly fashion but positively individually, or when I drove with him through the ripening fields and looked at them as he had the wagon halt, descended and bent over the ears again and again, in order finally to break one and carefully taste the kernels. This wholly unsentimental and wholly unromantic man was concerned about genuine human contact with nature, an active and responsible contact.[[71]](#footnote-71)

Buber’s encounter with the Zaddik (righteous, proven) or Hasidic rabbis was another important moment. The Zaddik’s life style such as living in a community, pray together and keep the Torah, made Buber realize how ‘the world needs the perfect man and that the perfect man is none other than the true helper’.[[72]](#footnote-72) The perfect man is those who responsible for others and look at them with their whole being.

Hans Kohn, gave testimony that the first world war (1914-1918) was the turning point of Buber’s life and of his thought of dialogue. Buber was not allowed to publish any writings before 1916. However, he was conducted to mature in his faith. He felt ‘something’ transcendent (Being) that grabbed and transformed him in all his thought.[[73]](#footnote-73) He considered this experience of faith as a ‘calling' to participate in real mutual action, here and now, in relation to the world; and to point out that all the doors should be opened, and the storm (the Nazi and the first world war) blew through all the chambers of his being.[[74]](#footnote-74) Buber, in this context, intended to promote the essence of truth can be found in relation with the others. "A truth not to be expressed in words but in a pressing of the hand, not conceptual truth but existential truth, a truth of human binding, unity, and communion".[[75]](#footnote-75) He believed that in the philosophy of dialogue, in a spirit of the “between”, humankind vivified his existence.[[76]](#footnote-76)

3.2. **The Paradigm of the *I-Thou* Relation**

Buber’s work *Ich und Du* (*I and Thou*) – which was published in 1923 spoke about the inter-human and the social relationship. The *I–Thou* relation is an ideal dialogue. The genuine dialogue is started when one communicates with the others and becomes aware of being of the others. The awareness of the others is expressed in ‘seeing the others’ or in ‘experiencing the others side’.[[77]](#footnote-77) Buber's dialogue relationship included the human relationship with nature, between men and the relation man and God.

3.2.1. The duality of the primal relations (*I-It* and *I-Thou*)

Buber described three spheres in which the human relationship is occurring: in relation with nature, in relation to men, and in relation with spiritual beings. Living with nature is the relation that vibrates in the dark and remains below language. [[78]](#footnote-78) It means every single creature moves over against man, but it will be remained close when ones adheres it as *thou*. Living with another human being is a more real relationship. It is open relation where everybody builds a mutual relationship. Living together with a spiritual being is the sphere of the relations that have no language but creates it, it is wrapped in the cloud but reveals itself, it lacks but creates languages.[[79]](#footnote-79) It means that one who participates in this relation should feel closed with others. There is a deep desire to act and to live in peaceful heart, with whole inner being. It makes one speaks the primary word with whole being. In these three relations, humankind has two fundamental relationships; the *I-It* and the *I-Thou.*

In fact, these twofold human attitudes is elaborated already in *Daniel: Dialogues on Realization,* in which Buber spoke of “orientation” and “realization” or “materialization” which refers to humankind’s daily experiences. By ‘orientation', he means the human attitude of looking at the world as a given object. An object, in general, is related to the human cognition and abstraction process, that a subject looks at the object (the world) as a thing to be observed.

The attitude of ‘orientation’ marks the *I-It* relationship, in which the object is not part of human existence.[[80]](#footnote-80) Since the world is understood as an object, it is easy to manipulate it. According to Buber, those who are entering the *I-It* relation – never ‘speak with the whole being’[[81]](#footnote-81), they are still in a world of “experience”.[[82]](#footnote-82) In the world of ‘experience', a man collects data, analyses them, and classifies them. The object of experience is a thing to be known, to be utilized or to be put to some purposes. It means that in the *I-It* attitude one makes a distance with the other. A man is like an observer before the object of observation to prove the hypothesis. There is no deep relation between them. Buber compared it with ‘the man who travels over the surface of things and extracts knowledge about their constitution from them: he gains an experience from it. He undergoes what belongs to the things’.[[83]](#footnote-83)

In addition, Buber distinguished two typical forms of lives of those who have come to terms with the *I-It* relation; the life of institutions and life of feelings. The first refers to the ‘outside' dimension. It is a functional relationship which demands people to make a profit, to success in a good negotiation, to organize the persons in an organization, and to conduct business. The second refers to the ‘within' dimension where life is lived but one removes it from institutions. Buber recognized that in the life of feelings the spectrum of the emotions dance before the interested glanced.[[84]](#footnote-84) These two dimensions of life could be seen in *do ut des* relationship, looking at the others because of their function or social status, the relation of intimacy or familiarity. The various problems such as violence, human trafficking, exploitation of nature, marriage divorce, etc mark the *I-It* relation. There is a distance between the *I* and the *It*.

In contrast to the “orientation” attitude in *Daniel*, Buber also spoke of the “realization” attitude which is like the *I-Thou* relation. If the ‘orientation' is the cognitive attitude of an observer, the attitude of ‘realization' is an involvement of the acting person in his surroundings to bring about change. There is a humanness which is manifested in compassion and in a relation of symmetry to the world.[[85]](#footnote-85) There are also fidelity and empathy as the paradigms of this relation. The realization attitude is found in the *I-Thou* relation, in which one participates directly with the others. In this participation, one looks at the others as unique beings and respects to them. Man does not perceive the others as bearing an isolated quality but engages them in a dialogue that involves their whole being. Both the encountering *I* and the encountered *You* are transformed in a deep relationship.[[86]](#footnote-86)

Unlike the *I-It* relation, the *I-Thou* relation is a direct relation; it is a relation between subject. As a subject, one does not look at the others as an object, thing or something, but as a person with their whole being. "When *Thou* is spoken, the speaker has no thing: he has indeed nothing. But he takes his stand in relation".[[87]](#footnote-87) The word "Thou" is only expressed when I am present directly with someone. While the word “he/she/it” is only expressed in the indirect encounters. When I talk about him/she/it, I do not need his/her/its presence. Thus, there is a possibility to manipulate the others in my indirect relation. When I say "he" or "she" for instance, I am referring to the other who are in not attending in front of me. I am treating them as a third person. I am not speaking with…. but I am talking about… But I can only say ‘thou’ or ‘you’ only directly, in the presence of the other. In the *I-Thou* relation, there is a personal encounter, an ontological relationship. Buber confirmed, “If I face a human being as my Thou, and say the primary word *I-Thou* to him, he is not a thing among things, and does not consist of things”.[[88]](#footnote-88) In the inter-subjective relation, a subject is acknowledged as a being. The two are *vis-à-vis* one another in a mutual relation. He characterizes here the genuine nature of the *I-Thou* relation: the human being as a person who addresses the being as man to the others. This *Thou* is not anymore, a thing among other things of the universe.

The *I-It* relation designates the world of *Erfahrung* (experience)[[89]](#footnote-89), where I use things and put these in order (class, category) and therefore am enabled to do it arbitrarily. The *I-Thou* relation in turn, characterizes the world of *Beziehung* (relation) or encounter, the world where I address you and you address me in a true dialogue. There is the world where I do not use you, but I encounter you. In the encounter with you, I affirm my existence. “I become through my relation to the *Thou*; as I become *I,* I say *Thou”* [[90]](#footnote-90), said Buber.

Buber considers encounter as the central of human existence. To his mind, the point of departure for and the culmination of human dialogue are addressing the other as *thou*. Quoting Buber, Eva Jospe said that, “Without a *Thou,* man is “lost”, for despite his uniqueness man can never find, when he plunges to the depth of his life, a being that is whole in itself”. [[91]](#footnote-91) Thus, the encounter with a *thou* is grace. It is a direct relation in which I speak with the real being of you and of me, of our life, of our world, of our being. As long as man is being aware of the world as *thou*, he also regains consciousness of himself as *I*. The *I-Thou* relation is aimed in two directions. The essence of human being is “twofold being”: *I* and *Thou*. The *I-Thou* relation then culminates in love. “Love is between I and Thou”, said Buber. [[92]](#footnote-92)

* + 1. I and Eternal Thou

Despite the *I-Thou* relation is an existential and ideal form of human relation, Buber still points out that it could be changed to the *I-It* relation when the other is treated as an object to be manipulated. In the history of human civilization, the development of knowledge and technology could be an environmental factor that causes the less of the ties of human relationship. This indicates that the relationship between men is not sufficient. Man needs the eternal *Thou*. The word ‘Thou’ in the dialogue philosophy of Buber is directed to human beings, nature, and God. When Buber speaks of the *I-Thou* relation as a grace, he recognizes the human orientation to God as the point of departure and point of arrival of the human relationship with the other. That is why Buber called God the eternal *Thou*.

The *I-Thou* relation culminates in the relationship with the eternal *Thou*, God. It can be realized in each relation but it is consummated only in the direct relation with the eternal *Thou*. Buber wrote:

Every particular *Thou* is a glimpse through to the eternal *Thou*: by means of every particular *Thou*, the primary word addresses the eternal *Thou*. Through this meditation of the *Thou* of all beings fulfilment, and non-fulfilment, of relations, comes to them: the inborn *Thou* is realized in direct relation with the *Thou* that by its nature cannot become *It*. [[93]](#footnote-93)

Buber underlined the important experience of meeting rather than calling God’s attributes. The relationship with God goes beyond the other relations, but it is interesting to note that for him, in every sphere of human relation, man can know and meet God. “In every sphere in its own way, through each process of becoming that is present to us, we look out toward the fringe of the eternal *Thou*; in each, we are aware of a breath from the eternal *Thou*; in each *Thou*, we address the eternal *Thou”*.[[94]](#footnote-94) Even though the encounter with the eternal *Thou* is realized in the *I-Thou* relationship, he made a difference between *Thou* and eternal *Thou*. *Thou* might be changed and become *It* but the eternal *Thou* never be changed.

In the relation with the eternal *Thou*, God should not be treated as *It* (object). Buber would like to remind men that the spirit of the modern age enables them to manipulate God for their interest. He realized that in prayer, one pours his feeling out as well as the full dependence on God. In prayer, one believes God as the divine one. Prayer is an expression of a very profound relationship between man and God. Or as George Galloway in *Philosophy of Religion* states prayer is one of the religious practices found anywhere if religion existed. William James acknowledges that prayer in its deepest meaning is the essence of religion. With the phrase "deepest meaning" James wants to affirm that in prayer there is unity and intensive conversation with the divine being.[[95]](#footnote-95)

However, prayer and sacrifice, for Buber, are two realities that might be used as instruments to manipulate God, if a man says a prayer or offer a sacrifice without involving the relationship between him and God.

The only God worth keeping is a God that cannot be kept. The only God worth talking about is a God that cannot be talked about. God is no object of discourse, knowledge, or even experience. He cannot be spoken of, but he can be spoken to; he cannot be seen, but he can be listened to.[[96]](#footnote-96)

Buber reminds one not to treat God as an object of speaking, observation, knowledge, or self-interest. In prayer, one should be united with God in an intense relation and faith. That is why a spiritual dimension such as believing of the real presence of God, a direct relationship with God, and the real fellowship with God through the other are necessary. Buber insists that who enters the relation with the eternal *Thou* is not isolated anymore. He looks at things in the *Thou* and then establishes the world on its true basis. A man, who goes out to meet the eternal *Thou*, should become a whole being; he does not intervene in the world and he also does not separated from the world. It means that the human relation with the eternal *Thou* does not lay aside the world of sense, but it goes beyond sense-experience. One should have recourse to the world of ideas. One should feel simply dependent on God, but also at the same time in his dependence he feels free. In his freedom, one acts not only as a creature but as co-creator with God[[97]](#footnote-97). The human relationship to the other then becomes a *locus* where he experiences God.

* 1. Encounter as Religious Awareness

It should be recognized that Buber’s work *I and Thou* is an integral part of the philosohy of human relation that shows account for divine and human love to glimpse God. It is the world of the encounter (*I-Thou*), and not the world of experience (*I-It*) that establishes human relations and human religious awareness. However, how could encounter be a way to provide human religious awareness? Would Buber escape from the solitude?

The characteristic of the *I-Thou* relation which is based on human awareness to love the other enables him to think of and to be responsible for the other as a living being. Responsibility for the other is a religious value. Guardini states that, ”A man is a person called by God. As that man, he can answer his own action".[[98]](#footnote-98) Guardini implies that human responsibility for the world is a kind of responding to God’s calling. This is an answer only one alone can give, for God addresses each man in uniqueness.

In a similar vein Buber insists that in every relation, man can encounter God. “In every sphere, in its own way, through each process of becoming that is present to us, we look out toward the fringe of the eternal *Thou*; in each, we are aware of breath from the eternal *Thou;* in each thou, we address the eternal *Thou*”.[[99]](#footnote-99) Establishing a good correlation and looking at the other as a *Thou* is a condition to have an encounter with God. “He who enters on the absolute relation is concerned with nothing isolated any more, neither things nor beings, neither earth nor heaven; but everything is gathered up in the relation”.[[100]](#footnote-100) Buber’s statement illustrates two significant aspects of the human relationship that are not contradictory: community and solitude.

In every encounter with the other, there is a transformation of human life. One cares about others; he is feeling a sense of loving responsibility for others. Buber recognized this transformation as the divine revelation that occurs in a community.[[101]](#footnote-101) A community, that is formed by a group of people who are in relation with the eternal *Thou*, is based on common relationship. All the members of the community live by encountering, by taking a responsibility for each other. They accept responsibility by responding to the most ordinary incidents around them. Everyone is called to answer those who addressed them with full of existential commitment.[[102]](#footnote-102) Buber idealizes a community life in which God is experienced as a Person.[[103]](#footnote-103) The Personal God becomes the foundation of human inter-relationship. He presents God who meets a man in dialogical life: in an address and in a response. The address consists in human saying *Thou* to God, and the response consists in the form of the transformation of the human life. Buber said, ”The relation with man is the real simile of the relationship with God; in it, true address receives a true response; except that in God's response everything, the universe, is made manifest as language”.[[104]](#footnote-104) The community, in which persons express their loving responsibility, establishes the relationship between each of members and the relation of the members with God. Building a community of loving responsibility, one takes part in hallowing the mundane. This prepares the religious men who are not only contemplating their own personal relationship to the divine but also to turn toward the world.

Buber goes on to affirm that the human worlds (being and thing) are meant to establish the togetherness with God. The man should not leave out the world, not to disregard everything, but to view everything in the *Thou*. But does Buber really escape from solitude? He explains two kinds of solitude. The solitude that frees man from experiencing and using the world will help him to purify himself before going out to the great meeting. In this kind of solitude, a relation may be reached. But if solitude is understood as an absence of relation and a stronghold of isolation, meaning a solitude in which man conducts a dialogue with himself, it cannot lead man to God.[[105]](#footnote-105) The first solitude brings one to live in the strength of the presence and creates a relationship with the other. But in the second man tends to use everything for his own interest. Man, according to Buber, falls into the deepest abyss of self-delusion because he imagines that God is in him and speaking with him.[[106]](#footnote-106) He who has a relation with the eternal *Thou* also has a relation with the to the *Thou* of the world. He is never isolated. If someone does not have the *I–Thou* relation with the world, he necessarily makes the world into an *It. “*You cannot both truly pray to God and profit by the world. He who knows the world as something by which he is to profit knows God also in the same say”.[[107]](#footnote-107)

Buber’s stressing on the human relationship with God is to approach the world from the perspective of the *I-Thou* relation. He feels that being a religious man, who looks at the whole life in a correlation with God, would be foolish and hopeless if a man turns aside from the course of his life.[[108]](#footnote-108) In other words, to seek God and to experience Him, one is obliged to unite with things and beings and to look at them as a *Thou*. The wholeness of man does not exist apart from a real relationship with others. That is why Buber defines spirit in its human manifestation as a response of man to the other.

Spirit is .... what constitutes man.... Spirit....is man’s totality that has become consciousness, the totality which comprises and integrates all his capacities, powers, qualities, and urges.... Spiritual life is nothing but the existence of man, in so far, he possesses that true human conscious totally.[[109]](#footnote-109)

The spirit that conducts man to realize the interiority of human being is like an energy that propels and rules over human action. It is natural openness of man to transcendent Being. It constitutes human originality which is irreducible since it leads man as spiritual being to experience God and to provide religious awareness.[[110]](#footnote-110)

Man, only relates the eternal Thou when he, in his relationship with others, is an integrated being and destroys all that egoism separate in relation to the other. The egoism, Buber clarified, appears in the attitude of treating the other as a thing. Since the world is part of human relations, Buber encourages man to consider the world as *thou*. There is a divine meaning in the life of the world, of man, and of the human person. “The word of one who would speak to the human being without speaking with God does not reach the state of perfection. Yet, the word of one who would speak with God without speaking to human beings gets lost”.[[111]](#footnote-111) Accordingly, the essential aspect of human religious awareness is actualized in the mutuality of the human relationship with God and with the world. Buber said, “Man’s religious situation, his being there in the presence, is actualized by its essential and indissoluble antinomy”.[[112]](#footnote-112)

Buber underscores the *I-Thou* relation as a prototype for building human religious awareness. There are two poles of human religious consciousness: It is aimed at God and it is addressed to man. The relation of man with others could not be comprehended as possessive form. I can use my own possession as I will, but I cannot treat others as I will. Possession is limited because there is an intention to border one only for those who belong to him. This is the spirit of the *I-It* relation. Man does not possess God, but he meets God. Buber wrote:

That through which all religion lives, religious reality, goes in advance of the morphology of the age and exercises a decisive effect upon it; it endures in the essence of the religion which is morphologically determined by culture and its phases, so that this religion stands in a double influence, a cultural, limited one from without and an original and an unlimited one from within. This inner reality, from the moment, that it is incorporated in religion, no longer works directly, but through religion, it affects all spheres of life. Thus, Theophany begets history. [[113]](#footnote-113)

The religious awareness is based on loving others and respecting them as part of my being. If possession is limited, love is unlimited. Buber declares love, community and the moral aspect as ways toward God. It is important that religious men should embrace moral value which enables them to get involve in duty and obligation to the world.[[114]](#footnote-114) It means one is ordered not to leave the world but to correlate with it. Human relation with God is not something that lies outside of man’s power. On the contrary, it involves man’s volition, his choice of accepting or rejecting the implications of divinity within himself.[[115]](#footnote-115) Moreover, He points out that those who are full of loving treat the other as an intimate person[[116]](#footnote-116) i.e. living in the *I-Thou* relation.

To be is an attitude to receive the other and to prove the singleness of being and the singleness of life. The acceptance of the other brings one to encounter.[[117]](#footnote-117) Human presence to the other is a kind of religious awareness that is based on his faith to the revelation of God as a Person. As a Jew, Buber did not recognize God as a visual object or a concrete object. On the contrary, he comprehended God as one who is heard and listened to. God is not an *It* but He is an *I* or a *Thou.* He does not believe in a self-naming of God, a self-definition of God before men. The word of revelation is *I am that I am.*[[118]](#footnote-118) He recognizes God as Person. It is indispensable for Buber. As a Person, God enters a direct relation with man, and then enables man to be more creative, reveals a man, redeems human act and thus makes it possible for a man to enter a direct relation with Him.[[119]](#footnote-119)

Being correlated with the other in the world of encounter is to confirm that there is meaning in the world.[[120]](#footnote-120) Only in the awareness that the world has meaning, someone will respect the world. Reflecting on the meaning of the world one could be conducted to another reflection of the revealed God. “God remains present to you when you have been sent forth; he who goes on a mission has always God before him: the truer the fulfilment the stronger and more constant His nearness".[[121]](#footnote-121) Buber presents the eternal *Thou* as the source and the summit of authentic human existence. It is in relation with the eternal *Thou* that man discovers the true value that leads him to correlate with the other. “Only an absolute can give the quality of absoluteness to an obligation”. [[122]](#footnote-122)

Buber implies the close interconnection between religion and ethics. Religion designates the human relation with the Absolute and ethics designates the human concretely action to the world as the expression of his faith in God.[[123]](#footnote-123) There is no separation between the ethical action and belief. The ethical life is the concrete expression of one’s religiousness. “Living religiousness wishes to bring earth living ethos”.[[124]](#footnote-124) The human person, first and foremost, stands in personal relation to the eternal *Thou.* Only then comes him relation to other men and to nature. His relation to the eternal *Thou* is the primary and ultimate relationship which constitutes him as man.

1. CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

As the previous section has shown, to Buber real living is encounter, and the core of the *I-Thou* interrelation is the dialogue itself. It is widely accepted that human exploitation, nature exploitation, injustice, violence, broken marriage, are still actual problem of human being. Nowadays, facing these issues, Buber’s notion of the *I-Thou* relation remains actual. Man, indeed, becomes a whole being when he treats the other as subject and not as an object. Considering the other as a *Thou,* man describes two sides of human relation: vertically, he is oriented to God in which he is called to be aware of living as being spiritual; and horizontally, he turns to men and nature because of the human transcendent to God. However, there are some points in Buber’s notion of the *I-Thou* relation that are being criticized.

First, Buber described the *I-Thou* relation as the only relation in which the other is treated personally; instead of considering the other as an *It* or an object, in the *I-Thou* relation, the other is viewed in their whole being. The other is part of “my“being. Looking at other as a “thou”, one opens to other and looks respectfully at him as a person. There is also, a mutual interaction. However, I believe that in fact, there are different kinds of human relationship which result from different human attitudes. Those who are in a good relationship will act well. The relationship, indeed, depends on the attitudes that one possessed. Emmanuel Levinas, for example, reproaches Buber’s mutuality relation. To his mind, human relation with the other is not marked by mutuality or reciprocity but asymmetry. When someone appears to me, I am asked to be responsible for him. The alterity of others urges me, informs me of my freedom. Every conversation or speech issues from the height of the other. ”The other is the manifestation of the height in which God is revealed”.[[125]](#footnote-125) Accordingly, the other (*Autrui, l’autre*) is infinite, a reality that principally cannot be acceded with my knowledge or my capacity. The only way to enter the encounter with the other is when there is an appearance of other’s face (*l’épiphanie du visage*). This brings my egoism down. Since the other whom I encounter is coming from a dimension of height, the true relation between I and the other should be asymmetrical. That is why Levinas worries that “Buber’s notion of the *I–Thou* relation would reduce the height from which God comes to us and thus turn God into an equal, that is, into a partner or a friend”.[[126]](#footnote-126) Levinas avoids a reciprocal relation because those who are entering a symmetrical relation are standing on an equal level. If the *I-Thou* relation is reciprocal, it would destroy the height from which the other comes. When the *I-Thou* relation is included in the eternal Thou (God), so the reciprocal relation would reduce God.[[127]](#footnote-127)

Second, in his philosophy of dialogue, Buber tends to constitute the concept of being of human only in human relationship with other as Thou. The problem is what will be happened to those who are not in a relationship with the other? Does the quality of their being become less? It is important to understand what Buber does Buber mean by being. Commentating Aristotle, Aquinas understood term ‘being’ (*ens*) in two principles, essence and being (*esse*)[[128]](#footnote-128). Being consists of that which is (essence or *quiddity*) and act of being (existence). In *Metaphysic XII*, he defined essence (*essentia*) as a count of something that thing is said to be; “that though which, and in which, that which is has being”.[[129]](#footnote-129) If I say Peter is a man, so, ‘a man’ is the first intelligible thing in Peter (being of Peter as a man) of the other being (Peter is capable of laughter or mortal). The simple character of essence is that being of something – *id quod per se primo intelligitur in alique re.* In other words, Aquinas understood the essence of human being as what makes one a human being. It is not including any individual matter (*materia signata*), it does not include any parcel of matter, but it is only some matter or other. So, human essence is including having a body, but it does not include having *this* body[[130]](#footnote-130). The other character of being is something that which, act of being, subject of action (suppositum, person). It is something other specific that be found in the first character of being. Peter is a man (rational animal) before being mortal. That Peter is a ‘man’ (first characteristic), but as a man, he (Peter) is being mortal or he is capable of laughter (second characteristic).[[131]](#footnote-131)

Based on this notion of being, it should be said that even though man is dynamic being, there is something permanent in human being (essence in the first meaning). And this first character of being (of man) could be understood in the concept of human being as a mystery. Mystery, said Marcel, it cannot be grasped from the outside of me. It cannot be objectified. It includes being in the situation of the subject, the unity of body and mind, the nature of sensation.[[132]](#footnote-132) It is plausible that presence with other is one of human expression as being in the world (second characteristic of being). However, since a human being is a mystery as person, his being cannot be explained completely even in his relationship with others as *Thou*. Buber is right in arguing that encounter with others and looking at them as *Thou* is another possibility of human being to express his being. However, being together with the other is one of the human ways of being (existence). As a dynamic person, a human being is situated by all his circumstances. This real situation effects man even in his relationship with other. So, the *I-Thou* relation of Buber could be a situational or temporal condition*.*

Third, it generally believed that the human relation with others occur in the real space of emotion, spirit, and mind. It does not only bring one to have fellowship, but it also leads one into the religious union, into what Buber called a true community. What is Buber means by this is that a meaningful society where people are engaging the world by building good relationship with others to experience God as divine Being.[[133]](#footnote-133) He insists that a true community enlarges the relation between men and leads them to take responsibility for the other. In a relationship with the other, Buber claims that one has experience of God. The truth of human life is living in the face of God, who is realized only when one communicates with the other.[[134]](#footnote-134) Buber's concept of experiencing God through human relationships with other is not a new idea. In the Christian Holy Gospel, according to Matthew for example, it is found the word of Jesus, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Mat 25:40). The Holy Gospel puts relation of man with others as the main virtue in grasping to the divine. However, Buber’s concept of experiencing God in the *I-Thou* relation creates a problem. The human relation which brings a man to religious consciousness might occur only in those who practices religious life and views a community as a model of religious life. It could be easy to understand for example, that in a Catholic religious community each member should be treated as brother or sister. The charism, spirituality, rule or constitution, vision, the mission of community is kind of guidelines in living a community life. Furthermore, it is personal commitment of every man to make a choice for joining with a community life.

However, the difficulty of Buber notion that the true community which he referred to is probably inspired by the Hasidism religious as a community. But here, I think there is another way of reducing the truth only in religious community. In fact, there are more people who are probably do not practice religious life (living in a community) but have concern on social life or social problem. There are still the non-government organizations, social organizations, the social foundations which participate actively in developing universal values such as solidarity, humanity, justice, and peace: they provide some example that there is another point of references for the truth outside of the religious union.

Regarding the human experience of God, Buber, in the fourth point, seemed to reduce human awareness of God’s presence only in the *I-Thou* relationship, when he said that experience of God is only in the human awareness of the other as *Thou*. Claiming this, Buber limits the presence of God to conditional presence. It is depending on human attitude; If one is not in a relationship with the other, God will be not present. The conditional presence reduces the omnipresence, characteristic of God as Being to the conditional presence of the *I-Thou* relation. Every claim to God is only a way in which human being affirms (faith) and feels (unite, peace) to be closer to God. In every dialogue, communication or relationship with the other, an individual always brings with him, his own back ground, ideas, intentions, experiences, knowledge, etc. These aspects could change human attitude from the *I–Thou* relation to the *I–It* relation. Good intention for helping someone, for example, will bring someone to do everything without any calculation (time, energy, etc.). There is no *do ut des* principle. Even in marriage life where each partner promise to be one for ever, there is still an envy and infidelity to their spouse. So, the difficulty of *I-Thou* relationship in Buber dialogue philosophy is how to prove the very good intention of those who are in a relationship. It is right that an intention could be seen in one’s daily life, but it is also limited only to our neighbourhood. Furthermore, Buber’s *I-Thou* relationship is blocking other possibilities for those who practice their spirituality to God by eremitic life. Buber limited his conception of God as personal only. As a Person, God should be a dialogic person.

Regarding the religious experience such as the experience of God, there is no religion without language, because language is one element of cultures. Consequently, there is no religion without culture and no culture without religion. Every experience is personal. It is subjective and it is true as a fact that happen in unique condition. So, it cannot be a judge as true or false. The experience of God is not the monopoly of some religious system or culture*.*

However, the term ‘experience’ in the context of the experience of God should be declared. The human religious awareness in the dialogic philosophy of Buber can be compared to Karl Rahner's concept of experience of God. Human awareness is closely related to his interiority and his self-awareness. Man is constituted by his state of awareness of something, that can be expressed in perception, memory, and new orientation or transcendental experience of Absolute Being. Rahner (1904-1984) understood the human transcendental experience as human self-awareness. He explains the circular movement of what he called with *Auskehr in sich* (stepping out into the world) and *Ruchkehr in sich* (returning into ourselves) as two directions that man becomes self-awareness.[[135]](#footnote-135) In *Auskehr in sich* movement, a man goes out from himself, turns toward the worlds and experiences the world as other reality. It is a kind of human openness to the world. While in *Ruchkehr in sich* one returns into himself after having a series of experiences with the world. The return into oneself is a moment of the self-reflection that possible constitutes human consciousness if he steps outside himself and experience the others as a reality that distinct from him. Rahner said," We are present to ourselves only when we grasp another object different from ourselves, an object that must come our way and show itself to us by itself".[[136]](#footnote-136)

Human experience with the world is a subjective structure. It means every single experience has resulted of human openness to the world. This is a posteriority of human experience. So, in the circular movement of human *Auskehr in sich* and *Ruchkehr in sich*, there is also human freedom, because, in all these processes, where one is being aware of his world and reflecting on it with his cognition and affection, he constitutes his self-consciousness.[[137]](#footnote-137) This new self-conscience moment comes from the human state of freedom. Only in his freedom one gives the meaning of every experience, and be aware that he is unique and be autonomy. Being an autonomic person, a man could express his orientation to God. Rahner explained that human openness to the world is kind of revelation, that can be revealed in words. Every uttered word gives a certain sense including in a communication or to build a relation. Word can be a ‘locus’ of the encounter with God. By term ‘locus’ he means history. Stating that “to be human is to be spirit” (*Der Mensch ist Geist*),[[138]](#footnote-138) Rahner claimed that human existence in the world, in what he does, in all his experiences, could be an openness toward God. He wrote,” Only that makes us human: that we are always already on the way to God, whether or not we know it expressly, whether or not we will it. We are forever the infinite openness of the finite for God”. [[139]](#footnote-139) So, with Rahner, we can affirm that being a humankind is a way toward God.

Rahner’s concept of human transcendental experience comes from human self-awareness thanks of human stepping out into the world and his returning into ourselves. These circular movement are closed to Buber's dialogic philosophy. The *I-Thou* relation in Buber can be comprehended as the *Auskehr in sich* in Rahner, since this relation be a ‘locus’ where man be aware of his relational being and rational being. These being then be revealed in a communication, love or responsibility in term of Buber, but it is also manifested in a ‘word’ as *locus* of human revelation with other in Rahner. Here, seems to me that a ‘word’ as a *locus* of human revelation in Rahner thought is similar to Buber’s dialogical existentialism piece under the *I-Thou* relation. For Buber, human relationship works on the premise of existence as encounters. Using the word pairs, I*-Thou and I-It*, Buber described both as encounters through which one engages with others including his consciousness, his modes of being and his orientation to God. Since a ‘word' is not only a tool for communication, but it is also communication itself, it is a relation. In this context, ‘word' in Rahner or ‘relation' in Buber could be a *locus* of human awareness to other and to God.[[140]](#footnote-140)

Finally, Buber affirmed that the human relation with the eternal *Thou* is the prototype of dialogue because God can never be an *It*; God can only be a *Thou* to me. However, Carl Frankenstein, for instance, questioned whether God can “only” be addressed in prayer? It is not possible to have a dialogical relation with this Being who is addressed. He claimed that the field dialogue is not without limits. Only with a limited and bounded not-I, can I enter a dialogical relationship which is characterized by the interchangeableness of the subject-object position.[[141]](#footnote-141)

Buber's notion of the sacrament of the world, of daily life as a sacred thing, is influenced by the Hasidism’s movement in Jewish religious tradition. He seemed to use this notion as a contemporary human problem. He took the notion of Shekinah (God is not living in the world), transcendent in immanence, and changed it to the notion that God dwelt in the world, so the world becomes a sacrament. There is a sacralization of the human reality. He comprehended transcendent in the world and for a human being as going beyond the authentic relation, from limited and closed subjectivity or from egoism. It is a going beyond that does not cancel the identity of those who enter in relation.[[142]](#footnote-142)

1. CONCLUSION

Buber, in his dialogue philosophy, emphasizes relationality over understanding reality. For him, to be is to be in relation. His statement, “In the beginning is relation” proved it. This is a kind of his *credo* to hold one in an attitude of relation. The phrase “in the beginning” expresses a certain sort of feeling that could be understood in the phylogenetic sense. It refers to a ‘word' and a ‘relation'. A word, since it is uttered, it does not only mark a communication, it is also a communication itself. A word reveals an interrelation. Buber recognizes a ‘word’ and a ‘relation’ as two fundamental aspects of human existence. It provides also human religious conscious.

Using the *I-Thou* relation as the pattern of human interpersonal and direct relation, Buber develops the philosophy of dialogue between a man with the other, man with nature and man with the eternal *Thou*, God. This pattern which is based on a primary word (*I-Thou*) is used to look at human being as a person: at how to express the necessity of being; and at how to arrive at the encounter with God. The *I-Thou* relation that is marked by mutual and responsible loving brings a man to experience God as a Personal Being. This religious experience urges man not to live as a stronghold in isolation, not to separate himself from the world but to live with others, to feel responsible for them and to view them as my *Thou*. It is a way by which man manifests his ontological being as human and his transcendence as a spiritual being.

Moreover, Buber’s statement “in the beginning is relation” leads man to understand that ‘encounter’ is the key concept of his dialogue philosophy. For him, “All true life is encounter”.[[143]](#footnote-143) Man does not live in a vacuum but among the other. An individual does not find the meaning of existential being except in awareness of being together with others. I become ‘I’ through my relationship with ‘Thou’. It is important to underline that the ‘I’ exists ontologically only in being related to a ‘Thou’. The ‘I’ does not exist ontologically prior to the relation. ‘Relation’ in the phrase “in the beginning is relation”, is comprehended in the ontological sense. The *I–Thou* relation is the realm where the ‘I’ establish mutual relations. The mutual relation generates the loving responsibility for the other. Life becomes truly life when it becomes a life of responsibility. Buber realizes that human existence is manifested in the responsibilities for others as *thou*. Saying, “I love you” means I am responsible for *thou.* When *thou* is spoken, the speaker is standing in relation to others. The human relation to others then culminates in a relation to God.

Since Buber understands God as eternal *Thou*, I believe that calling God as *Thou*, he would like to indicate the deep understanding of God as a relation. God is relation. Living an experience of God means man should live in a relation. Presence then characterizes the *I-Thou* relation. The present is not as ‘the abstract point between past and future’, but it is the present of intensity and wholeness.[[144]](#footnote-144) It exists only insofar as encounter and relation exist. Standing in a relationship with others as *Thou* is human awareness of God. That is why Buber is not recommending the *I-It* relation. The only relation that is possible is the *I-Thou*.

As a religious being, participation in a religious community leads man to have his religious awareness. There are three significant aspects that help men in providing their religious consciousness: the encounter with *Thou*, love as a responsibility for others, and community life that is revealed in prayer and sacrifice. The encounter with *Thou* occurs in three spheres of human relation: life with nature, life with human beings and with eternal *Thou,* God. In a community life, prayer and sacrifice, men can express their life in a relation to the eternal *Thou.* Buber believes that prayer and sacrifice are “set ‘before the face’, in the consummation of the holy primary word that means mutual action: they speak the *Thou*, and then they hear”.[[145]](#footnote-145) So, the *I-Thou* relation then culminates in the encounter with God. This motivates and inspires man to correlate with others. When someone enters the *I-Thou* relation he is no longer living in isolation. Human worlds provide access to God, and the effect of his encounter with God who enables him to consider the others as *Thou*. There is kind of unity in human encounter with nature, man, and God.

Since God is the absolute and the infinite Being and man is finite being, so the human natural openness to the transcendent Being is expressed in religious experience. For Buber, religious truth is vital rather than conceptual. It can only be intimated in words and can first be satisfactorily proclaimed only by being confirmed in the life of people, in the life of community.[[146]](#footnote-146) One does not find the meaning of existence of life except in awareness of being related with the other. I become "I" through my relationship with “you”. Buber realized that human existence is manifested in their responsibilities for the other. When *Thou* is spoken, the speaker is always standing in relation to the other. So, the presence of God could be experienced in a human relationship. Human life is an endless dialogue with God, who treats human being freely. The responsibility for the other is an expression of human love. Loving the other, then, marks human relationship with God. In the *I-Thou* relation, that human beings affirm their directedness to the transcendent Being, but it implies a human responsibility for the other as *Thou.*

1. HEIDEGGER, Martin: *Being and Time*. English transl. John Macquarie & Edward Robinson. USA, Oxford UK & Cambridge 1996 (Blackwell), p.150. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. MORGAN, W.J. & GUILHERMER, A: I and Thou: The Educational Lessons of Martin Buber’s Dialogue with the Conflicts of His Times, in: *Journal of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, vol.44, No.9, (2012). Oxford (Blackwell Publishing), p.984. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Ibid*., p. 985. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. FRIEDMAN, Maurice. S: *Martin Buber’s Life and Work. The Early Years 1878-1923*. London 1982 (Search Press), p.331. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. BUBER, Martin: *I and Thou*. English transl. SMITH, Ronald Gregor. Second Edition. London 2004 (Continuum), p.13. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *Ibid*., p.11. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Ibid*., p.12. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Ibid*., p. 11. *See also* BUBER, M: *Il Principio del dialogo* *e altri Saggi*. A cura di POMA, Andrea. Roma 2004 (San Paolo). p. 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. BUBER, M: *I and Thou*. *Op.cit*., p.12. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. BUBER, M: *I and Thou*.,p.61. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. *Ibid.*, p.63. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber’s Life and Work. Op.cit.,* pp. 4-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Ibid*., p.22. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. VERMES, Pamela: *Buber on God and the Perfect Man*. ed. NEUSNER, Jacob et.al. Brown Judaic Studies 13, USA 1980 (Scholar Press), p.12. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber’s Life and Work. Op.cit*., p.27. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. CRAIG, Edward (general ed.): *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Routledge, vol. II, London and New York, 1998, pp.42-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. VERMES. P: *Op. cit.,*p.13. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. CRAIG, E: *Op.cit*., p.43. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. *Ibid*.,p. 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. *Ibid*., pp. 45-46. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. BUBER, M: *The Way of Man According to The Teachings of Hasidism*. Pennsylvania 1960 (Pendle Hill Publication). Republished electronically by Pendle Hill 2002, p.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. BUBER, M: *Meetings. Autobiographical Fragments*. Third Edition. ed. FRIEDMAN, M.S: London and New York 2002 (Routledge), p.23. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber’s Life and Work*. *Op.cit*., p. 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Hasidism is a Hebrew word *chased* or *hasidut (hesed)* which originally means “allegiance” and then piety. It is the popular mystical movement of East European Jewry. The Hasidic movement arose in Poland in the eighteenth century, and despite bitter persecution at the hands of traditional Rabbinic, spread rapidly among the Jews of Eastern Europe until it included half of them in its ranks. The Hasidim was founded by Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer (1700-1760), who is more commonly known as the Baal-Shem-Tov, the master of the good name of God. Every real Hasidic community has its own *rebbe* or *zaddik* as the leader of a community. See, *Martin Buber’s Life and Work*. *Op.cit*. p.94. See also: FRIEDMAN.M. S: *Martin Buber*: *The Life of Dialogue*. *Op.cit*., p.17. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. BUBER, M: *Meetings. Autobiographical Fragments*. *Op.cit*., p.46. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber’s Life and Work*. *Op.cit*., p. 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber*: *The Life of Dialogue*. *Op.cit., p.22.* [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. BUBER, M: *The Way of Man. Op.cit*., p.3. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. *Ibid*., p.5. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. *Ibid.*, p.7. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. *Ibid.,* p.35*.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Eliasberg was editor of *Juedischer Verlag*; the First Jewish-Zionist Publishing house in Western Europe, that was established in 1902 by Martin Buber. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Theodore Herzl was a founder of the political form of Zionism, a movement to establish a Jewish homeland. He was the first president of the World Zionist Organization. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. FRIEDMAN, M.S*: Martin Buber’s Life and Work*. *Op.cit*., p. 37. See also VERMES, P: *Op.cit*., p.11. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. “Zionism was the first political secular movement in which Jews of “the better class” dare to speak on behalf of Jews. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Op.cit*., p.39. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *Ibid.,* p.38. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *Ibid*., pp.45. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. *Ibid*., pp.53-54. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber. The Life of Dialogue*. Illinois 1956 (The University of Chicago Press), p.27. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. *Ibid*., p.28. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. RUDAVSKY, David: ‘Martin Buber’s Existentialism: Sources, Influences and Interpretation’, in *The Journal of Hebraic Studies* 1/1 (1969), p.41. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. *Ibid.*, p.82. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber’s Life and Work. Op.cit.*, p.77. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. *Ibid*., p.82. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber*. *The Life of Dialogue*. *Op. cit*., p.29. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. *Ibid*., pp.78-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. *Ibid.*, pp.80-81. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber*. *The Life of Dialogue*. *Op. cit*., pp.29-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. *Ibid*., p.89. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. If the classic and medieval centuries understand ‘transcendental” as *leges entis* (the laws of being), Kant, on the contrary, recognizes it as *leges mentis* (the laws of thought). The transcendental is the highest condition which underlies whatever knowledge. For example, the highest condition of essence is space and time, which are explained in the transcendental aesthetic; the highest condition of judgments are categories, which are described in the transcendental analytic; and the highest condition of reasoning is the idea, which is studied in the transcendental dialectic. So, the transcendental, for Kant, is *noumenon* (*das Ding a Sich*), the thing-in-itself. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber*. *The Life of Dialogue*. *Op. cit.,* pp.34. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. BUBER, M: *Meetings. Autobiographical Fragments*. Third edition. ed. FRIEDMAN, M.S: London and New York 2002 (Routledge), p.34. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. FRIEDMAN, M.S: *Martin Buber*. *The Life of Dialogue*. *Op. cit*., p.34. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. *Ibid*., pp.34-35. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. BUBER, M: *Meetings. Autobiographical Fragments. Op. cit*., p.35. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. *Ibid*., p.35. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. *Ibid*., pp.48-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. BUBER, M: *Meetings. Autobiographical Fragments. Op. cit*., p.317. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. *Meetings* is one of Buber’s little classics, that was first published in 1967 as part of *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*. It is not an autobiography, but only autobiographical fragments of a collection of small pieces written in very different periods of Buber's life. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
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67. *Ibid* [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
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69. *Ibid*., p. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. *Ibid*., p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. *Ibid*., p.27. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. *Ibid*., p.46. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
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74. *Ibid*., p.179. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. *Ibid.*, p.182. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. *Ibid.*, pp.183-184. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
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80. ROTENSTREICH, N: *Immediacy and Its Limits. A Study in Martin Buber’s Thought*, Paris 2009 (Routledge Revivals), p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
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82. *Ibid*., p.36. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. *Ibid*., p.12. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
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85. ROTENSTREICH, N: *Op. cit.*, pp.2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. BUBER.M: *I and Thou. Op. cit*., p.11. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. *Ibid., p.12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. *Ibid.,* p.15. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. *Erfahrung i*s the German word for experience, but Buber used this word only for things. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
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99. BUBER, M: *I and Thou, Op.cit*.,p.78. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. *Ibid.*, p.63. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. BUBER, M: *I and Thou, Op.cit*.,p.82*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. JOSPE .R. and SCHARTZ.D: *Op.cit*.,p.52. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. BUBER, M: *I and Thou, Op.cit*.,p.100. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. *Ibid*.,p.79. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. *Ibid.,*p.80*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. FRIEDMAN.M.S: *Martin Buber*. *The Life of Dialogue. Op.cit.,*p.75. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. *Ibid*.,p.63. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. FRIEDMAN.M.S. *Martin Buber. The Life of Dialogue. Op.cit*.,p.92. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. There are three levels of experience which constitute man; the sensory experience that relates to the sensation as a first data; the conscious experience which relates to the interior reality of a human being; and the religious experience, which relates to the absolute or transcendent reality. See. SPACCAPELO.N: *Fondamento e Orrizonte. Scritti di Antropologia e Filosofia. Op.cit*. p.80-83. Religious consciousness could be cleared as the mode of consciousness whose intentionally is God and others in God. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
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128. *Esse* is the infinitive of the verb *sum*, and it means simply ‘to be’. *Ens* is the participial form, corresponding to the English ‘being’. Concretely it means ‘that which is’. It signifies a subject as possessing an act of being or existing. For example, *currens* is ‘one who is running’ or ‘runner’. While *Esse* means the act of being, the exercise by the subject. See. AQUINAS, Thomas: *On Being and Essence.* English transl. Armand Maurer. Second Revised Edition. Canada, 1968 (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies), p.14. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
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140. Term ‘word' as the manifestation of human relation with God and human being in Rahner is understood as a vicarious sign of what is not given in itself. For Rahner, the self-manifestation of God is immediate. He communicates himself through a vicarious sign where another reality points to the one that is to be revealed. He can only manifest Himself in a way that man can perceive its: in human nature, human fundamental experiences, included religious feeling and religious experience, in human history. What he means by ‘history' is an ‘inner moment of human spiritual nature' to be. It is not just something happen in our history life, but something which man has to precisely as spirit, as open for God. So, for Rahner, term ‘word' is connected to human nature as being. Being is self-presence. *Ibid*., pp.93-96. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
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