

**INTERSUBJECTIVITY IN GABRIEL MARCEL'S ONTOLOGY:  
A PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

**BY**

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**CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that the Thesis:

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A PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR MARKETING COMMUNICATION"**

Submitted to the  
School of Postgraduate Studies  
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is a record of original research carried out

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to those who believe that they can conquer the poverty of knowledge.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is the product of my burning desire in life to give poverty the final blow and claim eternal victory. I have tasted poverty of many colours but the worst kind of poverty that could imprison a man, I dare to say, is the poverty of knowledge. Right now, I can declare that I am free, and free indeed. I give the glory to the Almighty God for giving me the opportunity to experience life and have something to show for my sojourn therein.

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Odion Oscar Odiboh

April 22, 2008.

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this thesis represents my original work in the Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study amplifies the argument of the thesis that the practice of dehumanizing, alienating and disconnecting man in the course of marketing communication can be addressed through the adoption of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy of intersubjectivity. Man's dehumanization, alienation and disconnection throw up fundamental obstructions and misconceptions in the present-day understanding and practice of marketing communication, making it imperative for philosophy to clear the impediments and chart a new and compelling path.

Contemporary marketing communication is confronted by three basic problems. The first problem is dehumanization – the treatment of man as an object or a number and subsequent replacement by product in terms of importance, positioning and relevance through the method of communication in marketing. The second is alienation - the stripping and transferring of the inherent attributes of man to product through perennial misuse of communication in marketing. The third is separatism – the lack of synergy among the various elements of marketing communication in theory, pedagogy and practice. These problems, without doubt, have caused human disaffection and unfettered suspicion within the enterprise of marketing communication, and exposed the far-reaching inability of the enterprise to appreciate the nature of man.



The dynamics of the thesis posit that marketing specifically requires the involvement of communication and authentic marketing communication is rooted in intersubjectivity as theorized in the philosophy of Gabriel Marcel (1889 – 1973). As a philosopher, a dramatist, a writer, and a teacher of philosophy, Marcel developed an ontology that is based on the reality of the self, the intersubjective being, the man who is the main actor in all forms of daily transactions, including marketing communication.

With the acceptance of the fact of man's centrality to all things, this thesis applies the philosophical instrument of intersubjectivity, specifically, Gabriel Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity, to dissect the philosophical problems facing marketing communication, articulating that the exercise is timely and germane. If we want to properly reposition man, synergize and harmonize the various elements of marketing communication, enrich its professional practice, and midwife a new opportunity for academic research in this field, then it is imperative to tackle the problems of dehumanization, alienation and separatism in marketing communication.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the practice of marketing communication, man seems to be used and abandoned. That is why, it would be communicated in the process of marketing, for example, that it is "MALTINA" (not the man who made it) that "cares" and manufactures "nourishment"; KIA is "the car that cares" (not the maker or even the driver of the car); "GULDER" (not the man who made it), is "the ultimate"; that "OMO" is the one which "washes bright" (and not the man who does the washing); that "STAR BEER" gives the "brighter life" (not the man who made the beer); that "GUINNESS" breeds "greatness". These and many more, exemplify how communication is used in marketing to glorify a product and relegate man to the background.

Many products not only make man obscure, they actually ultimately annihilate man. One of them is cigarette. Its communication says that all smokers are liable to die young.

Cigarette smoking, despite the fact that it is acknowledged to be deadly, (and banned in Nigeria by the Advertising Practitioners' Council of Nigeria – APCON) is still being pushed into the consciousness of man with other tools of communication in marketing (i.e. sponsorships, event marketing, public relations, etc). The harder anti-smoking groups work to protect man from the harmful impact of cigarette smoking, the more cigarette manufacturers devise aggressive means and methods of

communication to counter such well-meaning efforts. In the marketing of cigarettes, communication is used to circumvent even the hardest of anti-smoking legislations in the world. This development indicates that instead of positioning man first and above all, the manufacturers and marketers of products simply do otherwise, by using the tools of communication to undue advantage. The ontological implication of this communication strategy in marketing has serious consequences for man.

The foregoing should not be interpreted as denying or debunking the importance of products to man. Acceptable is the definitive argument that a product is what meets, at least, a need of man. Where man needs to eat, the food, which meets that need, is a product. Where man needs to move from place to place, the vehicle, which serves that purpose, is a product. Man must cover himself. The cloth, which serves that requirement, is a product. Money is a product because man needs it for his daily material and capital transactions. In the absolutist and existential sense, man (male or female) is a product because he/she needs his/her own being first of all, in order to procure his/her essence in life. Needless to say, product is that, with which man has determinate ontological relationship. But this relationship does not, and should not argue for the primacy and supremacy of product over man. If it does, a problem arises, particularly if one is ignorant of the being of man.

The lack of the understanding of the ontological structures of man in marketing, has led to various attempts to grapple with the problem at hand through the formation of anti-trust laws by various governments, who view marketing with suspicion. In the same vein, consumer protection agencies have sprung up to deal with this palpable veneration of product. Over the years, these approaches seemed to have achieved little, as the communicative power vested in product is still largely misused. The ontological approach to the problem has therefore become inevitable.

Needless to say, it is now imperative to recall man from a state of alienation into which he has dropped (in marketing communication), and properly reposition him in the formal structure of authentic and futuristic marketing communication, using ontology. An ontological understanding of man as the main actor guarantees credibility and the true appreciation of the place of man in the scheme of marketing communication. It would also underwrite the positive and edifying usage of communication in marketing. In practical terms, the application of ontology (in this case, Marcel's concept of intersubjectivity) to the vexed issues of dehumanization, alienation, and separatism in marketing communication would enhance professionalism in that field of human endeavour.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **BACKGROUND ANALYSIS**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the foundation for the entire work stating the problem to be tackled, the purpose and rationale for the effort as well as the aim and objectives in focus. In addition, the chapter defines the key terms and concepts used in the entire work; it presents the methodology used and ended with a literature review.

The highpoint of the chapter is the literature review, which examines salient publications on marketing communication as well as commentaries on the works of Gabriel Marcel. The literature review opens a lacuna, which is that while the literature on marketing communication are deficient in philosophy, the philosophical works of Gabriel Marcel do not deal with the problems of marketing communication. The intention to synergize marketing communication and philosophy, signposts this chapter as it prepares the ground for examining the knotty issues of dehumanization, alienation and separation with Marcel's intersubjectivity theory.

#### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Man has been dehumanized through the misuse of communication in marketing and the vesting of the power of communication in products,

instead of man.

As a result of this problem, man diminishes while products loom larger than human life. This, without any ambiguity, is unfair and unacceptable. Nothing can be greater than its creator; otherwise, it has become repudiative and destructive, more so that no entity can create itself. A thing is created by something. Gabriel Marcel noted that even technology has failed in this unsavory ambition to aspire to be greater than man, its creator. Where technology attempted to do so, Marcel noted, it left destruction in its trail. Therefore, to erect the communication structures of marketing purely on technology instead of ontology is dangerous to humanity. From the Marcelian perspective, man, not technology should be and should remain the focus of marketing communication. By the same token, product should be the appendage of man, not the other way round.

The problems identified have engendered intolerance, egocentrism, and deception, which currently call credibility to question in marketing communication. The question of credibility has influenced the formation of protection groups and anti-trust laws in many parts of the world. It is agonizing to note this development in the enterprise of marketing communication.

Disconnect in marketing communication is visible in many literature on marketing as they disagree on the nature and quantity of the *Ps* of

marketing (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, etc.). Though few of them establish the inherent-ness of the connectivity between the *P's*, none of them has grounded these *P's* in the ontology of man. The same problem of disconnectivity holds sway in the promotional adjuncts of marketing such as advertising, sales promotion, etc., which is why the practitioners do not understand why they necessarily need to integrate or synergize their activities. It is the norm in marketing today, to think about each activity, as its own creation. With this problem, it is clear through literary exegesis, that marketing communication without connectivity to man, remains foundationless, nebulous in practice and lacks a clearly definable philosophical superstructure. One can now understand why marketing communication is still lacking the ingredients for its own actualization into a distinct discipline.

As at now, marketing communication is studied in two different disciplines of marketing, and communication. Some students of communication do not seem to fully understand what marketing is all about; while some students of marketing seem to know little about the fundamentals of communication. Yet, in practice, the two go together. This academic situation is mind-boggling. Consequently, the emergence of an interdisciplinary enterprise in the realms of marketing and communication, grounded ontologically in philosophy is imperative.

More than building a disciplinary or academic foundation for marketing communication, this work is concerned about man who is at the center of it all. It argues that it is not fair for the creation of man to displace man from an ontologically ordained position. Herein lies the taproot of the problem before us.

Where man is disadvantaged, it is usually the duty, or the calling of philosophy to right such a wrong, because man is the primary concern of philosophy. In other words, all that philosophy does, revolves around man. That is why it is argued in this work that, without resolving the problems identified above philosophically, especially as they concern man, far reaching progress, which is required in marketing communication cannot be achieved. By the same token, if man is not recalled from obscurity and placed in his proper position within the scheme of marketing communication, the problems identified remain unsolved. This understanding (of man and the necessity of his rehumanization) seems lacking in current trends in marketing communication – a situation that needs to be reversed.

### **1.3 PURPOSE AND RATIONALE OF RESEARCH**

The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which the present-day dehumanization, alienation, and separatism of man in marketing communication theory, pedagogy and practice can be reversed



through the application of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy of intersubjectivity. Specifically, this work desires to argue for the necessity of man-centred synergy or connectivity in marketing communication whose structural components currently suffer disconnect.

Marketing and communication are two subjects in a strange relationship. First, while communication seems to possess an inherent self-sustaining capacity, marketing does not. In other words, while man cannot but communicate, marketing does not have that kind of hold on man. Rather, marketing seems to require the tools and paraphernalia of communication in order to do so. Second, while communication seems to be subjective and intersubjective in parts, marketing is mainly subjective. Third, while communication seems to be general in character, marketing tends to deal with specifics. However, what is unknown to those who have not taken deep philosophical look at the relationship between marketing and communication is that both subjects have one umbilical cord in ontology. The concept of intersubjectivity in Gabriel Marcel's philosophy provides the window of scholarship for us to see clearly, without vagueness, this ontological connection between marketing and communication.

Indeed, the question of man's role in marketing communication has been a recurrent one. Over time, divergent or diffused attention has been focused on the role of the manufacturer or service provider concerning the

packaging of products and services, the role of the distributor and retailer in the transiting of product/service, the role of the advertiser or salesperson in the communication of the essences of the product/service, and finally the role of the customer in the final consumption of the product/service. Ideally, each of these stakeholders, being closely related to one another, ought to transcend itself, to make the others thrive. But that is not the case. Each one does its job with little attachment or complete unattachment to others.

Imprint of manufacturer's name and address is common on products. But then, it requires physical visitation to observe man's role in the manufacturing process. On the field, marketers and salespersons establish human connection with the consumer and then dissolve into the background while the product takes the centrestage. By this act alone, they encourage the promotion of the product, and obliterate the marketer or the salesperson. Advertisements are to be seen while the men and women (Agency copywriters and artists) who made them must remain obscure. To know these people, one has to visit the advertising agencies. Even in marketing research, consumers are mere numbers and therefore defined in terms of their demographics and psychographics, not as humans that think. These are the factials of the commonsensical argument, that marketing communication is bereft of the vital human face, and thus requiring a reexamination and rehumanization.

As it shall be established later in this work, each partaker in marketing communication works for selfish, subjective benefits. In this scenario, the consumer is the worst hit. Even in a situation of monopoly, the consumer has no choice; and where competition leads to cost cutting measures, the same consumer is given adulterated versions of the original product, as his money's worth. Many consumers have been dehumanized after consuming poorly packaged products, because the marketer had subjective (rather than intersubjective) consideration of profit maximization. This development, for example, led to the establishment of NAFDAC (National Food and Drugs Administration and Control) in Nigeria. The role of NAFDAC, among others, is to bring authenticity to bear on the marketing of foods and drugs and protect humanity from the harmful effect of profit-propelled product adulteration.

While NAFDAC fights perpetrators of adulteration, the question about man's role begs for answer among those (advertising practitioners, public relations practitioners, publicity experts, sales promoters, and direct marketers) who deploy communication tools for marketing purposes. They are yet to grapple with the question: what is the role of man in marketing communication? This work shows that, apart from not being able to provide the answer to the question, these professionals see themselves as subjective and not intersubjective partakers in marketing communication. That is to say, they fail to work together, and none wants to uplift the other, to the

detriment of marketing communication in general, an action that is calling for the intervention of intersubjectivity. This work analyses the inadequate understanding of the necessity of intersubjectivity in marketing communication. It further indicates that until this trend reverses, theoreticians, teachers and practitioners of marketing communication would never be able to answer the question about the place of man in their field, let alone use him as the connecting strand in their field of endeavour.

What has not been asked is the role of ontology in marketing communication. Yet, it is the fundamental angle of the question of man's role in marketing communication. Ontology, this work surmises, directs attention to the core essences of things, which include man, and the activity of marketing communication. By extension, an ontological temper focuses on the being of entities. Without going into distracting details, this work seeks to portray man as an *is* and calls attention to the need to respect humanity through mutual consideration for one another, especially in marketing communication. Therefore, at the center of this work is man, who can be best understood ontologically, in order to navigate his being and the core of his essences. In other words, it is for the uplifting of man and the rehumanization of the world that this work pursues marketing communication from the perspective of ontology. Consequently, this work recalls man from obscurity, neatly puts him at the center of marketing

communication, in a grand ontological fashion, bringing about a clearer and more humanistic understanding of marketing communication as essentially an intersubjective enterprise.

#### **1.4 Aim**

This study aims at appraising the problems of marketing communication from the perspective of the intersubjective ontology of Gabriel Marcel with the intention of presenting viable philosophical solutions and creating the right platform for a new area of academic research in marketing communication.

#### **1.5 Definition of Terms**

Key among the concepts used in this study are: intersubjectivity, ontology, phenomenology, existentialism, man, communication, marketing, and product. Others are theory, historicism, dehumanization, rehumanization, alienation, separatism, anthropomorphism, typology, marketology, individuality, and primacy. Their definitions as they would apply to and be used in this thesis are as follows:

### **1.5.1 Intersubjectivity**

Intersubjectivity in this research refers to the thinking that the self cannot be without others. It is the transcendental activity of going beyond the region of the self, to acknowledge, accept, accommodate and interact with others. In phenomenological thought, it means "in-between subjectivities," the marriage or product of subjectivities, the synergy of subjectivities.

### **1.5.2 Ontology**

Ontology is presented here as the study of Being, concerning itself with whatever it means to be at all. It focuses on the core of any existent in whatever form, pedigree or composition.

### **1.5.3 Phenomenology**

Phenomenology is the methodological description of a thing precisely as it is. It is defined as the non-judgmental, unbiased examination of things, ideas, events, facts, experiences and states of affairs exactly as they present themselves for inspection.

#### **1.5.4 Existentialism**

Existentialism is defined here as the individual's thinking about himself in all seriousness about his freedom, accomplishment, responsibility, progress and authentic living.

#### **1.5.5 Man**

Man is understood in this study to mean any human being, a *homo sapien* or a member of the human race regardless of sex or age. It means man and/or woman in the ordinary sense of its usage, being equally masculine and effeminate at the same time.

#### **1.5.6 Communication**

Communication in this research refers to the everyday transferring of thoughts from one being to another through speech, writing, signs, symbols, and their significates. Communication comes with feedback and is recognized in this study as ultimately integrative or interconnective.

#### **1.5.7 Marketing**

Marketing in this study means an exchange process; that is, exchange of money for goods, exchange of goods for money, exchange of ideas for money, exchange of goods for ideas, exchange of money for money, and of

course, exchange of goods for goods. In other words, marketing is about the transactional interconnection between money, goods and ideas in a network of transportorial exchanges among human beings.

#### **1.5.8 Product**

Product refers to that idea or thing which is contrived by man, to meet a specific need or desire. It means the tangible and intangible thing, which is so needed or desired by man to the extent that man is prepared to acquire it in exchange for something else.

#### **1.5.9 Theory**

Theory is conceptualized here to mean a system of assumptions, procedures or principles, which are used to analyze or explain the nature or reality of a specific phenomenon – e.g. Gabriel Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity.

#### **1.5.10 Historicism**

Historicism is understood in this research to mean accounting for the movement of a particular system of thought from one generation to another, highlighting the changes that took place progressively, within each time-period.



#### **1.5.11 Dehumanization**

Dehumanization is the act of degrading man with respect to his/her best qualities.

#### **1.5.12 Rehumanization**

Rehumanization in this research refers to the deliberate endeavour to return the human attributes hitherto taken away from man.

#### **1.5.13 Separatism**

Separatism is defined as the act of severing or dissolving the relationship between two people, groups of people or activities by way of not communicating or interacting with one another.

#### **1.5.14 Anthropomorphism**

Anthropomorphism is regarded here as the attribution of human qualities (behavior, attitude, ability, and motivation) to non-human entities such as objects, ideas, animals, words, things and phenomena.

#### **1.5.15 Typology**

Typology is used in this work to mean the systematic arrangement of

ideas, concepts, issues, events and phenomena in terms of their similarities and differences.

#### **1.5.16 Marketology**

Marketology is defined as the systematic study of marketing communication in which a tool of philosophy, especially ontology, is applied.

#### **1.5.17 Individuality**

Individuality in this work means the characteristics, attributes and disposition, which mark a single human being as different or distinct from another human being.

#### **1.5.18 Primacy**

Primacy is defined as the condition of being the first or the foremost or the most important among others.

#### **1.5.19 Alienation**

Alienation means the denial or stripping of man's human attributes or abilities.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

The following questions are fundamental to the thesis of this work:

- a. What are the problems inherent in the theory, teaching and practice of marketing communication?
- b. How does Marcel's intersubjectivity theory provide the ontological basis for solving the problems identified in marketing communication?
- c. What are the fundamentals of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy of intersubjectivity?
- d. What are the nature, structures, and characteristics of ontology?
- e. What is the connection between marketing communication and philosophy?

## **1.7 Objectives of Research**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- a. To examine the glorification of product and the systematic diminishing of man's being in the activity of marketing communication.
- b. To examine the relationship between marketing communication and philosophy.
- c. To espouse the relevance of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy

of intersubjectivity in marketing communication.

- d. To present an analyses of the inadequate understanding of the role of man in marketing communication.
- e. To show through an ontological examination of the core essences of things, the possibility of uplifting and rehumanizing marketing communication in theory, teaching and practice.

### **1.8 Methodology**

The methodology readily designed for this research is phenomenology. Phenomenology is defined as *the study of all possible appearances in human experience, during which considerations of objective reality and of purely subjective response are temporarily left out of account* (Morris, 1982: 983). In other words, phenomenology is the methodological description of a thing precisely as it appears in profiles. It deals with things, ideas, events, facts and states of affairs exactly as they present themselves for our inspection or examination. This method requires that there must be no prejudice or prejudgment but factual analysis of what has been written in relevant books, journals, monographs, precisely as they are presented. Phenomenology is essentially a philosophical instrument designed by Edmund Husserl for:

- (i) Dissecting what is apparent and real to the intellect.

- (ii) Sifting prejudice away from that which appears visible.
- (iii) Balanced and detached weighing of facts in details.

In this work therefore, phenomenology is employed in presenting marketing communication as it is in theory, teaching and practice, and as intersubjective in profile. The instrument is also used as a proof of the possibility of applying ontology to marketing communication. Ontology comes in many variants. But, the most important of them all, for this research, is the ontology of man. That is not to say that other variants of ontology do not involve man. Basically, the phenomenological description of the ontology of man sharpens the focus of this work on man and humanity's foundational role in marketing communication.

Therefore, the characterization of man from the perspectives of the Marcellian intersubjectivity, consciousness-raising, creation and usage of meaning in marketing communication are presented in this work, phenomenologically.

The significance of the methodology of phenomenology to this work is in the following ways:

- (i) It allows for objective consultation, collection, careful study and analysis of expressions from relevant books, journals, monographs and Internet.
- (ii) It allows for clear demarcation (bracketing) of the character,

scope and presuppositions of intersubjectivity, ontology, and marketing communication.

- (iii) It helps in the diagnosis and the direction of attention to the ontological problems of communication in marketing, and how to transcend these problems and provide their solutions.
- (iv) It helps in bringing out the essential connection between philosophy and marketing communication.
- (v) And since man is the common factor between philosophy and marketing communication, the phenomenological interpretation of the various concepts of man is made interesting and easy to understand.

The adoption of phenomenology in this work greatly enhances the consistency of the research in the sense that it is one strand that runs through it. As a matter of fact, the method adopted in this work is significantly influenced by the phenomenological ontology of Gabriel Marcel. In this phenomenology, he presents man as a being who should not only be dignified, but also sacred. Man, Marcel says, is beyond the merely functional, but that with *the capacity to love, to admire and to hope* (Keen, 1967:10).

Having accepted Marcel's method of studying man, this work goes ahead to apply the same method to marketing communication. Man remains the key figure in marketing communication. Therefore, any ontological

examination of role in facilitating communication in marketing must of necessity, require the methodology of phenomenology.

Two types of sources are considered in the phenomenological methodology of this work. They are primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources include:

- a. Gabriel Marcel's major works (in English translations) such as *Being and Having*, "On the Ontological Mystery" in *The Philosophy of Existentialism*, *Man Against Mass Society* and *The Mystery of Being*.
- b. Gabriel Marcel's ontology and theory of intersubjectivity which are not located in one text but found in bits and pieces in his works.

Secondary sources include:

- a. Literature on philosophy.
- b. Literature on marketing communication and its elements such as advertising, public relations, publicity, sales promotion and personal selling.
- c. Commentaries on Gabriel Marcel with reference to his ontology and theory of intersubjectivity.

## **1.9 Literature Review**

Sources and rationale for this research show themselves in the detailed bibliography and literature review. This study will be based on the original works of Gabriel Marcel in English translations, and some commentaries as well as books and articles in journals, which dwell on marketing communication. As stated above, commentaries and original works of Gabriel Marcel shall constitute the primary sources of the research, while the secondary sources shall include relevant texts and learned journal articles in marketing communication. The bibliography at the end of this study provides the details of these sources.

The rationale for this research becomes explicit after a succinct clarification of what experts have said about marketing communication on one hand, and Gabriel Marcel on the other. A literature review is therefore imperative in order to establish the need for a philosophy of marketing communication founded on Gabriel Marcel's ontology. For this purpose, works of Edgar Crane, William Lazer and others help in dissecting the gamut of marketing and communication.

Edgar Crane (1965) seeks to extend the frontiers of marketing communication into the behavioral sciences. Systematizing marketing communication, as Crane attempts, is commendable. At the same time, his argument for a behavioral approach also applies in the argument for



the creation of philosophical frontiers for marketing communication, which he did not attempt at all.

William Lazer's work (1971) on the surface seems to be mainly concerned about marketing. But chapters 14 and 15 of the book cancel this impression as the paraphernalia of communication in marketing take the front burner. Again, this publication bears the seals of sociology and psychology, without recourse to philosophy, which is the root of scholarship.

Subhash Jain (1990) provides a definitive, conceptual presentation of marketing activity and marketing decisions as they affect the same enterprise. According to Jain, marketing solely depends on the consumer. But what is difficult to locate in Jain's picture, is the man who is enthralled in the marketing process, but (who) is not necessarily the consumer.

P. R. Smith (1993) bemoaned the deficiency of theoretical framework, or philosophical superstructure for the study of marketing communication. The rest of Smith's work under review examines marketing communication as a genre of communication, which takes place within and around the marketplace or marketing environment. It is about a wide range of communication needs in the production, distribution, selling, consumption and continuous demand for a product or service. The work, like many others on marketing communication,

explains the nature and uses of the elements of marketing communication such as advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, publicity, public relations, sponsorships, exhibitions, packaging, merchandising and word-of-mouth. This work has no philosophical background and therefore, is unable to locate the intersubjective role of man in marketing communication. In addition, the gaps between its propositions confirm the remark that marketing communication is in dire need of philosophical link.

Kolawole Ogundowole (1994) expertly examines some of the philosophical issues in communication. These include the correlation of objectivity and subjectivity in the praxis of communication, the role of man's mind in the exchange of information, and man's increasing awareness of an evolving universal environment in the midst of the demand for a New World Information Order. It deals mainly with the environmental condition of man from the materialist, change perspective and the objective-subjective interactionism in the course of communication. Through this work, the intersubjective nature of human relationships in communication shows itself. In simple terms, what Ogundowole gives to us, is the searchlight that helps us to discover man's totality in the unveiling of communication, as an ontological imperative. However, the work does not deal with theories of everyday

communication; neither does it touch on specific modes of communication such as marketing communication.

A. O. Odugbesan's (1995), handles the problem of the buying behaviour of consumers in marketing. With various approaches to the problem, the treatise argues for psychological solutions. The philosophical dimension to the problem, as relevant as it is, begs for inclusion in this work.

Fred Wierseman (1996) explores the customers' angle in marketing. With appropriate examples, the book shows how to select and satisfy the customer, competently, competitively, and profitably. The work dwells on the connectivity (through partnering) between men and inadvertently points at the philosophical issue of intersubjectivity. The work needs to be intentionally philosophical in order to provide a total and more robust understanding of the man-to-man relationship in marketing communication.

Anders Gronstedt and Esther Thorson (1996) argued that the domination of advertising among the elements of marketing communication is approaching its end. Similarly, advertising agencies will patently give way for the emergence of integrated marketing communication agencies. IMC, the book predicted, will influence the strategizing of businesses, especially in the advanced countries. But it

✧ does not state what changes would take place in the thinking pattern of the man who will execute the predicted overtake.

Griffin and McArthur (1997), examine the historical background of integrated marketing communication. They submit that it is time for managers to move from the functionality to the culturality of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). In other words, IMC should be part of management culture for the sake of consistent and elastic growth. Solid as their argument seems, Griffin and McArthur abandoned the all-important issue of the unpredictability and dynamism of human thought, particularly as it affects the way man transcendently organizes reality.

➤ Ben Wightman (1999) examines a neo-Nietzschean opinion that integrated marketing communication is dead; that practitioners killed it as soon as it was born. He argued that IMC was created with the aim of patching the holes in advertising and building imperialistic agencies; but soon after the triumphant entry of IMC, the endeavour acquired a morbid disease, went comatose and died. Though the existentiality of IMC can be gleaned from this work as a philosophical problem worthy of pursuit, it was not so treated.

➤ George Low (2000) identified the factors that forced experienced senior marketing managers to embrace integrated marketing

communication. The work also identifies the benefits derivable in synergizing the elements of marketing communication. Since the work is the product of an assemblage of field researches, the lack of a theoretical locus, which is a lacuna, clearly shows itself.

Dan Steinbock's work (2000) is one of the pioneering studies on marketing communication on the Internet. It explains the use of Internet communication facilities to market products (offline and online), achieve competitive edge, and position an organization or an entrepreneur for long-term successes. Though this work is historical, empirical and technologically futuristic, it is however silent on how the whole contraption would impact on the ontology of man.

Richard Varey's work (2001) seeks to redirect readers' attention to the fact that marketing communication is an intentional method of managing exchange in daily transactions. Though the point is emphasized, that relationships provide the basis for these transactions, the nature of that relationship is not properly espoused. Consequently, questions beg for answers: are relationships not ontological? Is it not possible to examine relationships intersubjectively? The critical philosophical angle of human relationships is left unattended.

Eva Neumann and Ray Sumser (2002), provide ideas on how to effectively plan and implement marketing communication campaigns to

the benefit of an organization's human resource capital. They argue that the effectiveness of a communication programme reflects not in its cost, but in the removal of uncertainties, garnering workers' support, and entrenching benchmarks for future plans. Although their work is a pragmatic exposition of marketing communication, it does not deal with the issue of man and the problematic of his thoughts as they affect marketing communication.

Moingenon and Soenen (2002), examine the theoretical frameworks for organizational efficiency. These frameworks, they argue, are perceptual, cognitive, and interpretative, based on the principle of identities. More than any other book on marketing communication, this work shows itself as the nearest to being philosophical, because it examines how individual minds make sense of identities in organizational life. Identities, as a philosophical matter domiciles in ontology, and it has bugged the minds of scholars in recent times. This fact however, is not reflected in this literature.

William Perreault and Jerome McCarthy (2002) produced another brilliant effort on marketing, focusing on planning. Its attention is beamed on the global notion of customer satisfaction, using the *four Ps* to the best advantage, creating innovation, improvement and continuity in the marketplace, and the handling of global challenges as they occur. Once

again, as it is the tradition with literature on marketing, there is no philosophical backgrounding.

Philip Kotler's (2003) is perhaps the most elaborate work on marketing. The work, in the main, explores the theories and practices of marketing from the management perspective. It establishes the need to understand the role played by strategy, tactics and decision-making in marketing. But there is no philosophical grounding of the problem of man's alienation in the course of using the tools of communication in marketing.

Kitchen and Pelsmacker (2004) stressed the significance of integrated marketing communication at various levels of a twenty-first century business concern. The mission of the authors is to encourage today's business managers to take integrated marketing communication more seriously than before. In spite of its stimulating practical slant, their argument lacks intellectual stamina for developing any philosophical platform for marketing communication.

As commentaries by Kenneth Gallagher and others (below) would indicate, Gabriel Marcel's philosophical themes do not have direct bearing on marketing communication. However, the inter-disciplinary value of Marcel's philosophy is clearly evident in these works.

Kenneth Gallagher (1962) clearly surveys the entire gamut of

themes such as *Being*, *Having* and *Intersubjectivity*, showing the uniqueness of Gabriel Marcel's thought. This work is relevant to this research in the sense that it helps in better understanding, in an interpretative manner, some of the complexities noticeable in the original works of Marcel. However, the work does not show how Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity can be applied to other areas of academic endeavour, especially marketing communication. This may be in consonance with its admission that Marcel's thoughts are *unsystematic*.

Katherine Rose Hanley (1998) and (2003) shows clearly that Marcel's thoughts are not as unsystematic as some of his commentators may argue. Through vivid translations, and literary appraisals, she demonstrates the cross-disciplinary applicability of Marcel's thoughts to creative drama. Though Hanley explains the *dramaturge* in Marcel by bringing his plays to the fore, she is unable to treat Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity. Also, her area of focus is literature, not marketing communication.

Peter Rogers (2002) attempts to put in proper perspectives, the relevance and importance of the life and works of Gabriel Marcel to the post-modern world. The author stated that the unresolved issue of *Being* is in danger of being suppressed, and a reechoing of Marcel should go a long way in countering this inhibition. As an autobiographical work, the



applicability of Marcel's ontology to other academic areas is not treated at all.

Tyson Anderson (2003) presents another confirmation of the cross-disciplinary applicability of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy, this time, in religion. In this article, Anderson considers the relationship between Christianity and Buddhism using the parameters of Marcel's ontological treatment of *mystery*, *persons* and *awareness*. Except for the argument of applicability, this work lacks literary relevance in marketing communication.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

In summary, the literature above approve the argument that works on marketing communication are theoretically deficient due to the lack of philosophical superstructures. In all the works cited, attempts are either inadequate or totally absent in creating the appropriate philosophical frontiers for marketing communication, just as none exhibited an understanding of the existential and ontological relationship between man and man, which itself is central to all human endeavours including marketing communication.

While the foundational thoughts that could give rise to the enterprise of marketing communication are missing in the commentaries

above, the works on Gabriel Marcel gave no attention to the unsettling problems domiciling in marketing communication. This is the lacuna that this research intends to fill. The central objective of this endeavour is to examine the nature and problems of marketing communication philosophically and provide the missing frontiers through the intersubjective apparatus of Gabriel Marcel's ontology. Therefore, in order to achieve the necessary progress in marketing communication by unlocking the grid therein, this work presents Gabriel Marcel's man-focused intersubjective ontology as a foundational thought in marketing communication.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **GABRIEL MARCEL'S BACKGROUND AND THE EMERGENCE OF HIS INTERSUBJECTIVE ONTOLOGY**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the background and philosophical temperament of Gabriel Marcel with the ultimate aim of identifying the historical signposts of his intersubjective ontology. The chapter conducts an overview of the circumstances in which Marcel was born, lived and wrote, and thereby establishes the link between his life and his thoughts. From that standpoint, it is argued in this chapter that Marcel's intersubjective ontology bears apparent connectivity to the circumstances of his birth, parentage, upbringing, education, versatility, career paths, and the works of some philosophers before and during his era.

Several publications on the history of philosophy and even on the Internet indicate pointedly that Marcel has not been adequately credited for his contribution to the robustness of the discipline. For instance, his name is always missing when ontologists are mentioned, suggesting that he was either not an ontologist, or at best, his brand of ontology, if any, was slim and insignificant. Secondly, the western world, until lately, credited a fellow Frenchman, Martin Buber with some of Marcel's outpourings on the core

issue of intersubjectivity; and merged them in the *I-Thou* philosophical fraternity. As Marcel grew up, his stature came of age, although like some existentialist philosophers (exemplified by Soren Kierkegaard) before him, recognition came posthumously. In addressing these misgivings, this chapter seeks to reverse the misplacement of Marcel, present the kernel of the broad spectrum of his interdisciplinary ontology and establish the place of Marcelian ontology in philosophy, with respect to his brand of intersubjectivity.

## **2.2 THE LIFE OF GABRIEL MARCEL**

Categorizing Gabriel Marcel as an ontologist may be controversial, his life was not. Marcel was born in Paris on December 7, 1889, to a government official who later became an Ambassador of France to Sweden. Marcel's father was widely traveled, highly regarded and well educated - suggesting that Marcel was born in an elitist environment.

Gabriel Marcel was an only child whose early life was marked by tragedy as his mother died when he was only four years old. Consequently, his father took Marcel's aunt as his second wife, a development that impacted on the life of the young Marcel forever. Though the aunt raised the young Marcel to adulthood, life was no longer the same, as the stepmother could not fill the void left by his biological mother. They were not close just

as Marcel became reserved almost to the point of turning to a recluse. Despite having a little less than vivid memory of his mother, Marcel continuously described her as a spiritual existent, which had an important influence on his thoughts as a youth - giving rise to his early encounter with the seen and the unseen.

Cain (1995) recorded Marcel's personal account of the early influences on his life. In it, Marcel says that all his childhood and probably his entire life was dominated by the death of his mother, *an absolutely sudden death that was to unsettle all our existences* (Cain, 1995: 2). By this self-confession, it should not be doubtful that Marcel was greatly influenced by either the spirit of his deceased mother or the vacuum created by her eternal absence. After his discovery of the maternal vacuum, Marcel began to ask palpable questions which only philosophy could answer.

For him, neither his father and nor his stepmother could fill the maternal vacuum. In his account of the two main adults surrounding him, Marcel described his stepmother as an unbeliever, and his father a skeptical moralist. His categorical statement about his father is that of someone *who had been brought up as a Catholic, had ceased practicing his religion at an early age... regarded Catholic thought itself as obsolete and tainted with absurd superstitions* (Marcel, 1966: 109). Later in life, Marcel took up the faith, which his father abandoned and which stepmother denounced.

Marcel's childhood is described as a *desolate universe* (Keen, 1967: 2), which was affected by the sense of personal irrevocable loss for which his father and stepmother never allowed verbal expression. Though death was not an issue for family discussion, it became an experiential matter that haunted him as an adult Red Cross official during the World War II. As an active Red Cross official, Marcel's job was to obtain news of the wounded and missing soldiers and contact their relatives. These intensely demanding encounters with people were a living source of Marcel's highly tangible and personalistic philosophy, and of his lifelong suspicion of abstraction. From childhood to adulthood, the air around Marcel was pervasively dry and stifling even as his family placed great emphasis on the pursuit of academic success. This infertile and uncongenial existence contributed to Marcel's passion for *the faraway, the alien, and the remote* (Ibid. 2).

At the age of 8, Marcel began to ventilate his innate passion for scripting by writing plays; and as an adult, he would achieve a reputation as a playwright as well as a philosopher. His plays, which enunciated the structural content of his philosophy, were performed in the early 1920s. Starting in his youth, he also displayed a keen ability to play music - a vocation, which would also influence his thinking later in life. Marcel was fond of improvising at the piano throughout his adult life, but it wasn't until 1945 that - with his wife's encouragement - he undertook to write formal musical

compositions. When his wife died in 1947, Marcel wrote less of plays, played less of music and wrote more on philosophy. Once again in his life, Marcel withdrew to the inner of life, abandoning physical expression of his abilities.

Marcel received his degree in philosophy from the Sorbonne in 1910 and married Professor Jacqueline Boegner nine years later. Together, they adopted a son, Jean. Marcel lived and taught philosophy for a time in Switzerland, where he began writing his *Metaphysical Journal* (1927). The journal reflects a movement away from traditional academic philosophy, which was influenced by Søren Kierkegaard, in whom Marcel was deeply interested. In some ways, the book is overlooked in serious assessment of Marcel. Another publication from Marcel's diaries was *Being and Having* (1935), which stamped his personality on the philosophical benchmark of ontology.

During World War II, Marcel wrote his thorough study of the American philosopher Josiah Royce (1956), and taught at the Lycée Condorcet in Paris. He also taught philosophy at the University of Sens (1919-1923) and later returned to Paris, where he continued his research in philosophy.

After World War II, Marcel's Christian mode of existentialism aroused the interest of other French philosophers who, in their commentaries observed the sharp contrasts between his work and the atheistic existentialist temperament of Jean-Paul Sartre. Outside France,

philosophical commentators did not see much difference, apart from the religious bent, between the ideas of Marcel and Sartre. It was long afterwards, particularly after his death, that Europe and in fact, the rest of the world began to appreciate and deeply analyze the works of Marcel.

At 39, Marcel embraced Catholicism once and for all and used philosophy to uplift the religion that his father had abandoned. Stepping into Catholicism, to a large extent, was an intrinsic condemnation of his stepmother's faithlessness, which influenced his father's latter-day rebellion against religion, especially the catholic religion.

Exasperated by an education, which devalued personal growth and exalted academic success in itself, Marcel pursued philosophical idealism, probably as an escape route from the demands of his immediate environment. Marcel's brilliance in music and intellect allowed him to transcend the problems of his personal life by concretizing it through deep philosophical thinking and productive academic endeavours. His idealism did not survive in the face of constant tragedy. In fact, he became suspicious of idealism, and instead pursued tangible, existential philosophy.

Evident in his work *Man Against Mass Society*, was Marcel's concern about the loss of human freedom in the face of technology-propelled, materialistic society. This aspect of his life became the primary theme of his reflection,



which was wholly influenced by, if not specifically derived from, the rise and development of Soviet society and culture at that time. What Marcel saw happening in the Soviet Union, then, became a kind of immutable model for the effects that materialistic culture must necessarily always produce for and among people who are subjected to a state-sponsored atheism in a system structured on the philosophical platform of dialectical materialism. According to Marcel's observation, if a society is deliberately materialistic in its direction and projections, even to the point of becoming atheistic, then the people who live in that community would be deprived of their individual freedom as the government becomes necessarily coercive. At the time Marcel was musing about the world around him, the Soviet totalitarianism had peaked in influence, aggression and expansion. That is why for Marcel, a

*materialistic conception of the universe is radically incompatible with the idea of a free man: more precisely, that, in a society ruled by materialistic principles, freedom is transmuted into its opposite, or becomes merely the most treacherous and deceptive of empty slogans (Marcel, 1952a: 20-21).*

One argument concerning a socio-historical approach to the life and time of any philosopher, Marcel inclusive, is whether his ideas should be regarded as epochal and not episodic. According to this point of view,

expressions by any philosopher, nay Marcel, should be limited to the specific standards of his time and cannot be extended like universal laws or rules that necessarily apply in a spatio-temporal continuum. Without much ado, this argument clearly swings either ways, like a pendulum.

If Marcel's works drew inspiration from the relationship between the materialism of a society and the absence of individual freedom solely from observations he made about the nature of Soviet society during his time, particularly in the early 1950's, it becomes very difficult for him to argue convincingly that this Soviet characteristic necessarily applies to each and every society that exhibits an attraction towards materialism, particularly today's post-modern and pluralistic materialism. Marcel's position in this direction is to the effect that a materialist notion of the universe, and not the sociopolitical proclivity of Soviet rulers, was responsible for the abduction and imprisonment of individuality. People, in the face of the denial of their personality, which is symbolized by freedom, must reject assimilative social contraptions, which tend to strain, stress and bracket the distinctiveness of a person. The idea that every material view of the universe, as opposed to any spiritual or religious one, for instance, enslaves everyone who harbours an opposing view might tally with the materialism of the Soviet state but cannot

be applied, at the same time or in the same way, to any other view that depends more on the non-spiritual physicality of the observable universe.

Two things are apparent here. If a purely sociological point-of-view is adopted, one that emphasizes the historical moment of his philosophical position, it would be difficult to argue that Marcel is wrong in his assessment of Soviet communism because it is true that the Soviet state, which was both atheistic and materialistic, generated a social condition in which individual freedom was generally undermined for the sake of a collective totalitarian society. At the same time, however, it would also be difficult to generalize from that specific political reality by claiming that every materialistic ideology must also necessarily deny the basic human freedom of the people who embrace it or live their lives inside its contraptions.

Materialism, even atheistic materialism, cannot be called, or identified as, the sole cause of the loss or absence of individual freedom. Using the Soviet state a paradigm of a materialistic culture that also denies freedom is perfectly legitimate, and very probably true, but to universalize the example, making it apply to every case where the material dominates over the spiritual, or where the two sides of this coin somehow share equal credibility or spatio-temporality, tends to make it more difficult, not less, to evaluate Marcel's stated theme that materialism, in and of itself, necessarily and

always limits or denies or abrogates individual human freedom or that societies so defined or constructed necessarily annihilate intersubjectivity.

Arguing for or against Marcel's position concerning the Soviet authoritarianism and extermination of human freedom is peripheral to the core issue, which is the dehumanization of man. What is to be gleaned from Marcel's life and works is his hatred for and preachment against the dehumanization of man – a condition that denies man his freedom, objectifies his subjectivity, depersonalizes his consciousness and renders him mechanical like the atoms of Lucretius and Democritus. Soviet autocratic milieu only provided a lifetime experience for the Marcellian crusade for man's self-upliftment, which is relevant today as it was philosophically fundamental in his days.

Marcel's philosophy was always preoccupied with the religious dimension of life, but his upbringing had been religiously agnostic (uncertain as to whether one can really know that God exists), and he was not formally a believer. In 1929, however, an open letter from the distinguished French Catholic writer François Mauriac challenged Marcel to admit that his views suggested a belief in God. Marcel's admission of Episcopal influence on his personal life subsequently led to his conversion to Catholicism, which was a new dimension to certain aspects of his life and thought. But he remained a

strikingly independent thinker whose ideas were formed before his conversion - and as such could be regarded as important indicators of certain Godly aspects of the Marcelian experience. Marcel became a leader in French Catholic intellectual circles, and his Paris home was the meeting point for stimulating discussions among leading intellectuals of all persuasions.

Religion provided for Marcel's life and his works a platform for the pursuit of freedom, human individuality, rehumanization or self-rediscovery. Freedom, Marcel argued, is achieved through an intersubjective relationship with that which transcends the person. In most traditional western and Christian contexts, a reference to that which transcends the individual generally refers to God. Having departed from the irreligiosity of his father and fully embraced Catholic Christianity, Marcel discovered a new relationship that brought him the peace of mind, which was missing in his childhood years. Fresh was his life and deeper was his thought about freedom and individuality that the whole experience became a prescription for others. For him, the possibility and necessity to link up with and accept God who is above and physically invisible to everyone, should signpost the possibility and necessity for anyone to access and accept the other individual who is next-door and physically visible to everyone. This in itself is an act of

transcendence. Transcendence, for Marcel, is not a mere intersubjective religious experience, it is fundamentally an ontological necessity.

Marcel's sense of irreparable loss in the death of his mother seems to provide the argument that his concept of intersubjectivity is based on the notion that love functions for connectivity. Materialistic societies deny both charity and attachment, according to Marcel, simply because in a radical materialism, the idea that all subjects are but objects in reality renders the basis for subject-to-subject inter-connectivity, an impossibility.

Marcel was primarily not an academic figure. Although he spent brief stints at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, 1951-1952, and Harvard University, 1961-1962, teaching philosophy, it was freelance writing that provided the needed income for him. Late in life, Marcel became associated with Moral Re-Armament, which he discussed in "Fresh Hope for the World: Moral Re-Armament in Action" (1960). Among his chief philosophical works are *The Mystery of Being* (1951); the Gilfford Lectures for 1949-1950 at the University of Aberdeen; *Homo Viator* (1951); *Man Against Mass Society* (1951); *Being and Having* (1957); *The Existential Background of Human Dignity* (1963); and the William James Lectures at Harvard for 1961-1962. He is known not only for several dramatic works, but also for his work as an editor, critic, and lecturer. At the Frankfurt Book Fair in 1964, Marcel received

major international recognition in the form of the German Peace Prize. He died in Paris on October 8, 1973.

### **2.3 THE PHILOSOPHY OF GABRIEL MARCEL**

The totality of Marcel's philosophical insights can be summarized in the difference between a problem and a mystery. He believed that once a problem is solved, it is dismissed from consciousness, whereas a mystery always remains alive and interesting – just like his mother's spiritual presence. Problems, Marcel believed, are determined through abstraction, analysis and objectification. Mysteries, on the other hand, are approached with "secondary reflection," which concerns itself with deeper personal insights and man-centred manifestations.

In the characteristic existentialist tradition, Gabriel Marcel built his philosophical structures around man. He was concerned about the place of man in the universe, which he described in terms of such fundamental human experiences as relationships, love, fidelity, hope, and faith. His brand of existentialism was said to be largely unknown in the English-speaking world, where it was mistakenly associated with that of Jean-Paul Sartre. But the fact remains that Marcel's view of the human condition hinged on "beings" which are beleaguered by tension, contradiction and ambiguity. He

was also interested in life's religious dimension and was considered the first French existentialist philosopher.

Marcel's veneration of man is a significant aspect of his philosophy. He called himself a "concrete philosopher," indicating a reaction to his early idealism. He saw philosophy not as formulation of a system but rather, as a personal reflection on the human situation. He held that the philosopher must be personally involved, because human existential connectivity is more significant than any distant and detached theorization. In that sense, involvement with other persons becomes a heart-warming possibility. It also makes it possible to counter the impersonality of the mechanistic modern world and gallantly recall and refocus man to an awareness of the mystery of being. To drive home the reason for this thinking, with action and praxis, Marcel argued for the development of the individual through person-to-person dialogue or communication. The spiritual angle to this explication, Marcel hinges on the assertion that human existence finds its earthly satisfaction in a God-inspired connectivity of persons that is existentially characterized by mutual fidelity and hope.

Marcel strove for continuity in his philosophy by developing his theme of the priority of existence over abstraction, for instance, from the cogito of Rene Descartes. Although his critique of idealism and his defence of faith resemble Kierkegaard's criticism of Hegel, Marcel denies that faith is an



irrational leap or that the individual stands alone in his faith. For him, no one is alone, no one can be alone; and there is no reason why anyone should be alone because every individual is ontologically endowed with the native ability to gravitate towards God and others like him.

Marcel was concerned that scientific thinking had bankrupted human experience. Scientific thinking, with its reductionism and technicality, avoids the mystery of life in preference for 'problems' and 'solutions'. Accordingly, the modern man's desire to seek scientific answers to all mysteries is indicative of the lack of self-essence and the establishment of self-estrangement. Therefore, man divorces himself from fundamental subjective experience by turning to objective scientific analysis. As a result, the idea of man's dignity and sacredness is replaced by the notions of function and technicality through which man views himself as a functional being, which is imprisoned by biological, mental, and social contrivances. As a result, "the capacity to love, to admire and to hope" vanishes, as man loses his desire "...to transcend his situation of alienation and captivity" (Keen, op.cit: 10), which is self-induced.

In Marcel's view, the world is merely a tissue of raw materials at the disposal of man; a thing that is transformable to satisfy humanistic desires. But curiously, humanity turns around to regard, admire and

glorify the technological creations, which are their property. Unfortunately, he surmises, this trust in technological advances deprives us of the experience of an authentic existence and casting over us, the shadow of contradistinctive inauthenticity.

Marcel saw that the dual approaches of abstraction and possession lay at the root of social problems such as personal disconnect with others, selfishness, hatred, envy, infidelity and hopelessness. While both abstraction and possession are part of life, they can grow out of proportion and dominate, and ultimately destroy, man's being. By abstracting, man forgets the concreteness of experience, which is represented for example, by the freshness of body-to-body contact, deep appreciation of those fine attributes of friends, foes and loved ones. As a result, man adopts resentment towards the mutuality of experience, and this attitude is entirely opposed to cooperation, love, mutual respect, understanding, supportiveness, humility, admiration, charity and hope. For this reason, Marcel submits in his various works that it is commonsensical to argue that when things and states of affairs are controlled through a process of objectification, the fact of existence would limit concrete reality and its "mysterious fullness" (Keen, Op.cit: 15).

In spite of the positive indications in his philosophy, Marcel cannot go

uncriticized. Gallagher (1962) criticized Marcel as an unsystematic thinker whose philosophy is difficult and elusive. For him, the difficulty in understanding Marcel's philosophy stems from the fact that virtually all his works will have to be perused in order to string his thoughts together. Gallagher contends that this is not only arduous, but also demanding of academic stamina and consistency of followership. In his conclusion however, Gallagher argued that though this elusiveness and haphazardness may be the negative portrait of Marcel, on the other hand, it signifies the freshness and originality of his thought.

*Actually, in the case of this relentlessly unsystematic thinker, even to speak of "his philosophy" has a hollow ring, for it suggests just the kind of carefully constructed edifice of doctrine, which Marcel deliberately renounces. An attempt to "expound" such a thought inevitably runs the risk of distorting it. And yet the risk seems worth running. For Marcel's thought, while original and fascinating, is so extremely elusive that it is a rare reader for whom it does not seem to cry out for interpretation. The paradox is that this elusiveness is an essential constituent of his thought, and any exposition, which sought to eliminate it, would be self-defeating. I have sought to find the source of this elusiveness, not in order to banish it, but rather in order to discover its philosophical significance. My hope has been that, through a progressive penetration of Marcelian themes, the animating principle behind his thought*

*will gradually emerge. What follows, then, is an exposition--in the sense that an attempt has been made to bring the contours of Marcel's thought into clear focus--but one, which preserves the freshness of his approach. The success of such an attempt is bound to be uneven, but it is hoped that it will be of service in providing much-needed direction to many a reader drawn to Marcel's style of thought, yet adrift in its uncharted expanse.*  
(Gallagher, 1962: ix)

In spite of his awareness of Gallagher's technical and thematic criticism of Marcel, Alex Scott ([www.questia.com](http://www.questia.com), 2006), went on to identify nine major themes in Gabriel Marcel's philosophy, which are: Unity and Disunity in the world, Truth, Reflection, Objective Identity, Existence, Problems and Mystery, Faith, Freedom, and Being. On his part, Francis Lescoe (1974: 79 – 133), identified fourteen themes, namely: Mystery, reflection, incarnation, I-Thou, Presence, Encounter, Intersubjectivity, Disponibility/Indisponibility, Faith, Love, Hope, Broken World, Totalitarian State, and Existence of God. Other commentators on Marcel's philosophy identified varying number of the Marcelian themes. Without losing their places in the philosophical menu of Gabriel Marcel, all these themes take their places under the canopy of intersubjectivity, which itself is grounded on ontology but in some cases, rendered with religious and political tonality. In order to grasp the link between these themes, it would be most helpful to

focus on the key ontological themes among the lot. Therefore, for this purpose, seven themes are identified for analysis. They are: transcendence, truth, reflection, existence, faith, freedom and mystery.

### **2.3.1 Transcendence**

In *Philosophy and Existence*, Marcel states that we live in a broken world, which has lost its real unity. Consequently, we need to transcend its disturbing disunity in order to be connected to the being of our existentialia, which is: the fact of our existence. The necessity of transcendence is the source of philosophy itself and the fulfillment of human thought, according to Marcel. Transcendence is defined as the state or quality of going beyond ordinary limits of experience, thought, or belief. According to Marcel, to transcend is not merely to go beyond, in spatio-temporal definitions, but to also overcome or rise above the primordial limits of existence. Man must go beyond mere formulas, which tend to box the universe into a corner and stifle its very existence. Marcel: *it has become increasingly evident to me that the claim to 'encapsulate the universe' in a set of formulas are more or less rigorously related to the absurd* (Marcel, 1949: 1). To transcend therefore means going beyond the absurd, according to Marcel. Transcendence is exigent and experiential and therefore native to the human condition; it is not beyond all experience, for beyond experience, there is nothing that can

be thought or felt, argued Marcel.

### **2.3.2 Truth**

Gabriel Marcel in many of his works, including *Metaphysical Journal*, stated that truth is singular. For him, being "true" is only one aspect of Being. Truth emerges from reality in that it defines only a single aspect of reality. The fulfillment of Truth (the totality of all truths) brings to our comprehension, an all-inclusive reality and helps us to avoid belligerence, war mongering and dehumanization. In the fulfillment of truth (that which is really real and apparent will be accepted by all), falsehood or negativity is defeated. Truth is both immanent and transcendent, exhibiting a quality that defines judgments of value. A value judgment may be true or false, but we cannot describe the truth or falsehood of a sensation or a feeling. While a sensation or a feeling is a mode or an approach towards grasping Being, Truth is an aspect or part and parcel of Being. Truth is not a thing or an object but an ontological expression, argued Marcel.

### 2.3.3 Reflection

Philosophic thought is reflective says Marcel. Reflection is the recall or reexamination of experience in order to understand or to comprehend it. Experience transforms itself into reflection, which occurs when we recognize a break in the continuity of our experience. Reflection thus seeks to restore the unity of our experience in a secondary fashion. Two types of reflection are identifiable in Marcel's *Metaphysical Journal* and *Homo Viator: An Introduction to the Metaphysic of Hope* – primary reflection and secondary reflection. According to him, primary reflection is analytic, and moves in the reverse direction with the tendency to dissect the unity of experience, whereas secondary reflection tends to restore it.

Primary and secondary reflections are at opposite ends of an existential fulcrum at the center of which is the question: "what am I?" This question is an important part of Marcel's thematic treatment of reflection. According to him, reflection discovers that 'I am not what I am thought to be,' but also, that 'I am not simply the negation of what I am thought to be.' Reflection on this question of personal identity, for example, also leads us to recognize the fundamental nature of feeling. We discover, Marcel surmised, that who we are cannot be separated from what we feel. Feeling is not passive; feeling is participation. But participation is more than feeling.

Participation is an active existential engagement in the world. Objective participation is related to what we can view objectively. Non-objective participation is subjective participation. But non-objective participation is not merely subjective; it also includes intersubjectivity or shared subjectivity, which unifies our being-in-the-world.

Marcel says that personal identity includes both the objective identity in the outer world, and the felt quality of identity in the inner world. To address the point in another way, *my body is mine in so far as for me my body is not an object but rather I am my body* (Marcel, 1952b: 100). A felt quality, or a quality of feeling, is not a mental object, because a person's feeling cannot be separated from what the person feels. A felt quality is a unity, which cannot be dissolved by primary reflection. For this reason, contemplation would be a mode of participation in which the duality of the inner and outer world is transcended. Contemplation is an inward regrouping or collection of mental resources. To contemplate is to gather one's mental resources in the presence of whatever is being contemplated.



#### **2.3.4 Existence and Being**

✦ Marcel does not distinguish between Existence and Being. For him, Being is being-in-a-situation, which, principally is dynamic and therefore, always altering. Accordingly, we cannot give an objective answer to the question: "What is Being?," because we cannot abstract from the experience which is our own. Being is transcendent of objective enquiry. Our own experience of Being is subjective. Thus, enquiry into existence and being can be engaged in only by taking 'intersubjectivity' as a starting point, says Marcel.

#### **2.3.5 Faith**

✦ On Faith, Marcel submits that it enables us to say that we believe in a transcendent reality, even though such an existent is a mystery. Faith is belief that is not based on proof. Marcel argues that faith is distinct from opinion; faith is not to believe that, but to believe in. If we believe in something, we place our faith in it, and thus we are changed in our own sense of Being. Marcel asserts that faith implies humility and prayer. Humility is a mode of being which includes the recognition by the self of its own finiteness, and an affirmation of, and reverence for the sacred. Prayer is a

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form of spiritual communication with God. Authentic prayer is neither a selfish request, nor a mechanical recitation, but a way of uniting ourselves with God.

### **2.3.6 Freedom**

According to Marcel, freedom is the ability to act significantly with personal conviction, even in the face of encumbrances and painful rejection. Significant is a free act because it contributes to making us who we are as human beings. Freedom is not merely doing whatever we want, not merely the ability to make an arbitrary choice, but the signification of the inherent ability to make a responsible and accountable choice.

### **2.3.7 Mystery**

Marcel's *Mystery of Being* is concerned with Being as much as it is with mystery. Mystery is what opens for us a wider view of reality for inspection or examination without the use of the surgical knife of science. Marcel shows that mystery is capable of being experienced in an awe-inspiring manner. It stares us in the face as an innermost subjective experience that we can have; yet beyond what we can explain.

All the themes of Marcel's philosophy are largely intertwined, stimulating and persuasive arguments in ontology, which were influenced by the philosophical temperaments of Rene Descartes, Soren Kierkegaard, and Edmund Husserl, among others.

#### **2.4 Philosophical Influences on Gabriel Marcel**

A faithful examination of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy is incomplete without recourse to those thoughts that made the rounds and provided inspirational philosophy during his time. Ample evidences indicate that the compatriot Frenchman, Rene Descartes, the Danish Soren Kierkegaard and the German Edmund Husserl among several others, motivated Marcel. But the mind-boggling question is: what could be the connection between the methodic meditations of Rene Descartes and inspirational mysteries of Marcel, the *Either/Or* of Kierkegaard and the *Being and Having* of Marcel; and the investigative eidetic of Husserl and the intersubjective concerns of Marcel? How did the rationalism of Descartes, the existentialism of Kierkegaard and the phenomenology of Husserl find cohabitation in the ontology of Marcel? Answers to these questions can be discovered through a cursory examination of the life and philosophies of these three major influences on Gabriel Marcel.

### **2.4.1 René Descartes and the Existence of the Self**

The French thinker, René Descartes (1596-1650) is called the father of modern philosophy. He initiated the movement generally termed rationalism, and his *Discourse on Method and Meditations* defined the basic problems of philosophy for over a century.

To appreciate the novelty of the thought of René Descartes and connect it to Marcel's temperament, one must understand what modern philosophy, or rationalism, means in contrast to medieval or scholastic philosophy. The great European thinkers of the 9th to 14th century were not incapable of logical reasoning, but they differed in philosophic interests and aims from the rationalists. Just as the moderns, from Descartes on, usually identified philosophy with the natural and pure sciences, so the medievals made little distinction between philosophical and ecclesiastical concerns.

The medieval thinkers, like St. Thomas Aquinas, wanted to demonstrate that the revelations of faith and the dictates of reason were mutually dependent. Their universe was that outlined by Aristotle in his *Physics* - a universe in which everything was ordered and classified according to the end that it served. During the Renaissance, however, men began exploring scientific alternatives to Aristotle's hierarchical universe. Further, new instruments, especially Galileo's telescope, added precision to scientific generalizations. By the beginning of the 17th century, the medieval tradition

had lost its vibrancy. But the schoolmen, so called because they dominated the European universities, continued to adhere dogmatically to the traditional philosophy because of its association with the canons of Catholic theology. The rationalists, however, persistently refused professorships in order to preserve their intellectual integrity or to avoid persecution. They rejected the medieval practice of composing commentaries on standard works in favor of writing original, usually anonymous, treatises on topics suggested by their own scientific or speculative dispositions. Thus, the contrast is between a moribund tradition of professorial disputes over trivialities and a new philosophy inspired by original, scientific research.

While Descartes participated in this conflict between the scholastic and rationalist approaches, Marcel found later-in-life consolation in Catholic ecclesiastics. Descartes spent a great part of his intellectual effort - even to the extent of suppressing some of his writings - attempting to convince ecclesiastical authorities of the compatibility of the new science with theology and of its superiority as a foundation for philosophy.

Descartes' research in mathematics and physics led him to see the need for a new methodology, or way of thinking. His first major work, *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, (1629) begins with the assumption that man's knowledge has been limited by the erroneous belief that the various objects of experience determine scientific praxis. The first rule therefore states that

all true judgment depends on reason alone for its validity. For example, the truths of mathematics are valid independently of observation and experiment. The second Cartesian rule argues that the standard for any true knowledge should be the certitude demanded of demonstrations in arithmetic and geometry. His third rule begins to specify what this standard of true knowledge entails. The mind should be directed not by tradition, authority, or the history of the problem, but only by what can clearly be observed and deduced.

Many philosophers recognized the ideal character of mathematical reasoning, but no one before Descartes had abstracted the conditions of such thinking and applied it generally to all knowledge. If all science is unified by man's reason and if the proper functioning of the mind is identified with mathematical thinking, then the problem of knowledge is reduced to a question of methodology. The end of knowledge is true judgment, but true judgment is equivalent to mathematical demonstrations that are based on intuition and deduction. Thus, the method for finding truth in all matters is merely to restrict oneself to these two operations.

In Descartes' later works, he refined his methodological principles, and in the *Meditations* he attempted a metaphysical justification of his type of reasoning. His *Discourse on Method*, was directed to men of good sense rather than professional philosophers and it contains Descartes' vision of a

unity of science based on a common methodology, showing that this method can be applied to general philosophic questions. In brief, the method is a sophistication of the earlier rules for the direction of the mind on how to reduce any problem to its fundamentals by analysis and then constructing solutions by general synthesis. Descartes' major works *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, *Discourse on Method* and *The Meditations* were some of the seminal books in the history of philosophy, which Gabriel Marcel read at Sorborn.

The earliest influence of Descartes on the young Marcel was the idealism in his (Descartes') philosophy. Like Descartes, Marcel used idealism to escape from the demands of the immediate environment by finding succor in his own mind or the mind of the individual. In the same vein, Descartes' emphasis on the self found a place in the works of Marcel who extended the frontiers of the individual to that of the absolute individual Other(s) through a cogent transcendental exercise. However, while this idealism formed the foundation of his philosophical posturing, Marcel abandoned it as he advanced in age for existentialism, which was pioneered by Soren Kierkegaard. While the Cartesian idealism had an early impact on Marcel, the Cartesian proof of God's existence seemed to have appealed to Marcel later in life, for it helped his religious rebirth in Catholicism.

Marcel's argument against abstraction is largely seen as a protest

against Cartesianism. For him, Cartesianism is primary reflection through abstraction and analysis, which is inadequate for cognizing the palpable human condition in the world. Therefore, Cartesianism requires an additional secondary reflection, which effectively provides deeper personal insights about the mysteries surrounding our being. According to Marcel, Descartes' *cogito* is too enclosed to appreciate the tangibility and palpability of the human condition. To counter the impersonality of this Cartesian self-meditation, Marcel suggested a person-to-person dialogue as a way of appreciating the reality of humanity and the need to concretely humanize or even rehumanize the world. Obviously, Marcel was gravitating towards existentialism and intersubjectivity, two salient philosophical modes of thought which were missing in Rene Descartes' philosophy but made available in the philosophy of Soren Kierkegaard.

#### **2.4.2 Soren Kierkegaard and Existentialist Intersubjectivity**

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) is often considered the father of existentialism. He was active primarily in the first half of the nineteenth century, and died shortly after. One of the highly publicized episodes in Kierkegaard's life should be noted - his relationship with Regina Olsen. In 1840, Kierkegaard completed his degree and became engaged to Regina.



However, he almost at once discovered a doubt about the fitness of the marriage and almost a year after the engagement, returned the ring to her. Regina was unconvinced of his sincerity, and for two months, Kierkegaard sought to break her attachment to him by misrepresenting himself as a scoundrel who had abused Regina's affection. It was during this period of separation that Kierkegaard wrote *Fear and Trembling* and developed the concept of hope in a first outburst of existentialism.

*Concluding Unscientific Postscript* appeared February 28, 1846, scarcely twenty-one months after the triple publication of *(Philosophical) Fragments* (June 13, 1844), *The Concept of Anxiety* (June 17, 1844), and *Prefaces* (June 17, 1844). *Either/Or* (1843) was his best-acclaimed work.

*Either/Or* confronts the reader with an existential choice between two incompatible attitudes toward life: the esthetic and the ethical. The book does not present arguments but rather character portraits, situations, vignettes - written with remarkable verve and psychological insight. Kierkegaard does not judge between the attitudes but points to the reader that: each one must choose for himself even when confronted by an inability to find a convincing proof for his choice.

Writing mostly under pseudonyms, Kierkegaard, in his philosophy,

resurrected the idea of faith and described what it entails: the acceptance of paradox, sacrifice, and suffering according to the innermost character of the believer. He vehemently argued against G. W. F. Hegel's philosophy, in particular, Hegel's tendency to mediate all oppositions and hold out the prospect of complete understanding. Hence, Kierkegaard deliberately plays up the suprarational character of Christianity and its demand for a radical choice (not a mediation) between good and evil. He showed that freedom is the necessary condition for Christianity and that freedom cannot be understood or proved. By the same token, he developed the concept of dread, which shows that it is in the experience of dread or anxiety that man apprehends his freedom to choose and hence his responsibility and accountability. The point of derivation in his philosophy is: from *either* good *or* evil, man must make a choice; and in a situation where we *either* choose *or* refuse to choose, we would have made a choice.

For Kierkegaard, religion forms a special sphere of existence. In *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, a detailed attempt is made to show, against Hegel, that it is impossible to understand human existence intellectually. The truth about one's own life is not to be attained in conceptual thought; it is a truth that is chosen, and lived in fidelity to that choice. He exploded with a frontal assault on the Christian establishment and condemned the pretenses and camouflages of the Church; the comfortable and worldly lives of the clergy, and the watered-down

doctrine of Catholicism. The main burden of all these attacks was not that men failed to live up to the severe demands of Christianity - he admitted this was impossible - but rather the pretence of doing so. Ecclesiastical hypocrisy was Kierkegaard's target as far as religion is concerned and the enthronement of faith was his endeavor.

Andrew Irvine, in a 1998 lecture titled "Existentialism and Soren Kierkegaard" published on the Internet, remarked that Kierkegaard's burden was the question "What ought I do?" Kierkegaard's answer, Irvine noted, was a tripartite distinction of stages on life's way. The first stage is the aesthetic, the quest for sensual and intellectual pleasure. While this eventually leads to boredom and then suicide, there is an impulse to move to a form of life in which there is a conception of oughtness. This is the second stage, the level of the ethical in which we freely align ourselves with the moral law, determined to be good. Hegel tried to synthesize the moral life and the aesthetic life but this is actually the highest form of aestheticism. Kierkegaard argued that a jump is involved in moving from one to the other and that we must simply choose. The third stage is the religious in which we must be open to a teleological suspension of the ethical. In the religious life, divine command is paramount and true love for God is expressed in the willingness to set aside moral habits and respond to the divine command.

Nearly 70 years passed before his work began to be known outside Denmark, but he has become one of the strongest influences on 20th-century thought. One of the philosophers that Kierkegaard influenced

was Gabriel Marcel.

Denmark, Kierkegaard's country was one of the numerous places, which Gabriel Marcel's father visited as a top-ranking government official. Probably as a result of this contact and his offshore popularity, Kierkegaard and his philosophy were often discussed by the numerous visitors to the house where the young Marcel was in the minority audience. By the time he was in Sorborne, Marcel gained better contact with Kierkegaard's philosophy through his works, especially *Either/Or*. Individuation or the focus on the self as espoused in this work, provided the backdrop for the intersubjective dramaturgy in Gabriel Marcel's ontology. According to George Pattison, *the story of the self told by Kierkegaard is a story of individuation – but it would be more correct to say that it is a drama of individuation, a drama of how to be myself in the face of the other who also confronts and constraints me and by doing so, requires me to be who I really am* (Pattison, 1997: 129-130).

Faith as the first instrument of intersubjective transcendence is one item of thought that Marcel borrowed from Kierkegaard. Dropping his father's faithlessness for the Catholic faith is probably Marcel's practical demonstration of Kierkegaard's *leap of faith*. Aside from this, the strongest influence of Kierkegaard on Marcel is the treatment of the notion of freedom. While Marcel had accepted the doctrine of a free man (who cogitates about himself) from Descartes, Kierkegaard's enunciation of human freedom

provided the opportunity for Marcel to cogitate beyond the self and incline towards the other individual. Marcel took over Kierkegaard's argument that freedom must rise above scientific materialism and communal imprisonment in order to provide the platform for contact, communication and networking. Like Kierkegaard before him, Marcel treated existentialist themes such as: the individual, choice, life, death, absurdities, personal relations, and extreme situations.

However, Marcel was seemingly uninterested in Kierkegaard's dissolution of man in God. But rather than criticize Kierkegaard, Marcel opted for an emphasis on the concept of intersubjectivity, a mode of relationship that is not restricted to God (as postulated by Kierkegaard) but extended to man. For Marcel, the ultimate target of philosophical endeavour is the being of man; an ontological enterprise that requires the instrumentality of phenomenology, specifically the Husserlian phenomenology.

### **2.4.3 Edmund Husserl and Phenomenology**

The influence of Edmund Husserl on Gabriel Marcel should require a long explanation of the expanse of Husserl's philosophical offering simply because comprehending the connection between Husserlianism and Marcelianism is rather difficult for those who have not thoroughly studied the

works of the two philosophers. Having examined Marcel's works above, a cursory explanation of Husserl's thought is necessary.

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) German mathematician and father of phenomenology discovered philosophy by attending lectures of Franz Brentano in Vienna. From Brentano, he inherited the view that the central problem in understanding thought is that of explaining the way in which an intentional direction, or content, can belong to the mental phenomenon that exhibits it. Mental phenomena are founded in sensory data, but whereas for Brentano there is no sharp distinction between 'intuitions' (*Anschauungen*) and concepts (*Begriffe*), Husserl differentiated between the two. The distinctive feature of this way of thinking is that the content is immanent, existing within the mental act, and anything external drops out as secondary or irrelevant to the intrinsic nature of the mental state.

In his earliest work, *On the Concept of Number* (1887), recast as the *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, 1891), Husserl applies Brentano's psychology to the epistemology of arithmetic, attempting to find an acceptable empiricist account of the process of abstraction whereby we apprehend the numerical properties of aggregates. The problem of reconciling the subjective life with its objective content, preoccupied Husserl from this time onwards. Husserl eventually discarded his attempt to keep both a subjective and a naturalistic

approach to knowledge together, abandoning the naturalism in favour of a kind of transcendental idealism. The 'bracketing' of external questions for which he is well known implies a solipsistic, disembodied Cartesian ego as its starting-point.

By the time Husserl pushed the question further back into the ultimate foundations of all rational thought, he became convinced that the ultimate justification of thought patterns rested in the synthetic powers of consciousness - not in mere habits of thought but rather in indispensable concepts and relations, which, as underlying all thought, were seen to be necessary. These ultimate *phenomena* became now the constant objects of his tireless research.

From *Logical Investigations* (1900/1901) to *Experience and Judgment* (1939), Husserl expressed clearly the difference between meaning and object. He identified several different kinds of names. For example, there are names that have the role of properties that uniquely identify an object. Each of these names expresses a meaning and designate the same object. Examples of this are "the winner in Kebbi" and "the loser in Argungu", or "the equilateral triangle" and "the equiangular triangle"; in both cases, both names express different meanings, but designate the same object. There are names, which have no meaning, but have the role of designating an object:

"Aristotle", "Socrates", and so on. Finally, there are names, which designate a variety of objects. These are called "universal names"; their meaning is a "concept" and refers to a series of objects (the extension of the concept). The way we know sensible objects is called "sensible intuition".

Husserl also identifies a series of "formal words" which are necessary to form sentences and have no sensible correlates. Examples of formal words are "a", "the", "more than", "over", "under", "two", "group", and so on. Every sentence must contain formal words to designate what Husserl calls "formal categories". There are two kinds of categories: meaning categories and formal-ontological categories. Meaning categories relate judgments; they include forms of conjunction, disjunction, and forms of plural, among others. Formal-ontological categories relate objects and include notions such as set, cardinal number, ordinal number, part and whole, relation, and so on. The way we know these categories is through a faculty of understanding called "categorical intuition".

Through sensible intuition, our consciousness constitutes what Husserl calls a "situation of affairs" (*Sachlage*). It is a passive constitution where objects themselves are presented to us. To this situation of affairs, through categorical intuition, we are able to constitute a "state of affairs" (*Sachverhalt*). One situation of affairs through objective acts of



consciousness (acts of constituting categorically) can serve as the basis for constituting multiple states of affairs. For example, suppose  $a$  and  $b$  are two sensible objects in a certain situation of affairs. We can use it as basis to say, " $a < b$ " and " $b > d$ ", two judgments which designate different states of affairs. For Husserl, a sentence has a proposition or judgment as its meaning, and refers to a state of affairs, which has a situation of affairs as a reference base.

Some years after the publication of his main work, the *Logische Untersuchungen* (*Logical Investigations*, first edition, 1900-1901), Husserl made some key conceptual elaborations which led him to assert that in order to study the structure of consciousness, one would have to distinguish between the act of consciousness and the phenomena at which it is directed (the object-in-itself, transcendent to consciousness). Knowledge of essences would only be possible by "bracketing" all assumptions about the existence of an external world. This procedure he called *epoché*. These new concepts prompted the publication of the *Ideen* (Ideas) in 1913, in which they were at first incorporated, and a plan for a second edition of the *Logische Untersuchungen*.

From the *Ideen* onward, Husserl concentrated on the ideal, essential structures of consciousness. The metaphysical problem of establishing the

material reality of what we perceive was of little interest to Husserl despite being a transcendental idealist. Husserl proposed that the world of objects and ways in which we direct ourselves toward and perceive those objects is normally conceived of in what he called the "natural standpoint", which is characterized by a belief that objects materially exist and exhibit properties that we see as emanating from them. Husserl proposed a radical new phenomenological way of looking at objects by examining how we, in our many ways of being intentionally directed toward them, actually "constitute" them (to be distinguished from materially creating objects or objects merely being figments of the imagination); in the phenomenological standpoint, the object ceases to be something simply "external" and by the same token, ceases to be seen as providing indicators about what it is, and becomes a grouping of perceptual and functional aspects that imply one another under the idea of a particular object or "type". The notion of objects as real is not expelled by phenomenology, but "bracketed" as a way in which we regard objects instead of a feature that inheres in an object's essence founded in the relation between the object and the perceiver.

In a later period, Husserl began to wrestle with the complicated issues of intersubjectivity (specifically, how communication about an object can be assumed to refer to the same ideal entity) and tries new methods of bringing

his readers to understand the importance of phenomenology to scientific inquiry (and specifically to Psychology) and what it means to "bracket" the natural attitude.

In all of these works, Husserl doggedly pursued his vision of a radical foundation for rational thought. His passionate dedication to clarity and fundamental insight were what most impressed his students. Never satisfied with his results, however, he referred to himself at the end of his life a real beginner.

Evidence indicative of direct contact between Marcel and Husserl does not exist, but the fact that elements of Husserlian phenomenology are present in Marcel's philosophy could not be accidental. However, there are conjectures that the Marcel's world war experiences as a Red Cross official opportuned his contact with German thoughts at a time when Husserlianism was popular. Cartesian influences in both Husserl and Marcel likely provided a mutual, foundational meeting point for the philosophical disposition of both men, starting with the notion of transcendence.

Transcendence in Husserl's phenomenology finds relevance in Marcel philosophy. For both philosophers, transcendence is a core philosophical activity but they differ in its application. Husserl argued that transcendence is an objective act of consciousness for the understanding of states of affairs

and the phenomena as they present themselves for examination. Transcendence in Marcel's works is the going beyond the depersonalization and communal disunity of the world in order to overcome the cocoon of existence and the restrictive formulas or abstractions of (neo-Cartesian and Husserlian) scientific thinking. For him, transcendence is native to human existentialia while Husserl believes that it is the essential propeller of consciousness.

Marcel adopts the Husserlian eidetic notion of bracketing and applied it on the issue of self-evident human problems. For Marcel, eidetic bracketing helps the human purpose of understanding reality; but that the individuality of every man should never be bracketed by the society, otherwise, freedom would be murdered and man's ability to think for himself and at the same time, appreciate similar ability in others, would have been dealt a mortal blow. In his *Homo Viator*, Marcel applies the methodology (epoché) of phenomenology as created by Husserl, to describe the elements of individuality and human experiences such as hope, love, fidelity and loyalty. Marcel later transcended these elements and arrived at a level of *genuine encounter with the Absolute Thou by way of the I-Thou relationship* (Lescoe, 1973:88).

With Marcel, phenomenology has come to be useful in ontology as a stethoscope for listening to the heartbeat of the singular, the subjective and the spontaneous. Unfortunately, in spite of seasoning his existentialism with Husserlian phenomenology, Marcel himself is not easily regarded as a phenomenological ontologist. Why is this the case? There is no doubt that the center of Marcelian philosophy is his ontology, or what may be referred to as existentialist ontology. What is ontology and how can we describe Marcel's ontology? Answering these questions is next.

## **2.5 Prelude to Gabriel Marcel's Ontology**

### **2.5.1 Definitions and Meanings of Ontology**

The term **ontology** emerged from two Greek etymological combinations, which are *onto*, and *logos*. *Onto* is translated as *to be* or *of being* or *part of being*, while *logos* means *science, study, theory*. (Unah, 2002: 1 – 9) With the combination of the two words, ontology could be rendered as the science of being or the study of what it means to be, or the theory about part of being. In other words, ontology seeks to describe or posit the basic categories and relationships of being or existence to define entities and types of entities within its framework.

Since the first time it was scribbled down in the history of philosophy, to the time of Christian Wolff whose writings popularized it, ontology has been rendered in different modes and colourations. For instance, Etienne Gilson, notes that:

*In the prolegomena to his Elementa philosophiae sive Ontosophiae (1647), Johannes Clauberg remarks: Since the science which is about God calls itself Theosophy or Theology, it would seem fitting to call Ontosophy or Ontology that science which does not deal with this and that being, as distinct from the others owing to its special name or properties, but with being in general... a certain science which envisages being inasmuch as it is being, that is, inasmuch as it is understood to have a certain common nature or degree of being, a degree which is to be found in both corporeal and incorporeal beings, in God and in creatures, in each and every singular being according to its own mode. (Gilson, 1952: 112-113).*

Gilson calls this text the "birth certificate" of ontology as a science conceived after the pattern of theology, yet radically distinct from it. He noted that it was in 1729 that ontology finally came into being as "Ontologia of Christian Wolff" (Ibid).

It must be noted that before Christian Wolff, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) defined ontology as that which is concerned about "something and of nothing, of being and not-being, of the thing and the mode of the thing, of substance and accident" (Couturat, 1903: 512).

In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Immanuel Kant presented ontology as the first part of metaphysics. *The word itself comes from the Greek, and just means the science of beings, or properly according to the sense of the words, the general doctrine of being. Ontology is the doctrine of elements of all my concepts that my understanding can have only a priori* (Kant, 1998: 698-699).

On his part, Alexius Meinong simply calls ontology the *science about entities as such, or about pure entities* (Meinong, 1977: 224-225).

According to Nicolai Hartmann, *ontology has to do with fundamental assertions about being as such. Assertions of this sort are precisely what we call categories of being* (Hartmann, 1953: 13-14). Meanwhile, Mario Bunge is quoted as saying that ontology is

*the branch of philosophy that studies the most pervasive features of reality, such as real existence, change, time, chance, mind, and life. Ontology does not study constructs, i.e., ideas in themselves. These are studied by the formal sciences and epistemology. Hence the expression 'ontology of mathematics' makes sense only in the context of objective idealism (such as Pythagoras's and Plato's)... Ontology can be classed into general and special (or regional). General ontology studies all existents, whereas each special Ontology studies one genus of thing or process-physical, chemical, biological, social, etc. Thus, whereas general ontology studies the concepts of space, time,*

*and event, the ontology of the social investigates such general sociological concepts as those of social system, social structure, and social change. (Bunge, 1999: 200-201).*

In his own account of ontology, Reinhardt Grossmann argues that ontology searches for and provides answers to the questions concerning the categories of the world as well as the laws governing them:

*Ontology was born when someone realized that any view of this sort implies a distinction between individual things, on the one hand, and their properties, on the other. Ontology was born when someone realized that there are, not only different kinds of individual thing, but also different kinds of entity. This realization must have led almost immediately to a number of distinctly ontological questions. How, precisely, do individuals and properties differ? How are they related to each other? Are there perhaps any other kinds of entity? And so on... A particular ontological theory must of course strive to accommodate all differences and connections. It must attempt to present us with a complete list of categories. Everything there is must find a place in the system. The theory is unsatisfactory if it is incomplete, that is, if there are entities which are not categorized. In ontology, similarly, the fundamental laws describe the behavior of categories. For example, individuals are subject to change, while properties are not. Individuals, furthermore, even though they exemplify properties, are never exemplified by anything. Laws of this nature distinguish*



*between different categories; and the second law mentioned also shows how they establish connections between categories. Properties are connected with entities... Ontology... asks what the categories of the world are* (Grossmann, 1983: 3-4).

Jerzy Perzanowski, argued that ontology is the theory of what there is, the theory of being that considers our *ontological universe, all items that are possible, describing and classifying them and searching for the principles of this universe, principles of taking together the plurality of ontic objects, particular beings, into one -- the Being*" (Perzanowski, 1990: 23-24). Perzanowski says that two questions govern ontological investigations: the first being the question about what is possible and why? The second question, concerning the being's principles, that is what is given and what is not given, and the possibilities thereof (Unah, 2002: 18-22).

Roberto Poli, defines ontology as *the theory of objects... of every type of object, concrete and abstract, existent and non-existent, real and ideal, independent and dependent. Whatever objects we are or might be dealing with, ontology is their theory. 'Object' is used in this sense as synonymous with the traditional term 'being'* (Poli, 1996: 313-319).

From Leibniz through Gilson to Roberto Poli, the meaning of ontology can be gleaned from varying angles and dimensions. For instance, while Leibniz presents ontology as that which throws up for observation, the

relationship between something and nothing, Kant sees it as the baby of metaphysics nurtured by epistemology. For Gilson, ontology begins where theology stops although both of them possess similar conceptual patterns. Meinong says that ontology is fundamentally an investigative science; while Hartmann argues that ontology is indeed the activity of making clearly unambiguous statements about being. Bunge says that ontology is an all-encompassing, functional and flexible study of all things while Grossmann avers that it is a research activity, which examines and cross-examines the laws of reality. For Perzanowski, ontology domiciles in the region of possibilities while perusing the is-ness of a thing; while Roberto Poli posits that ontology is characteristically epistemic. Each of these assertions finds a place in Marcel's work, as shown later in this work. However, it should be clearly stated that the disparity in the rendition of ontology is the hallmark of philosophy and the historicism of the concept itself bears testimony to this fact.

### **2.5.2 The Historicism of Ontology**

According to the entries in *www.answers.com/ontology*, on the Internet, Ontology as a concept is generally thought to have originated from early Greece and treated in the raw form by Plato and Aristotle. While its

etymological root is Greek, the oldest historical record of the word itself is the Latin form *ontologia*, which appeared in 1606, in the work, *Ogdoas Scholastica* by Jacob Lorhard (*Lorhardus*) and in 1613 in the *Lexicon philosophicum* by Rudolph Göckel (*Goclenius*). The first occurrence (in English language) of "ontology" appears in Bailey's dictionary of 1721, which defines ontology as 'an Account of being in the Abstract'. However, its appearance in texts and dictionaries indicates it was in use already before the publications; although Christian Wolff later popularized it. A historical account on the *answers.com* website says that it is likely the word was first used in its oral Latin form by philosophers with Latin roots, whose works bear the Greek influence.

Another historical account on the *answers.com* website argues that some philosophers of the Platonic breed contend that all nouns refer to "entities" which is a major element of ontology. Other philosophers assert that some nouns do not name entities but provide a kind of shorthand way of referring to collective objects or events. In this latter view, *mind*, instead of referring to an entity, point at a collection of *mental events* experienced by a person; *society* refers to a collection of persons with some shared relationships, and *geometry* refers to a collection of a specific kind of intellectual activity. By extension, ontology must give an account of words,

which refer to entities, words that do not refer to entities, show why they do or do not do so, and draw attention to the categories that are so produced. When one applies this process to nouns such as *electrons, energy, contract, happiness, time, truth, causality*, and *God*, ontology becomes fundamental to many branches of philosophy.

But what are the crucial questions and assumptions of ontology if, truly, it is historically fundamental to many branches of philosophy and the works of Gabriel Marcel? According to various texts, led in contribution by Jim Unah's *On Being: Discourse on the Ontology of Man*, the questions are: What is existence? What does it mean to say something is? How accountable is the is-ness of things? What constitutes the *identity* of an object? When does an object go *out* of existence, as opposed to merely *changing*? What are an object's properties or relations and how are they correlated to the object itself? Why does anything rather than nothing, exist? What is the place of nothing within the totality of being? What is really real? What is the role of speech in the art and science of creationism?

One strand that cuts through the entire gamut of ontology is the basic question: "What is there?" In other words, *what is, what is?* (Unah, 2002:7). Different philosophers provide different answers to this question but one common approach in the history of ontology is to divide the extant entities

into groups called "categories". However, these lists of categories are also quite different from one another. It is in this latter sense that ontology is applied to such fields as theology, information science and artificial intelligence.

According to the disciples of Aristotle, ontology is the science of being inasmuch as it is being, or the study of *beings* insofar as they exist. It involves taking anything at all and examining it, not as a tree of the forest or a slice of bread or a television set or a governor, but just as something that simply *is*. Specifically, ontology concerns determining what *is* and asks whether, and in what sense, the item in question can be said to "be": finding a subject, a relationship, and an object to talk about.

At various times in the 20th century, Schools of subjectivism, objectivism, relativism, the postmodernists and empirical philosophers tried to reframe the fundamental questions of ontology in terms of bodies taking some specific action in an environment. This relied to a great degree on insights derived from scientific research into animals taking instinctive action in natural and artificial settings — as studied in the social, physical and biological sciences. The processes by which bodies related to environments became of great concern, and the idea of being itself became difficult to really define. What did people mean when they said "A is B", "A must be B",

"For A to be B"...? Some linguists advocated dropping the verb "to be" from the English language, in order to avoid any abstraction on the nature of being. Others, primarily philosophers, tried to dig into the word and its usage. Heidegger exhumed the being notion from the graveyard and attempted to distinguish *being* from *existence* while Gabriel Marcel tried to differentiate between *being* and *having*. For existentialists like Heidegger and Marcel, *being* is a fundamental central concept although they render to be differently. The general assumption is that to be possesses a variety of meanings and accordingly, there are many different ways of being.

The first formal development of the idea of being as the study of reality was by Heraclitus (504 – 501 BC) of the pre-Socratic Greek era. The most famous saying attributed to him is that all things are in a state of flux. State of flux here is widely regarded as a state of being. Plato remarks that Heraclitus said that all things pass and nothing abides; meaning that if anything is examined at all, over time, it would be discovered that it does not stay the same. In other words, to be is not to be the same at all times. Aristotle described Heraclitus' doctrine as affirming that all things are in motion, nothing steadfastly is. Is-ness, which is at the heart of ontology, is reflected in this Aristotelian rendition of Heraclitus' notion of *to be*. For Heraclitus, being or reality is ONE – from it all things come *to be* and to it all

things go back. Even as strife of opposites, being, the reality, the ONE is fertile and assimilative; it is one and many concurrently – not merely accidentally but essentially. Being is united and divergent, consumptive and productive, at the same time, thereby fulfilling its essence of simultaneous homogeneity and heterogeneity. In other words, there is always a relationship between one and many, the singular and plural, the individual and communal, wherein the ONE, the singular, the individual is potently assimilative and transformational of the many, the plural and the communal. Heraclitian being is the ontological basis of all reality in terms of this endless transformative conflict.

Probably the most popular and controversial pre-Socratic development of the idea of ontology is Parmenides (6<sup>th</sup> century BC). Heraclitus' argument about being suggests a state of becoming where the many are always going in and out of the ONE in a condition of strife. Parmenides, an ex-Pythagorean disagreed. For him, being, the ONE, is, and becoming (widely rendered as change) is illusion. Being *is*, non-Being *is not*; what *is*, is; and what *is not*, is not, he argued in his prose. In other words, if anything comes into being, then it comes either out of Being or Non-Being. If it comes out of Being, then it already *is* (in which case it does not come to being); if it comes out of Non-Being, then it is nothing since nothing comes

out of nothing. This means that in a situation where Being *is* and Non-Being *is not*, becoming dissolves into obscurity. Being or reality is complete – nothing can be added to it, since anything that is added to being would itself be being. Also, being cannot be divided by something other than itself for besides being, there is nothing. Permenidian being is not only monistic; it is finite, definite, determinate and complete with neither a beginning nor an end.

The ontological theory of Permenides regarding being or reality influenced Empedocles of Akragas, the Atomists and a host of other pre-Socratic philosophers. Empedocles (440 BC) of Akragas, southern coast of Sicily, sought to reconcile the view of Permenides (that being does not come into or go out of existence) with the fact of change that we see and experience daily. Permenides dismissed change as mere illusion of the senses, but Empedocles argued that Being is matter (consisting of earth, air, fire and water), which is in a continuous state of flux. To proclaim the illusoriness of becoming (change) as Permenides did is to deny the complementarity of the four elements of matter. For Empedocles therefore, reality is a combinational interaction of earth, air, fire and water and other things, which come *to be* when these material elements work together in a process of dissension and unification. For instance, love brings about



relationship or co-relation, while hate engenders war or hostility; order occurs when things connect or embrace themselves and disorder exists in a condition of disconnection or disjointedness. Love builds up things through the unification or mixture of the four particles; then hate takes its turn and begins to separate the particles of the four elements, thereby causing certain things to cease to exist; then once again, love takes its turn and unites the four particles and new things come into existence again; then hate takes over. There is no end to this cyclical process of unification and separation of these particles of being (matter) with change as its fundamental character. For Empedocles, Being, the ONE, has content and is productive, evolutionary, and transformational. With his argument that change is not illusory but an ontological property of being, he was able to sway other philosophers away from Parmenides. One of such pre-Socratic philosophers was Anaxagoras.

Like Empedocles, Anaxagoras (500 BC) believed the theory of Parmenides that being does not change. But how can this be reconciled with daily experiences of transformation? Parmenides says our experience of change is illusory; Empedocles articulates that it is simply the effect of an ever-recurring process of combination and separation of the indestructible particles of the four elements (earth, water, air and fire). But Anaxagoras

contends that the four elements themselves are a combination of several qualitatively different particles: there are infinite particles, the combination of which results in a thing coming *to be* but a particular type of particle predominates in everything under the force or ultimate principle of NOUS or MIND. In Gold for example, the particle of gold predominates in that which is called gold; in earth, the particles of earth predominate. All particles combine in an orderly manner in everything, but one particle predominates by the power of the mind. Anaxagoras' argument therefore is that: in everything, there is a portion of everything, for there is no indivisible particle because everything is infinitely divisible by virtue of a universal governance of the mind. If for example, a piece of paper is burnt to ashes, there must have been particles of ash in the paper otherwise the paper would not become ashes. In other words, if one thing eventually becomes another, the particles of that other thing were always there as part of the mind-ordered or Nous-ordained composition. Anaxagoras' mode of being is therefore indefinite, divisible, interactive, trajectory, mind-connected, and all encompassing.

Differing from Anaxagoras, the Atomists were to provide radical alterations in the pre-Socratic permutations over the ontological notion of being. Lucippus and Democritus, according to Aristotle, were the pioneering

embodiments of the Atomist School (founded by Lucippus). While the ontological treatment of being was restricted to philosophy (sometimes with cosmological, epistemological and spiritual tonality) by Heraclitus, Permenides, Anaxagoras and several others, the Atomists extended the frontiers of being to physical sciences, thereby providing the foundation for the contemporary application of ontology in areas outside philosophy such as artificial intelligence. Empedocles had postulated the existence of the four elements of being (matter), which, when mixed together in various proportions, form the objects of experience. This he did to reconcile the Permenidian finitude and fixation of being and the Heraclitian flux or mutative theory of being. However, Empedocles did not work out his doctrine nor did he carry the quantitative explanation of qualitative differences of the elements of being to its logical conclusion. Anaxagoras swung pendulum-like between matter and mind in a pseudo-mechanistic manner, in his rendition of being. But the final step for completing the mechanism of being (matter) was attempted by the Atomists.

According to Lucippus and Democritus, there are an infinite number of indivisible units, which are called ATOMS. They are imperceptible to the physical eyes, varying in sizes, made up of the quality of solidity and impenetrability, infinite in number, and mobile in space (void). Lucippus and

Democritus preceded with the statement that is somewhat like this: in the beginning were atoms; these atoms were in a void, and that was all. They argued further that, in the beginning came *to be* the world of our experience. The original movement of the atoms *is* eternal and self-sufficient. In the void, the atoms collide by virtue of their configurations and irregular movements, thereby bringing things into being. With this atomistic theory, Lucippus and Democritus provided a purely mechanistic bank account of *what is*. Ontologically speaking, the Atomists presented being or reality as mechanistic, material, irregular, indivisible, mutable, spatial, and most importantly, characterized by an eternal interplay of atoms. However, the brilliant hypothesis of Lucippus and Democritus was by no means the last word in Greek philosophy. Subsequent Greek philosophers were to see that the richness of the world couldn't in its spheres be reduced to the mechanical display of atoms. One of such philosophers was Plato.

Plato (427 BC) in his *Theatetus*, exhibited that he was also influenced by the Permenidian theory of being. Though Heraclitus had taken the extreme view that change alone is real and Permenides had taken the other extreme view that change alone is illusory, Plato attempted to reconcile the two views. In his reconciliatory argument, Plato held that sensible objects or objects of our senses are subject to the Heraclitian flux and thus, cannot be

objects of true knowledge. Thus, Plato admitted change like Heraclitus. Also, like Permenides, he accepted that what is really real is unchanging. However, like the being of Permenides, Plato advocated the WORLD OF IDEAS to constitute the sole reality. Plato argued that knowledge must be infallible and must be about *what is*, but unfortunately, sense perception is neither of these. What *is really real* exists outside the senses but sense perception provides its imperfect representation in the physical world. For Plato, Being is epistemological, transcendental, otherworldly, infallible, and crystallized through the intellect.

Platonic notion of Being held sway until more recent philosophers began the multifaceted reversions of this trend. Notably and the first to make such an advocacy since Heraclitus was the nineteenth century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900). In *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* (Levy, 1913) and [www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com), it is recorded that Nietzsche used the expression "the innocence of becoming", as a fundamental element of his philosophical thought grounded in the "will to power." In his rendition of becoming, Nietzsche described the aesthetic qualities of existence, and produced concepts such as "Dionysian world", "eternal recurrence", "amor fati", and "decadence". It was with this a-teleological view that he attempted to separate all views pertaining to the

human condition, where "thingness" is ultimately characterized as a mere "hypothesis." In Nietzsche's phrase, such a view, pertaining to the "inequality" of all "things", carries deep implications for ethics and epistemics.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel uses Becoming as a mediating force in his phenomenology of the spirit or the becoming of knowledge in a dialectical mode of ontology. In the Hegelian model, Being *is*, on the one hand, opposing to Non-Being and, on the other hand, "is the same as Non-Being." Becoming acts therefore as the process by which Being comes into itself, or becoming is the unity of being and not-being (Solomon, 1985).

Several other versions of the notion of *being* or *what is* abound in various interpretations and colourations. To examine all the formats of ontology is unwieldy and overtly ambitious, especially since the destination of this discourse is Gabriel Marcel's ontology. However, in order to concretize the foundation of the current discourse on ontology, it should be pertinent to examine the underlining elements that characterize and typologize ontology as the last steps towards the explication of Gabriel Marcel's ontology.

### **2.5.3 Characteristics of Ontology**

In all its renditions, ontology as a study of *being* possesses certain distinctive features that differentiate it from any other activities of philosophy. Each of these unique elements is referred to as *being* or a different way of expressing *being*. They include: physical objects, minds, classes, properties, relations, space and time, events and universals. Many philosophers say that properties and relations have an abstract, rational existence, and that physical objects have a concrete, empirical existence. That, perhaps, is the paradigm case of a difference in the ways in which items can be said to *be*, or to have *being*. Each way of expressing *being* is explained below:

#### **2.5.3.1 Physical objects**

Physical objects as *beings* (in ontology) are said *to be* in the simple sense that they *exist* all around us. So, a house is a being, a person's body is a being, a tree is a being, a cloud is a being, and so on. They are *beings* in the sense that, they are physical objects. One might also call them bodies, or physical particulars, or concrete things, or matter. For Marcel, human beings themselves concretize physical objects.

#### **2.5.3.2 Minds**

In ontology, Minds are those parts of us that think and perceive and some philosophers including Gabriel Marcel consider them as beings. Each of us, commonsensically speaking, has a mind. Of course, philosophers rarely just assume that minds occupy a different category of beings from physical objects. Some, like René Descartes, have thought that this is so (this view is known as dualism, which considers the mind as distinct from the body), while others have thought that concepts of the mental can be reduced to physical concepts (this is the view of physicalism or materialism which is rooted in the atomism of Lucippus and Democritus). Still, others maintain that though "mind" is a noun, it is not necessarily the "name of a thing" distinct within the whole person. In this view, the relationship between mental properties and physical properties is one of supervenience – similar to how "university" supervene upon certain communities.

#### **2.5.3.3 Classes**

Ontologically, we can talk about all human beings, and the planets, and all engines as belonging to different classes. Within the class of human beings are all of the human beings, or the extension of the term 'human being' such as male, female, foetus, babies, youths, and adults - in terms of



their interaction, communication, transaction and even creations. In the class of planets would be Mercury, Venus, the Earth, and all the other planets that there might be in the universe. Classes, in addition to each of their members, are often taken to be beings. Surely, we can say that in some sense, the class of planets *is*, or has being. Classes are usually taken to be abstract objects, like sets; 'class' is often regarded as equivalent, or nearly equivalent, in meaning to 'set'. Denying that classes and sets exist is the contemporary meaning of nominalism.

#### **2.5.3.4 Properties**

In ontology, the *redness* of a red book, or specifically, the *redness* which all red things share, is a *property*. One could also call it an *attribute* of the book. Very roughly put, a property is just a quality that describes an object. This will not do as a definition of the word 'property' because, like 'attribute', 'quality' is a near-synonym of 'property'. But these synonyms can at least help in comprehending the concept under focus. Whenever one talks about the size, color, weight, composition, and so forth, of an object, one is talking about the properties of that object. Some ontologists believe that properties are beings; the redness of all books is something that *is*. To deny that universals exist is the scholastic variant of nominalism.

#### **2.5.3.5 Relations**

A philosopher gazing at the sky *is*, in a relation to the sky he gazes at. So, in ontology, we can say that there is a relation between the philosopher and the sky: namely, the relation of gazing. So, some say, we can say that that relation has being. For another example, the NITEL building is taller than the Western House (both in Lagos). Being-taller-than is a relation between the two buildings. We can say that *that* relation has being as well. This, too, is a point of contention in the problem of universals in ontology.

#### **2.5.3.6 Space and Time**

Space and time are what physical objects are extended into. There is debate in ontology as to whether time exists only in the present or whether far away times are just as real as far away spaces, and there is debate as to whether space is curved or shapeless. Many contemporary thinkers actually suggest that time is the fourth dimension, thus reducing space and time to one distinct ontological entity, the space-time continuum.

#### **2.5.3.7 Events**

Events, according to ontologists, are states of affairs, which can be said to occur. To illustrate, consider the claim "Okocha went to market a car";

if true, then we must ontologically account for every entity in the sentence.

"Okocha" refers to a substance. But what does "went to market a car" refer to? It seems wrong to say that "went to market a car" is a property that instantiates Okocha, because "went to market a car " does not seem to be the same ontological kind of thing as, for instance, *redness*. Thus, events arguably deserve their own ontological category.

#### 2.5.3.8 Universals

Michael Loux, (1970) argues that one of the acutely persistent issues in ontology is the problem of universals. Universals are interpreted in varying forms, one of which is that they are exemplifiable objects (notions of property, action, relation, and types). Here, different objects can *possess one* and the same property; different persons can *perform one* and the same action; different things can *belong to one* and the same kind; and different pairs, triples, quadruples etc. of objects can *enter into one* and the same relation. What these things jointly possess, perform, belong to, or enter into is *a universal*.

*Another form of universals is as Nominalists, on the other hand, have denied the possibility of multiple exemplification and with it the reality of universals. Some*

*have agreed that objects can and do possess properties, enter into relations, and perform actions, but have contended that it is impossible for different objects to possess numerically one property, for different persons to perform numerically one action, and for different n-tuples of objects to enter into numerically one relation; whereas, other nominalists have refused to attribute any ontological status whatever to properties, actions, kinds, and relations. (Loux, 1970: 3-4).*

A particular ontology does not necessarily exhibit all these characteristics. For instance, Marcel's ontology deals with minds, classes, relations, events and the universality of man as beings.

#### **2.5.4 Typology of Ontology**

In the preface of *Ontological Analysis*, Abraham Zvie writes that:

*the best way to study ontology is through a close critical analysis of the major ontological problems the 'historical' ones-that is, the problems that gave birth to this field and continue to engage thinkers and scholars to this very day. The totality of Being of Parmenides and the principle of the oneness of being, thought, and language; the debate between idealism and materialism, as illuminated by Plato; the Aristotelian categories and the relationship between the individuum and the collective, or the species*

*and the genus; the ontological status of the 'I'; the antinomy of necessity and freedom: these are the issues that demarcate the horizon of present-day ontological discussion.* Bar-On Abraham (1996, XI).

Against this background, we now examine the various types of ontology in order to ultimately identify the location of Gabriel Marcel's ontology. Types of ontology examined are formal, formalized, pure philosophical, applied scientific, etc.

#### **2.5.4.1 Formal Ontology**

Formal ontology, also referred to as general ontology (Bunge, 1999) is the type of ontology within the ambit of philosophy as in the expression "Gabriel Marcel's ontology." Here, ontology comes with a lowercase "o"; it is countable and tied to a particular philosopher's thought about reality in the broad sense of the word. In other words, it refers to a particular system of categories accounting for a certain vision of the world. Parmenides formulated a formal ontology, to which various additions and Anaxagoras, Lucippus and Democritus and many others proposed alternatives. As such, this type of ontology does not depend on a particular *language*. For instance, Gabriel Marcel's ontology is always the same, independently of the language used to describe it ([www.formalontology.it](http://www.formalontology.it)).

#### **2.5.4.2 Formalized Ontology**

Another type of ontology is referred to as formalized ontology, which is also called special or regional ontology (Bunge, 1999). It comes with the capital "O"), as in the statement "Ontology of Marketing Communication." It has an uncountable reading because it refers to a particular philosophy of as many other disciplines as possible; it is used in the artificial intelligence and computer science communities. In its most prevalent use in artificial intelligence, Ontology refers to an *engineering artifact*, constituted by a specific *vocabulary* used to describe a certain reality, plus a set of explicit assumptions regarding the *intended meaning* of the vocabulary words. In the simplest case, Ontology describes a hierarchy of concepts related by subsumption relationships; in more sophisticated cases, suitable axioms are added in order to express other relationships between concepts and to constrain their intended interpretation (Nicola Guarino, 1998).

#### **2.5.4.3 Applied Scientific Ontology**

Applied scientific ontology advances a preferred existence domain consisting of three categories of existent entities, including objects, states of affairs, and the empirical world. The empirical world is itself an entity, one that contains all other entities; it contains all and only actual states of affairs,

involving all and only existent objects. The entities included are those minimally required for an adequate philosophical semantics, the things to which we must be able to refer to in order to make sense of meaningful thought and discourse, especially in the sciences. These are the objects that we say exist, to which we are ontologically committed (Grossmann, 1992).

#### **2.5.4.4 Pure Philosophical Ontology**

Pure philosophical ontology, indispensable as groundwork, is the first major step toward a complete fully integrated ontology. When we know what it means for something to exist, then we can proceed to the details of applied scientific ontology, defending the choice of a particular domain of existent entities. It is in this typology of ontology that we explain the concepts and clarify the existence conditions of physical entities and declare ourselves in favour of or opposed to the existence of numbers, sets, universals, relations, propositions, and abstract objects generally, minds and persons, God as a divine supernatural mind, language, art and other cultural artifacts. The traditional controversies of descriptive and speculative metaphysics are located here in order to account for the existence or nonexistence of specifically contested entities (Grossmann, 1992).

## **2.6 Gabriel Marcel's Ontology**

The question may arise as to why Gabriel Marcel is not recognized as an ontologist. First, he never called himself, in specific terms, an ontologist. Second, his works present an amalgam of philosophy, literature and drama, which, being without straightjackets, becloud the ontological content of his thoughts. However, Marcel's *Being and Having*, chief among others, is a treatise in ontology, having focused on issues of Being, Existence, Truth, Unity and Disunity, which are some of the core concerns of ontology as earlier examined above. Second, if ontology deals with the essential connectivity between the components of Being, Existence, Substance and Truth, (as enunciated above), then we cannot but refer to the theory of intersubjectivity, which Marcel popularized as a pointer to the obvious. It should be self-evident that the umbilical cord, which ties all structures of Marcelian ontology together, is intersubjectivity. Therefore, Gabriel Marcel's philosophy in which we find his theory of intersubjectivity is a weighty enterprise in ontology.

### **2.6.1 The Theory of Intersubjectivity in Marcel's Ontology**

It must be stated from the outset that intersubjectivity, as a philosophical concept is not the pioneering effort of Gabriel Marcel. Though



the principle preceded the philosopher, intersubjectivity since Gabriel Marcel has come to refer to the thinking that the self cannot be without others. In other words, *to be* is to exist with others; as a transcendental activity of going beyond the region of the self, to acknowledge, accept and accommodate others. In other words, man *is*, only when others *are*. That is the article of faith of the intersubjective philosopher in Gabriel Marcel.

Intersubjectivity should not be misrepresented as objectivity, or objectivism, or even subjectivity (Rand, 2006). Although they could be co-functional, they differ conceptually. Ordinarily, objectivity refers to the neutrality of opinion or viewpoint. In philosophy, objectivity is the idea that things exist, or that expressions about things are true, absolutely and independently of human existence or belief (Kuhn, 1996). To be objective is to adhere strictly to truth-conducive methods in one's thinking, particularly, to take into account all available information, and to avoid any form of prejudice, bias, or wishful thinking (Rorty, 1999). For example, if a study to determine the effectiveness of a marketing communication message is double-checked, randomized, and controlled, the study can be called "objective" because it adheres to methods that are known to improve the reliability of its results (Popper, 1972).

Opposed to objectivity is subjectivity, which holds that knowledge and truth are not independent of human existence. Technically, subjectivity refers to the specific discerning interpretations of any aspect of experiences. Elements of subjectivity are unique to the person experiencing them, because they domicile in that person's consciousness. Though the causes of experience are thought to be objective and available to everyone, (such as the value of a Naira note), experiences themselves are only available to the person experiencing them - such as when person says that God told him to give all his money to the church ([www.answers .com](http://www.answers.com)).

Unlike subjectivity, two or more individuals define intersubjectivity. It is the sharing of meanings constructed by people in their interactions with each other and used as an everyday resource to interpret the meaning of elements of social and cultural life (Scheff 2006). If people share common sense, then they share a definition of the situation ([www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com)). Historically, intersubjectivity is the attempt to avoid solipsism in the account of the universe (Copleston, 1966:32). Solipsism is the argument that the world is part and parcel of my will; that outside my will, the world disappears. On the other hand, intersubjectivity serves as an attempt to run away from the pitfalls plaguing the thesis of realism: that reality is independent of the

individual; that man may vanish, but reality subsists. Gabriel Marcel's intersubjectivity amplifies interaction between two or more people.

The Socratic dialectical method of making inquiry through the other is a forerunner of various attempts at intersubjectivity. Unfortunately, the Socratic dictum 'know thyself' reclines back to the individual as the starting point for the epistemic cognition of the world. In the propositions of Socrates, the "other" is not given attention. Thus, Socrates was subjective rather than intersubjective in his ontology. Marcel's intersubjectivity domiciles in ontology.

Intersubjectivity gained grounds within the phenomenological movement, a key influencer of which was Frantz Brentano whose intersubjectivity theory was based on the relationship between man and ideas (Brentano, 1960a-c). He built intersubjectivity on the platform of psycho-logics, using scientific parameters. After him, was Edmund Husserl, the acclaimed father of phenomenology. Husserl based intersubjectivity on the relationship between man and things, ideas and states of affairs. Husserl's (1967) intersubjectivity theory was founded on the argument: *I think; therefore, I think of something*. The influence of the Cartesian *cogito* is apparent in the Husserlian mode of intersubjectivity the colouration of which is different from Marcel's.

Followers of Husserl such as Martin Heidegger and other existentialists like Nikolai Berdyaev, Martin Buber and Gabriel Marcel were to treat intersubjectivity as a real theme in their works.

While Heidegger in *Being and Time* looked at intersubjectivity from the perspective of an isolated, homeless individual *DASEIN*, Berdyaev, in his works, espoused intersubjectivity from the angle of the community, the group, and the collective. Buber (1959), on his part, examined intersubjectivity as the clash between individualism and collectivism, which then necessitates the gravitation towards spiritualism. For him, intersubjectivity is expressed through the community, where the true human condition is seen by virtue of man's existence with man. Buber's theory of intersubjectivity seeks to break down the solitude of individualist anthropology and the repression of social collectivism through an active interaction with God.

His intersubjective position is that existence manifests in two ways: that of the "I" towards an "IT", and that of the 'I' towards a 'THOU'. In the first manifestation, relationship is physically experiential and incomplete while in the second manifestation, relationship is spiritual, complete, and borderless, with an open access to God. All of our relationships, Buber contends, bring us ultimately into existential relationship with God, who is

the everlasting Thou. A (www.answers.com, 2008) commentary on Buber's mode of intersubjectivity explains that the attitude of man goes with the meaning of the most important 2 pair expressions: "I-Thou" and "I-It". "It" is a man or a woman and therefore replaceable with and limited "he" or "she." This relationship is worldly. "Thou" on the other hand, is sacred and otherworldly. Ontologically speaking, simply *is*. The *is-ness* of the I-Thou relationship ensures that it does not need any form of intervention and intercession. For instance, love is not a subject-object but a subject-subject relationship in which an intervening third party ultimately introduces dissonance. Two people in love are both subjects who share the unity of being and seek to transform the relationship into that which can unify them individually with God, according to Buber. He says that the relationship with God is the best and purest because it is inadmissible of dissonance since it does not require the nosing of a third party. Intersubjectivity for Buber is the transcendental activity of rising above the limitations and problematics of man-to-man relationship, man and communal relationships and achieving the ultimate man-God relationship. This is not the case with the brand of intersubjectivity espoused by Gabriel Marcel.

In Gabriel Marcel's works, intersubjectivity is presented as a communication activity between one man in a relationship with others. Here,

four levels of connections are identifiable. The first level is made up of "existence" and "ontological exigence." The second level consists of "being" and "presence"; while at the third level are "disponibilite/indisponibilite", "participation" and "problematique." The last level, the fourth, is occupied solely by what Marcel refers to as the "meta-problematique."

#### **2.6.1.1 Existence**

Existence, which appears at the first level of Marcel's intersubjectivity theory, is the fact or state of *being* in actuality - a conceptual affirmation of a subjective entity. It is the level where man's existence is a matter of fact and not a matter for conjecture. For Marcel, existence connotes and denotes that man *is*, affirms that man *is out there*, and suggests that man merely appears on the scene. Here, man's existence requires no proof. Beyond being the primary concept in Marcel's intersubjective theory, existence has a fraternal connection with what he calls ontological exigence.

#### **2.6.1.2 Ontological Exigence**

Ontological exigence is a condition wherein something is necessarily desired, required, needed or wanted. Ontological exigence characterizes the necessity of existence itself because to be is to possess the metaphysical desire for existence. It is the point where existence is assertoric and

therefore, demands for itself because it is its own necessity and a self-required requirement. In other words, *what is not*, cannot desire existence; only that which *is* can do so. Native to existence in the realms of ontological exigence is the perpetuation of existence through the self. For instance, as soon as man is aware of his own existence, he does not want to die; rather, he desires to hold on to life tenaciously.

Ontological exigence, for Marcel, is an affirmation of the desire to continue to exist by virtue of naming offsprings after oneself, doing good generally, naming streets and edifices after oneself, seeking life after life, etc. As a matter of ontological exigence, existence is in continuity or a continuum of its own. Just as existence and ontological exigence are permanently connected, so are they linked to the next level of Marcel's intersubjective construction made up of "being" and "presence."

### **2.6.1.3 Being**

*Being* is the capturing of the metaphysical desire *to be* in the form of the physical, an expression or activation of existence itself, the unveiling of a subject (person) beyond a mere concept. Being is existence in as much as it represents existence because man becomes what we can feel or see. Being comes alive for real as the "I", the next-door neighbour, the one walking away on the street, the person talking and pointing at himself or herself as

somebody, the one who is also me. To express existence, according to Marcel, being shows up as the "I am." Associated with this being that we have just talked about is *presence*.

#### **2.6.1.4 Presence**

*Presence* is the state of being available, a connection to a state of affair. It is the "I am here, now" – a physical appearance in a specific location, a revelation of the self as showing up on the scene as an unconditional necessity in a particular space and time. At the point of presence Marcel avers, the "I" is established completely and faithfully. "I" has transcended the level of an idea, shed off the garment of conceptualization, and presents himself or herself for inspection, examination and acceptance in a phenomenological fashion. "I" changes from the next-door neighbour, the one walking away on the street, the person talking and pointing at himself or herself as somebody, the one who is also me. That "I" is now standing right there at your doorstep, walking up to you on the street; and talking about himself or herself as available for me or you. That "I" is also me approaching other people like me and wanting them to know that I am here right now.

At the third level of the Marcelian theory of intersubjectivity, are "disponibilite", "indisponibilite", "participation" and "problematique."



### 2.6.1.5 Disponibilite/Indisponibilite

Here, the discovery is made of another "I" or as many other "I"s which cannot but be referred to as the "Thou" or "Others." The significant finding here is that, in my mind, I am "I" and the person outside me is the "Thou," while in the mind of the same person, he is "I" while I am, according to him, the "Thou." Again, it is discovered that "Others" have the same ontological source and metaphysical desires just like "I". In a similar approach, Others are showing up as the necessities of "presence" which now commands a duality of communication – communication with the self, a carry-over from the elemental existence; and communication with others, a new requirement for mutual co-existence (with others). Marcel avers that two opposite attitudes show themselves at this point – the *disponibilite* attitude and the *indisponibilite* attitude. *Disponibilite* is expressed where the "I" steps forward to cooperate with "Thou" (others), intermingle with them, have consideration for them and humbly seek their well-being as he does for himself. *Disponibilite* helps to build a network of interaction, create an industry of relationships, humanize the world, build and sustain existential order, engender mutual respect, and retain the ontological connectivity, which has been established *ab initio*. Marcel argued that *disponibilite* (meaning: communicating with others, being accessible, open, cooperative, interdependent, and available to others), is the kernel of intersubjectivity. It

is something like: *I think, therefore, I think of I and Thou*. Disponibilite provides the spinal cord for the erection of intersubjectivity.

At this third level, Marcel identified a contrary state of *indisponibilite* where the 'other' is alienated through pride, selfishness, and the separatist tendency by seeking only after the self, communicating only with the self, desiring self-satisfaction at the expense of others, and generally submerging the consciousness of others underneath the sea of the self. Put in ordinary parlance, *indisponibilite* is characterized by insensitivity towards the feelings of others, arrogance, detachment, tendency to dehumanize, deceive, disconnect and annihilate others. *Indisponibilite* is the cause of war-mongering, separatist tendencies, assisted by the contraptions of science and technology in the world, according to Marcel. It establishes the propensity to see the other as a "he" or "she" or "it." While *indisponibilite* does not allow us to transcend our own "*cogito*" where we remain permanently stuck, *disponibilite* on the other hand, permits us to progress to the next level of participation where the relationship between all men is made possible by virtue of exchange, and other daily transactions of giving and receiving.

#### **2.6.1.6 Participation**

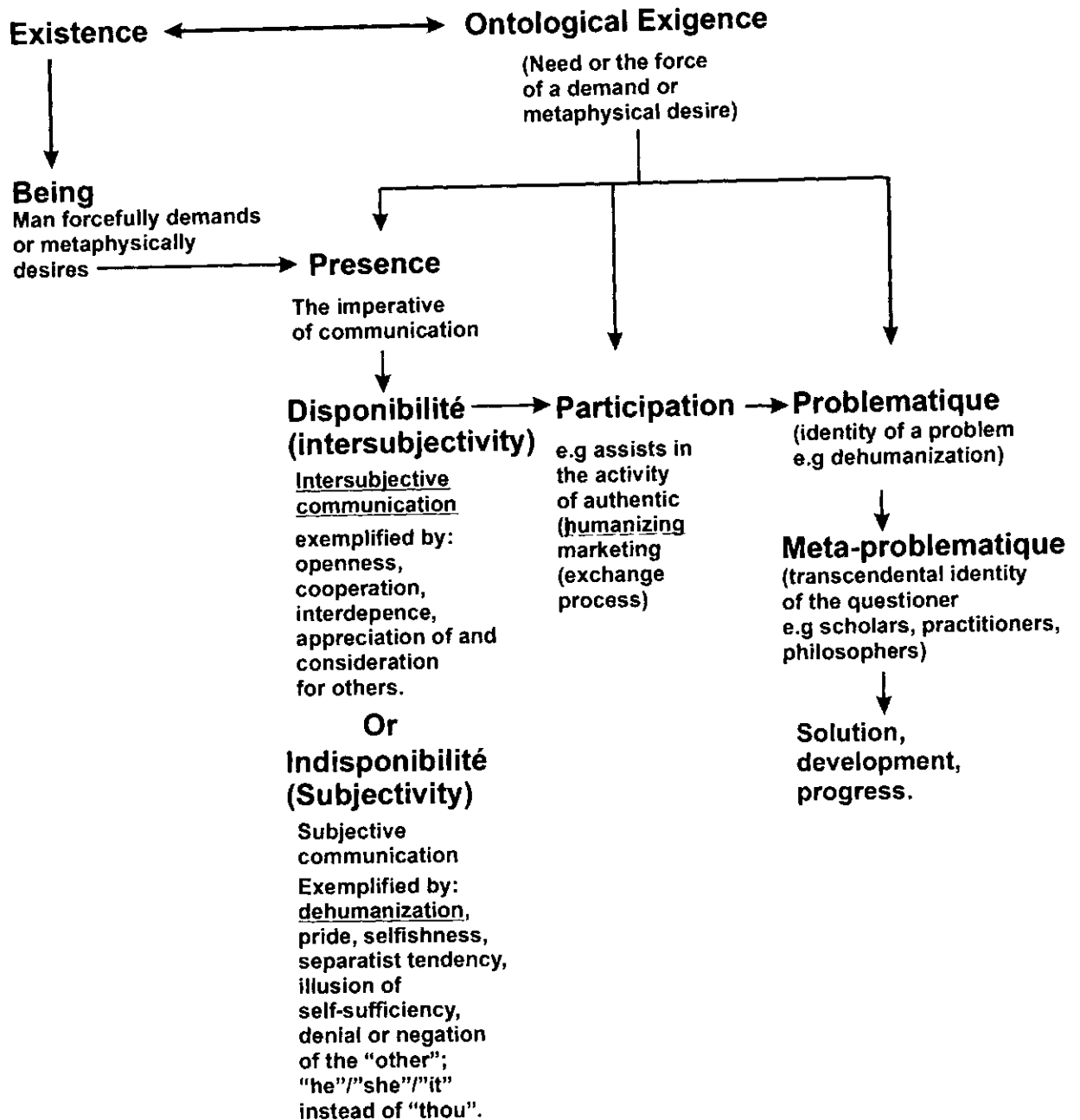
Participation is the decision of "I" and "Thou" to take the mutual decision to cooperate, work together, cohabit, synergize and most importantly, make the necessary progress towards the *problematique*. According to Marcel, to assist one another is an act of authenticity where I and Thou live in mutual respect and understanding and consequently join forces to progress towards the fundamental destination called the *problematique*.

#### **2.6.1.7 Problematique**

The *problematique* according to Marcel, is the identification of the problem(s) confronting "I" and "Thou" and the necessity of analyzing the ramifications of the problem(s). Participation in the *problematique* is to ensure that "I" and "Thou" do not journey adrift or reversed towards *indisponibilite*.

Marcel argued further that beyond identifying the problems confronting all, the person posing the questions concerning the problems or "the questioner" must be identified so that we are sure that there is a relationship between the questioner and the question itself. With this, the stage is set for the fourth and last level of "meta-problematique."

## Representation of Intersubjectivity Theory in Gabriel Marcel's Ontology



### Sources

- Gabriel Marcel's *Being and Having*, *The Mystery of Being*, and *The Philosophy of Existentialism*
- Author's Interpretation/Application in Marketing Communication

#### **2.6.1.8 Meta-problematique**

Here, we transcend the given problems in order to acquire their non-given solutions. The meta-problematique level is not only the last point in Marcel's intersubjectivity theory; it is, in fact, the transcendental and productive level, the reaping of the investment of "I" in the "Other"; for, it goes to show how man's sense of cooperation can engender unity of purpose, enhance productivity, humanize relationships and accentuate development and progress in all spheres of human endeavours.

### **2.7 Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is clear that what Marcel has given our world is the delight, freedom, and subterranean assurance of the intersubjective space, in which ego-driven proclivities are dwarfed by our interest in who we really are when we are free from the deception of a self-adhesive ego. An adoration of our connection with others displaces the prejudices of self-image and its self-aggrandizement, at least when we are in an inevitable communion with others.

Marcelian Intersubjectivity is the ontological experience of connecting with a finely-tuned state of consciousness and working together with others

who are also in the same state of alertness. Our collective and fervent thought about what wants to come into being would not shrink, but rather improve our collective senses, openness, profound insight, as well as the ability to think together, improving on each other's dreams and expectations, and overwhelmingly understanding the value of everyone's perspective in the course of daily exchanges. Without any aorta of doubt, Marcel's intersubjective ontology authentically replaces disconnection with connection, and mutual suspicion with reciprocal trust. It enthrones man as the prime mover of all states of affairs and daily transactions and gives the hope and confidence that rehumanization is possible where dehumanization has taken place.

But how useful is this Marcelian temperament of intersubjectivity when we consider the fact that certain modes of daily transactions are currently confronted by the problems of disconnectivity, distrust and dehumanization of man? One of such modes of daily transaction is marketing communication. In other words, how can Marcel's intersubjective ontology help in dislodging the apparent disunity in the house of marketing communication? These pertinent questions are best tackled by first examining the gamut of marketing communication in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE FUNDAMENTALS OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In chapter one, it is clearly stated that, in the tradition of philosophy, the searchlight of Gabriel Marcel's ontology shall be beamed on marketing communication. That first chapter also identified some of the issues that concern the endeavour of marketing communication and suggested that they (the issues) are not beyond the application of philosophical solutions. But what is marketing communication? What constitute the content and character of marketing communication? What qualifies an endeavour to be one of the activities of marketing communication? What constitute the problems of marketing communication? Why do the problems of marketing communication exist at all? How presentable are the problems of marketing communication without the imputation of bias or preconception?

In an attempt to consign these questions to the dustbin of history by answering them precisely and concisely, this chapter inspects the gamut of marketing communication both as a mono concept and a dual combination of terms and ideas. Beginning with a historical and contemporary explications of the definitions, nature and characteristics of marketing communication, the chapter leads to the conclusion that the nascent area of

study is benumbed by ailments that beg for philosophical surgery and healing.

The chapter identifies and examines the combination of marketing and communication with a referential textual exigency, showing the similarities, differences and connexion between them. In addition, the chapter explains the differences between marketing communication, mass communication and business communication, dealing with the commonplace tendency to mistake the identity of one for the other two.

Without recourse to unnecessary details or irrelevant analysis, the chapter lists out the elements of marketing communication and narrowed them to five in terms of their importance in theory and practice. Further, each element is analyzed in terms of its definition, content, practice, advantage and disadvantage. Also, the literary contribution of each element to the body of knowledge is mentioned with the intention of discovering the lacuna that beckons at philosophy.

### **3.2 Definitions, Nature and Characteristics of Marketing Communication**

Conceptually speaking, marketing communication is simply the combination of two words – “marketing” and “communication” – derived from existing activities that are so-called.



Marketing, the first word in the dual combination is defined as the planning and execution of price, promotion and distribution of products, services and ideas for the purpose of creating exchanges, which satisfy the company and its customers. (Hair et al, 2000: 5). Giles' historical account states that marketing evolved *as soon as man ceased to be individually self-sufficient and began to make and exchange things with others* (1974: 2). It is indeed corroborated that these exchanges are the offsprings of native human needs (Iornem, 1990: 11 – 14).

According to Iheanyi Achumba, the definitions of marketing have different hues and colouration but for him, it is a *human activity, taking place in relation to markets. It means working with markets to actualize potential exchanges for the purpose of satisfying human needs and wants* (Achumba, 2000: 10). Lazer (1971) sees it in terms of connection and relationships; while Preston (1970) argues that marketing is the activity of communication and exchange between individuals and others in the marketplace. The works of Philip Kotler, one of the most respected authorities on marketing, are replete with various examinations of the concept of marketing. According to him, out of the plurality of definitions of marketing, two stick out most prominently. These are the social and the managerial definitions of marketing:

*A social definition shows the role marketing plays in*

*society. One marketer said that marketing's role is to "deliver a higher standard of living." Here, is a social definition that serves our purpose: marketing is a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and freely exchanging products and services of value with others. For a managerial definition, marketing has often been described as "the art of selling products"... (Kotler, 2003: 8 – 9).*

A cursory examination of the various definitions of marketing indicates that certain concepts are germane to all. These are:

1. Exchanges
2. Human interaction
3. Individuals and others
4. Participation, relationships, connectivity and communication.

But do these same concepts find shelter in communication?

In various literature, communication, the second word in abovementioned combination (marketing communication) is presented in a myriad of ways: as a process of impartation of knowledge, transmission of thought; as a stimuli-response activity, interchange of information, transfer of meaning, transportation of messages, and so on. Interestingly, most of these presentations of communication are encapsulated in the definition:

that it is the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, by speech, signals, writing, or behavior (www.answers.com, 2008).

Perreault and McCarthy (2002: G-2) present communication as a process where a source attempts to reach a receiver. Ogbulogo (2004: 1) calls it the "sense of sharing" in "human interaction". Ogundowole (1994: 2) sees it as a process of "objectively comprehending reality." For Marshal McLuhan, communication is the process of disseminating information through the intervention of the media (1964). Malra Treece argues that since the etymological root of the word in Latin is *communis* or *communicare*, meaning "common," communication is conclusively the attempt to meet on common ground, intentionally or unintentionally, individually and collectively, verbally or non-verbally, in order to inform, persuade, dissuade, or even entertain (1994: 2 – 5).

Norton and Brendas argue enthusiastically that communication transcends mere talk, for it helps the understanding of the self, establishes the dynamics of change and focuses on the constructs of interaction.

According to the authors,

*Our bias is that communication is a process in which the individual interactively supplies premises to make sense out of a message. A person communicates because he or she makes connections, but they are not merely*

*associations. In the process of making sense out of stimuli, an information retrieval triggers associations. The process stimulates ideas and thoughts, some directly pertinent, others surprisingly related, and still others fragmentally connected.*

*The communicative process allows, and sometimes forces, an individual to make connections about the self, and simultaneously how the self relates to others and the world. The bonus of communicating is that one makes connections with other individuals. Communicating is people's bridge to others. The payoff is enormous. Social connections are made, as are political, business, spiritual, esoteric, and functional connections. Each connection holds the possibility of teaching a person more about him- or herself and the world. (Norton and Brendas, 1996: xvii)*

From all the treatises above, it requires no further argumentation in order to profess that communication is:

1. **Exchange** activity
2. About **human interaction**
3. Able to create a common ground for enterprise
4. Able to engender **connectivity** between the **individual** and **others**.
5. Always is need of *participation, relationships* and *connectivity* in order to manifest.

An examination of marketing and communication as above shows that though marketing needs communication in order to be evident, communication on the other hand does not need marketing to establish itself, being a wider and larger human activity compared to marketing.

However, marketing and communication have a strong meeting point or common ground for coming together in marketing communication: they are about individuals and others, relationships, connectivity, interaction and participation.

Having made the point about the connection between marketing and communication, what then can be said about the global concept of marketing communication itself?

Definitions of marketing communication are scanty just as literature on the subject is scanty. P. R. Smith attests to this point in these statements:

*The words "marketing communication" are themselves neither well known nor well understood. The number of people with the title "Marketing Communication Manager", although growing, is still very limited... whatever the exact situation, the lack of clarity only adds weight to my proposition that marketing communication must become more integrated and better understood*

*academically and in business* (Smith, 1993: 7).

Since marketing communication suffers from the poverty of definition, an attempt here and now should not be over-reaching but progressive and helpful.

First, given that the tools of communication are required for the process of marketing to take place, then, it could be said that marketing communication is the deployment of these (communication) tools in the process of marketing; or the study of the connection between marketing and communication.

Second, since both marketing and communication are about exchange activities, human interaction and relationships, it should be evidently clear that marketing communication is the study of the exchange activities, human interaction and relationships that take place in the marketplace.

Third, if the interventionist idea of Marshall McLuhan is employed, then, marketing communication could be defined as the study of marketing based on the intervention of the communication media. Another neo-McLuhan definition is that marketing communication is the study of the messages and associated media, which are used to communicate in the marketing process.

Fourth, if the proposition of Norton and Brendas (above) is

acceptable, then marketing communication can be defined as the study of the process in which the individual interactively supplies premises to make sense out of a message in the marketplace.

Marketing communication should not be confused with mass communication, or business communication. Mass communication is the term used to describe the academic study of various means by which individuals and entities relay information to large segments of the population all at once through the mass media (Uyo, 1987). The term 'mass' according to McQuail (2005) denotes great volume, range or extent (of people or production) and reception of messages. Thompson (1995) says that the important point about 'mass' is the plurality of recipients in the line of communication.

Differentiating between business communication and mass communication, Ogbulogo (2004) writes that business communication is that which takes place within and around an organization; where communication is employed for the task of coordinating and sharing of information; for the purposes of anticipating and solving organizational problems, conflicts, complex issues and mobilization of energies. While the senders and receivers of mass communication messages are large and widely dispersed, those

involved in business communication are fewer and closely-knit within and around the periphery of an organization.

According to entries in [www.answer.com](http://www.answer.com) (2008), while mass communication focuses on the larger society, the interest of business communication is the close-circuited corporate environment containing employers, employees, suppliers and stakeholders. The concern of marketing communication is the packaging and presentation of messages about products or services as opposed to business communications where the spotlight of communications is the packaging and presentation of the systemic activities of a company or enterprise.

Marketing communications is primarily committed to the generation of demand for a product or service through appropriate positioning, while corporate communications deal with issue management, staffage, corporate success and accountability. Mass communication covers publishing, broadcasting, newspapers/magazine production and the Internet; business communication covers letters and memos, telephony, presentations and speechmaking, business/proposal writing and e-mailing.

On its part, marketing communication is constituted by the elements as such as advertising, public relations, publicity, sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing, event marketing, issue marketing, marketing public



relations, sponsorships, exhibitions and displays, marketing politics, relationship marketing, graphic design, packaging, and online marketing.

### **3.3 Elements of Marketing Communication**

As noted above, marketing communication possesses a wide array of multiple elements. Smith (1993) says as much by stating that any form of communication goes, as long as it helps to sustain the spectrum of marketing. But others like Druker (1954) and Varey (2001) argue that marketing communication should not be an open-ended discipline but managed to facilitate exchange relationships. In order to effectively manage the present discourse on marketing communication, the searchlight shall be beamed on those elements (of marketing communication), which vigorously emphasize relationships and exchanges. Therefore, the analysis of the elements of marketing communication shall be restricted to Advertising, Public relations, Publicity, Sales promotion and Personal Selling.

#### **3.3.1 Advertising**

Advertising is defined as the *drawing of attention to something or notifying somebody about something* (Dyer, 1982: 2). It is any paid message presented in media, such as television, radio, magazine, newspapers, or

billboards by an identified source (Buell, 1984; 24). According to Bovee/Arens (1992: 6 – 8) advertising is the non-personal, paid for, and persuasive message in the media by a known sponsor.

From these and other definitions of advertising, key points can be decoded. First, advertising production and execution costs a lot of money, which at times takes it beyond the affordability of many people and businesses. In spite of that contention, advertising remains an investment that enterprises, big or small, believe they need for the purpose of making positive impact in business.

Secondly, name, address, vision, mission and other corporate identities must distinguish the sponsor of advertising. The creative process of advertising ensures that no material is complete without the name of the company, its address, logo, colours, telephone and e-mail inscribed on it. Sponsor identification, apart from guaranteeing corporate integrity, ensures compliance to regulation.

Third, advertising is non-personal because it is not about the individual *qua* individual, although it targets people individually and collectively with messages about a product or service or idea. In other words, advertising is not about people, whereas it can package people in the form of product, the patronage of which advertising solicits. For instance,

the advertising of a political office seeker creates awareness for the campaigner as a product and not as a person. An example is the Barack Obama of the United States Democratic Party who is packaged as a change agent. Hillary Clinton of the same party is also similarly packaged. Everywhere, anywhere they are advertised, Obama and Hillary are perceived as products or ideas of change. Political advertising, which should subjectify Obama, Hillary, etc, has objectified and depersonalized them because they have all become products or ideas.

Fourth, the aim and objectives of advertising are clearly defined and redefined continuously, varying from one product/service/idea to another. Creating awareness remains the most memorable objective of advertising. Positioning and repositioning of products in the minds of their target buyers, directing purchase decisions in favour of a product but at the expense of another are other objectives of advertising. Informing target buyers about the salient properties and beneficial offers of a product is yet another objective of advertising.

These four points derived from the definitions of advertising altogether buttress the argument that advertising promotes the art of expression and participation in the marketplace (Boyd and Levy, 1969:30) and provides the summarization of what the product/service/idea is all about

(Hicks, 1972).

Frank Jefkins says that advertising *carries the sales message to a very large number of people the advertiser does not know or cannot meet, and who may be scattered throughout the town, region, country or maybe the world.* (1985:112). Commanor and Wilson (1974:25) argue that advertising helps people to be aware of products, services and ideas and simultaneously take decisions in situations of complex and contending offerings, ignorance, and routine behaviour.

However Sandage, et al (1979) lament the often-ignored failure of advertising in marketing communication. Many advertising messages are simply exaggerated, inabsorbable, obscure, and ambiguous; they are dehumanizing through deception and misrepresentation of the standpoint of humanity. Adidi Uyo (op.cit) repeats the controversial argument that advertising makes people buy the things they don't really need, stimulate price increases, which take the product/service/idea out of the reach of those targeted by the same advertising. He stresses that pervasive commercial advertising, by constantly reinforcing a bogus association between consumption and happiness, leads to a squandering of resources and stands in the way of a discussion of fundamental societal and long-term needs.

Given the negative ends of advertising, there have been increasing efforts to protect the public interest by regulating its content and influence. Some examples are: the ban on television tobacco advertising imposed in many countries, and the total ban of advertising to children under twelve.

From the standpoint of philosophy, advertising is beset by functional and foundational problems. First, as Bovee and Arens and several other commentators have pointed out (and stated above), advertising is non-personal. In philosophy, particularly ontology, this means that advertising is *non-being* – it lacks the essential *is-ness* to succumb to the demands of intersubjective (cooperative) participation in marketing communication. This explains why advertising always seeks to do it all alone - casting a shadow of irrelevance on other elements of marketing communication. This is an explicit expression of disconnectivity.

Second, commentators agree that advertising is about products – a condition in which all things (human and non-human) are objectified in a creative message. In the midst of this, where is, and what is man? Another question arises as to whether it is human to objectify man, especially with overtly aggressive advertising messages laced with sexuality, violence, deception, and misguidance, all in an effort to influence people to buy a product. The answer to this question points at dehumanization.

The enormity of the philosophico-ontological problem of advertising shows itself on the Internet. Out of 22,452 books, and 9,430 journal articles on advertising found on the net, none is dedicated to building a philosophical foundation for advertising (www.questia.com, 2008). In all, only 11 books (no journal article) demand the development of a philosophy of advertising in order to deal a decisive blow to the problems plaguing advertising (Dickson, 2000).

### **3.3.2 Public Relations**

The communication methods and activities engaged for the establishment and promotion of a favourable relationship with the public is referred to as public relations. Sam Black says that public relations is a practical, professional two-way communication effort aimed at resolving *conflicts of interest by seeking common ground or areas of mutual interest, and to establish understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information* (1976: 3). For Gregory (1996), public relations is about deliberate planning and management of an understanding and goodwill between an organization and its publics.

Unlike advertising, public relations deals with issues instead of

products or services. Therefore, it is not necessarily paid for because it is about activities, which are repackaged as news stories in the print and electronic media (Seitel, 2006). Bruning and Ledingham (2000) say that it is about relationships and how it is managed in a mutually beneficial way.

Public relations can be an effective part of a company's overall marketing communication strategy. This is because some of the main goals of public relations are: to create, maintain, and protect the organization's reputation, enhance its prestige, and present a favorable image. Studies have shown that consumers in the market often base their purchase decisions on a company's reputation, so public relations can have a definite impact on sales and revenue (Bianco, 1993). Another major public relations goal is to create goodwill for the organization. This involves such functions as employee relations, stockholder and investor relations, media relations, and community relations (Lesly, 1991).

Public relations may function to educate certain audiences about many things relevant to the organization — including the business in general, new legislation, and how to use a particular product, as well as to overcome misconceptions and prejudices. For example, a nonprofit organization may attempt to educate the public regarding safe driving on the highway, while trade associations may undertake educational programs regarding particular

industries and their products and practices (Soderberg, 1986). Public relations is often called on to give existing products and services a boost by creating or renewing visibility in the marketplace. Employees are some of the most important audiences a company has, and an ongoing public relations programme is necessary to maintain employee goodwill as well as to uphold the company's image and reputation among its workforce (Center and Jackson, 1995).

Financial relations involves communicating not only with a company's stockholders, but also with the wider community of financial analysts and potential investors (Nucifora, 2000). A comprehensive, ongoing community relations program can help virtually any organization achieve visibility as a good corporate citizen and gain the good will of the community in which it operates. Public relations practitioners become heavily involved in crisis communications whenever there is a major accident or natural disaster affecting an organization and its community. Other types of crises involve bankruptcy, product failures, and management wrongdoing.

Organizations attempt to generate good will and position themselves as responsible citizens through a variety of programmes conducted in the interest of the general public. Some examples are market cleaning programmes (including water and energy conservation) and antipollution



programs (Cutlip et al, 1994). Organizations have undertaken a variety of programs to educate consumers, building good will and helping avoid misunderstandings in the process (Wilcox et al, 2002).

However, public relations has its drawbacks. It is clearly stated in [www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com) that one of the most damning criticisms of practices in public relations is the use of front groups — organizations that pretend to serve a public interest, but in the true sense, serve the interests of a hidden individual or group of people. This is deceptive and takes public relations to the profane level of propaganda, disinformation or even misinformation. Concocting bogus events and news stories, hiring false crowds of social agitators, conspiring with lobbyists and politicians to deceive the people, giving gifts and unsolicited donations to anti-tobacco groups, are some of the inglorious aspects of public relations (Crifasi, (2000).

Other negative aspects of public relations are: hiring celebrities to endorse inhuman social tendencies (such as homosexuality and lesbianism), deploying nice words to describe unfavourable situations (glorifying abortion by calling it “partial-birth” abortion), name-calling (especially in political debates), name-dropping (in order to obtain undue favour), selective presentation of facts, promotion of selfish agenda in disguise, paraphrasing, deliberate misquotation and undue indoctrination of people.

Philosophically speaking, the problems of public relations as mentioned above deserve timely attention, not because there are no foundational postulations to back them up; but because existing treatises on public relations are not based on the roots and branches of philosophy. Odedele (2008) for instance, made the point that public relations is about man and that the knowledge about man is germane to the understanding and practice of public relations. He dissected the relationship between philosophy and public relations from the speculative/theoretical, prescriptive and analytical perspectives and arrived at the need to always give attention to the *means* and *shoulds* of public relations. Though Oyedele's effort is original and praiseworthy, it must be stated that his work is in dire need of domiciliation in the authentic tradition of philosophy in order to be truly prescriptive and analytical.

More work need to be done, going by the fact that out of 11,251 books and 3,346 journal articles on public relations, (www.questia.com, 2008) there are only four books and two journal articles on the philosophy of public relations, out of which Oyedele's work stands out. Some of the problems of public relations requiring the attention of philosophy are: the dehumanization of man through deception, propaganda, misinformation, and the activities of front groups; the negative effects of the melting of "he"

and "she" (the individual) in "they" (the publics), and the apparent disconnection of public relations from advertising, personal selling and some other elements of marketing communication.

### **3.3.3 Publicity**

Publicity is often wrongly referred to as public relations or advertising. Yet, this is the earliest of all elements of marketing communication with many definitions of its own.

Publicity Handbook (1991: 2), states that *publicity involves supplying information that is factual, interesting, and newsworthy to media... such as radio, television, magazines, newspapers, and trade journals*. According to Broom et al., *publicity is information from an outside source that is used by the media because the information has news value. It is an uninhibited method of placing messages in the media because the source does not pay the media for placement* (2000: 10).

The Random House Handbook of Business Terms defines it as *information designed to appear in any medium of communication for the purpose of keeping the name of a person or company before the public or of creating public interest in their activities* (1988: 229).

Jeniffer Jenness ([www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com), 2008) writes that publicity comes alive through the public relations unit of an organization, imbued with the aim of gaining media coverage for the company's news-worthy events such as opening ceremonies, press conferences, launches and relaunches, or ceremonial appointments. Publicity helps organizations in preventing or countering negative publicity and boosting its media voice. Publicity can help a company accomplish many of its marketing communication goals such as stimulation of sales through customers' persuasion to buy a product or service, attract more clients to the company, motivate attendance at a special event, shore up a company's position in the marketplace, etc.

Publicity is not advertising, public relations, or promotions, because it is not controlled or paid for, but it has many advantages. If used correctly, companies can benefit greatly from publicity. Careful planning, research, and training can reduce negative publicity and can help companies control crises. The advantages of publicity are: low cost, generation of credibility, instant response to news-breaking marketing communication developments, capacity to manage crisis, and proximity to the media. Its emotive side is its ability to functionally apply existential themes such as birth, love, and death, which are dear to the mind of humanity.

However, publicity has its weaknesses; one of these being what is referred to as publicity stunt - the deliberately dehumanizing misuse of publicity to represent a competitor negatively, and swaying the media and their owners with money and patronage. In other words, publicity stunts can produce deception, propaganda and misinformation in the marketing communication process.

Another problem with publicity is the lack of control over how news releases are used, and the attending frustration over the low percentage of media consumption of news releases. Unless manipulated for selfish ends, the media are not obliged to use a particular story or publish stories about a company frequently. Childs (1940) confirms that publicity involves some manipulations. For him, telling one's story with manipulative intent is the dehumanizing usage of publicity, which it renders the element of marketing communication problematic.

The greatest philosophical problem of publicity is the lack of self-identity in spite of its geriatric character. Obscured by public relations, dominated by advertising, the question therefrom is: where is the "I" of publicity in the kingdom of marketing communication? By the same extension is the problem of the obscurity of man in publicity.

Existing works on the philosophy of publicity such as Immanuel Kant's *Hypothetical Publicity*, J. S. Mill's *Actual Publicity* and John Rawls' *Public Rule and Reason* (Gosseries, 2005) provide a starting point for dealing with key issues problematic to publicity in marketing communication. These are: the dehumanization of man through publicity stunts, misuse of communication/information, deception, propaganda, and manipulations. Another issue deserving philosophical examination is the amorphous boundary and servitudinal character of publicity which permit its usage by anybody, anywhere and anytime. Additionally, the intersubjective themes of love, birth and death inherent in publicity need appraisals via existentialism, in order to make publicity more robust and philosophically relevant in marketing communication.

### **3.3.4 Sales Promotion**

Sales promotion is defined as *those promotion activities – other than advertising, publicity, and personal selling – that stimulate interest, trial or purchase by final customers and others in the channel* (Perreault and McCarthy, 2002: 474). Bovee and Arens present sales promotion as *a direct inducement offering extra incentives along the marketing route – from manufacturer through distribution channels to consumers – to enhance the*

*movement of the product from the producer to the consumer* (1992: 576). It is designed to tactically accelerate sales, incentivate purchase at all levels. According to Smith (1993), sales promotion should be an integrative element of marketing communication that is designed to work with advertising, public relations, publicity, and direct selling. Smith avers that sales promotion is the action-oriented element of marketing communication that takes the form of competitions, price reductions, free gifts and sampling. Response to economic recession, it is argued, fuelled *the emergence of price consciousness and the customers' search for value for money offers* (ibid: 224). As a key ingredient in marketing communication, it is often said that *whereas advertising offers a reason to buy, sales promotion offers an incentive to buy* due to the fact that the latter works with *samples, coupons, cash refund offers, prices offs, premiums, prizes, patronage rewards, free trials, warranties, tie-in promotions, cross-promotions point-of-purchase displays and demonstrations* (Kotler, 2003: 609).

One of the benefits of sales promotion is its capacity to maximize sales volume (Bovee/Arens, 1992: 577) within a very short period, and in a way that would not have been possible using other elements of marketing communication. Its capacity to motivate buyers ensures that it tilts patronage in favour of a particular product per time, making its impact on

marketing easy to measure. According to Kotler, *sales promotions enable manufacturers to adjust to short-term variations in supply and demand... to test how high a list price they can charge... try new products... promote consumer awareness of prices... permit manufacturers to sell more than they would normally sell at the list price* (2003: 609).

Other benefits of sales promotion include the stimulation of consumer interest and loyalty in a product, development of new uses of the product, revival of ailing stock, and deseasonalizing *seasonal sales* (Smith, 1993: 228)

Although it is a powerful element in the marketing communication mix, sales promotion has its drawbacks. One of these is its short span – after the noise comes the silence - where consumers lose interest in the product. Frequency of sales promotion often lead to consumer devaluation of a product just as the cost of executing the promotion increases and costs more than what it generates.

Bovee/Arens, Smith and Kotler agree that sales promotion often causes undue tension and war in the marketplace because as soon as one starts, competitors tend to jump into the wagon and the result is the loss of revenue altogether by everyone. Smith remarks that, as with most marketing communication elements, sales promotions ideas die as soon as they are born:



*...the samples packs burst and destroy other goods, premiums are pilfered, misredemption (non-buyers acquire other buyers' coupons), malredemption (large scale fraudulent coupon redemption), over redemption (with millions claiming their prizes), or door-to-door samples that the dog or child gets before the adult, the possibility of mini marketing disaster seem endless (Smith, 1993: 237).*

Like some other elements of marketing communication, sales promotion lacks the vital philosophical binoculars for examining its own problems. With 690 books and 128 journal articles on sales promotion ([www.questia.com](http://www.questia.com), 2008), none grounds it in philosophy. Though sales promotion exhibits a disposition towards connectivity (by working with advertising, public relations and publicity), the fact remains that it is plagued by the tendency to glorify products at the expense of man. In sales promotion we find, as Smith argued, a situation of man cheating man through pilfering, misredemption, malredemption, and over-redemption – which are all the fallouts of inconsiderate and unmitigated inducement. Sales promotion is in need of a man-oriented philosophy in which people are not perceived as numbers but as the true representation of humanity. In other words, sales promotion should step forward for rehumanization.

### **3.3.5 Personal Selling**

Personal selling is one part of the marketing communication mix, intended to work in association with advertising, sales promotion, public relations and publicity. Personal selling is the process of communicating with a potential buyer face-to-face, with the purpose of selling a product or service. What mainly sets personal selling apart from other methods of selling (e.g. internet, electronic, telephone and facsimile) is its human front, which subscribes that the salesperson must conduct business with the customer in person. Kotler (2003) describes personal selling as the tool in the buying process used for ascertaining the preferences of buyers, and convincing customers to take action in favour of a particular product. It involves at least two individuals – the seller and the buyer – in an atmosphere of interaction.

In general, if a product has high unit value (a car for example) and requires a demonstration of its benefits, the best marketing communication element for pushing it is personal selling. No doubt, after a demonstration, it is usually agreed whether the product is worth having or not. There may arise instant or delayed decision-making, but personal selling is said to have performed its role where products are sold through human contact.

A company that cannot afford a mass-advertising campaign might consider personal selling as an alternative to advertising. Since sales force compensation is largely based on actual sales, personal selling may require less money up front than other elements of marketing communication.

One of the advantages of personal selling is that it allows the salesperson to target the message specifically to a buyer and get a feedback almost immediately. This way, it is more precise than other elements of marketing communication and often has a greater persuasive impact. Another advantage is that personal selling can be an important source of marketing information (Canon et al, 1999). Salespeople may learn about competitors' products, for example, or about emerging customer needs that may lead to the development of a new product. If the sales force is well-trained - acting as problem solvers and advisers for customers rather than using hard-sell tactics - personal selling may help a company build and grow a strong clientele base.

According to Kotler, another advantage of personal selling is its capacity to generate and develop relationships, ranging from ordinary business comradeship to profound personal companionship. The presence of everyone involved promotes participation in discussions leading to sales and the confidence of the buyer in someone who has demonstrated the

willingness to listen to him/her. Therefore, the best way to communicate in the marketplace is through personal selling because

*While face-to-face with prospects, salespeople can get more attention than an advertisement or a display. They can adjust what they say or do to take into consideration culture and other behavioural influences on the customer. They can ask questions and find out about a customer's specific interests. They can figure out ways to solve customer problems. If, and when, the prospect is ready to buy, the salesperson is there to ask for the order. And afterward, the salesperson is there to be certain that the customer is satisfied and that the relationship between the customer and firm continues to be mutually beneficial (Perreault and McCarthy, 2002: 422)*

Since personal selling is the best exhibitor of communication in the marketplace, most of its problems are clearly self-inflicted. They are: lack of strategy definitions and decisions, employing people with the wrong personalities for the job, poor or inadequate training, discontinuity of field selling evaluation, applying falsified (or altogether wrong) information about the prospects' thinking and behavioural patterns, getting orders and keeping them, and poor sales administration support (Bednarz, 1998).

Another problem of personal selling is its inability to reach as many potential customers as advertising, plus the cost of each contact is much

higher. Unfortunately, personal selling is also commonly perceived as being a less than reputable field of work. Unethical salespeople, aggressive or hard sell tactics, and misleading sales pitches have made many buyers to be distrustful of personal sellers.

With 184 books and 116 journal articles on personal selling and none on its philosophy, it is evident that, like other elements of marketing communication, the enterprise needs a backbone of thoughts. However, it must be acknowledged that, among all the elements of marketing communication, personal selling bears the strongest testimony for the research in focus. It has an in-built mechanism for identifying the "I" (the seller) and the "Thou" (the buyer) in atmosphere of connectivity, relationship and participation. Commentators agree that personal selling exhibits an inherent connectivity with advertising, sales promotion, public relations and publicity – because without the support of these other elements, it cannot work.

However, it should be noted that it is not the desire for connectivity with the "other" person that drives the personal seller to the customer. Rather, it is the existence of a product that drives the aspiration for connectivity. The personal seller simply wants to get the product across by all means possible. Consequently, products have undue and overriding

influence over man in personal selling. This is perhaps one issue that the philosophy of personal selling should address. Unfortunately, such a philosophy does not exist at the moment.

### **3.4 Problems of Marketing Communication**

It must be acknowledged that this is not an attempt to exhaustively examine the entire problems in marketing communication. Thus, the focus shall be on what has been revealed and discussed so far. Presently, without doubt, the problems of marketing communication are derivable from the problems of its elements.

As discovered above, the problem of advertising individually is its larger than life posturing and an unrepentant dominance of others in the house of marketing communication. Perhaps, more germane is its tendency to position product higher and above man. For public relations the problem is its tendency to dissolve the individual into irrelevance in the cocoon of the group. For publicity, the problem is that it remains amoeboid – lacking in clearly definable structures. On their part, both sales promotion and personal selling are product-propelled instead of being man-centred. So far, the discovery is made that neither the global marketing communication nor its elements are structurally and philosophically sound. But before delving into

the larger problem of philosophical restructuring, it is pertinent to examine three prominent problems of marketing communication which are:

1. Dehumanization of man
2. Alienation of man
3. Separatism

#### **3.4.1 Dehumanization of Man in Marketing Communication**

Dehumanization is the deprivation of human qualities and attributes (Morris, 1982); or a process by which an individual or a group of individuals is perceived as inferior to another individual or another group of individuals or an entity. It is referred to as the disengagement of man from man (Bandura, 1999), thingification of man (Lescoe, 1974), and justification of exclusion of man from man (Maiese, 2003).

Socio-philosophical thinkers often view dehumanization as central to hatred, marginalisation, victimization, belligerence, violence and wars which permeate all aspects of human life such as governance (dictatorship), social relationships (racism and ethnicism), religion (sectarianism) – (Unah, 1995).

The most active agent of dehumanization in marketing communication is marketing research which is used to provide data support for all the elements aforementioned. It is defined by the American Marketing

Association as the *function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer through ... information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process.* Marketing research *specifies the information required to address these issues, designs the method for collecting information, manages and implements the data collection process, analyzes the results, and communicates the findings and their implications.* Marketing research consists of gaining consumer input and data. It is the lifeline between companies and customers, and it allows the application of scientific methods to gain knowledge about consumers, buyers, competitors, markets, and marketing. (Neal, 2002)

The historicism of marketing research shows that it views man not as an individual but as a figure, a data instrument, an object to be sampled in order to achieve the more important goals of raising market shares, increasing productivity and maximizing profit for the owners of the business (www.answers.com, 2008). Its interest is not humanity per se but the justification of decisions concerning the pushing and pulling of products in the marketplace.



Fundamentally, market research justifies the exclusion of man's individuality from the objectives, processes and results of marketing communication. Hair et al, like all other authors on marketing research, show how market research thingifies man as a mere data in the process of information gathering and recycling, while disengaging the researcher from the researched, emotionally and ontologically. In marketing research, man's attribute as a thinking being dissolves, his individuality is short-circuited and his inferiority to the result of the research is glorified. This is probably why out of the 1,089 books and 1,234 journal articles on marketing research on the Internet, none dealt with man as a thinking being. The best, yet inferior portrayal of man in marketing research is as an ordinary consumer or customer whose demographics and psychographics are more important than his individuality as far as the profitization of business is concerned.

Other methods through which man is dehumanized in marketing communication are: the excessive use of sexuality, outlandish abstractions, and the dramatization of violence for the purpose of selling a product. Nudity in print advertising of Lotus body cream, suggestive verbal delivery of Star beer and Guinness stout radio messages, the publicity endorsement of homosexuality through gay marriage by pop star Elton John are examples of the use of sexuality in marketing communication without the consideration

of the feeling of humanity in general, towards such methods of communication.

Bank PHB advertising, publicity, sales promotion and personal selling communication which show a basketballer jumping to the top of a skyscraper to score, is an example of outlandish abstractions which objectify man in marketing communication. The impossibility message in the BankPHB communication is carried to the extreme, forgetting that impossibility itself is a possibility. For instance, it is impossible for an individual to live forever. Also, it is impossible for man to give birth to a lion. As far as man is concerned, impossibility is an attestation of human limitation.

The empirically supported propaganda model of Herman and Chomsky shows how corporate media are able to carry out unparalleled, dehumanization campaigns that promote the corporate goal of selfish monopoly, oligopoly, and unbridled profit-maximization. Government-controlled media, in either democracies or dictatorships, are also capable of carrying out dehumanization campaigns (in the guise of public relations and publicity), in which opposition groups are given bad names in order to strangle, enslave, and murder them.

### 3.4.2 Alienation of Man in Marketing Communication

Alienation is as real and confounding as dehumanization in marketing communication. Generally, alienation is the idea of something being estranged or isolated or dissociated from its real source. It is the condition where the self cannot understand or accept or adequately reflect itself; where its desires are not authentically its own (Apperley, 2008). It is the *projection of thought into a sphere other than thought itself* (Unah, 2002: 159), or the *reification of man* (Zahar, 1974: 4). Alienation expresses self-inadequacy.

Hegel (1977) invented the concept of alienation (in his theory of finite anthropomorphism) as the expression of the deficit between self-consciousness and the consciousness of the Absolute Spirit caused by the projection into the physical. Feuerbach (1986), a Hegelian, abandoned the absolutist paraphernalia of Hegelian alienation and introduced a materialist and anthropological explication of self-alienation, a condition where alienation is at the level of both nature and supernature – where man strips himself of his own attributes, and projects such attributes to the forces of nature and supernature, and venerates them. Man's self-alienation, according to Feuerbach, accounts for man's loss of self-confidence and the helpless dependence on external powers such as superficial earthly deities

and the heavenly God. In order to reclaim his dignity and recall his attributes for self-actualization, Hegel says that man must undergo the upward dialectical process of finite unity with the absolute spirit while Feuerbach prescribes the inversion of the same process. Since Feuerbach, there have been other explications of alienation – by Karl Marx (1869), Jean-Paul Sartre (1953), Eric Fromm (1956) and Herbert Marcuse (1964).

The instrument of alienation in marketing is the misuse of communication through misinformation, disinformation to downright cheating. For instance, the central theme of *greatness* of GUINNESS EXTRA Stout's marketing communication is to the effect that no man can be great without consuming the alcoholic drink. In other words, GUINNESS gives greatness. Greatness is a concept that is heavily dependent on a person's perspective and biases, simply because the term is used to emphasize apparent superiority of a person. The historical usage of the concept indicates that it is purely a human attribute of achievement; that is why in Europe, the most lauded rulers were given the attribute "the Great" (e.g. Alfred the Great, Peter the Great), or during the Roman Era and Middle Ages, the Latin title for "the Great" (Magnus) was used (e.g. Albertus Magnus).

In Africa, we have the Great Overamwen Nogbaisi of the Benin Kingdom, Queen Amina the Great of the Hausa Empire; while Nelson

Mandela is undoubtedly the greatest modern African, living or dead. *Be not afraid of greatness: some men are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them* is a commonly quoted statement of William Shakespeare that is indicative of greatness as a human quality.

Greatness, by its true nature, is subjective. To take the concept out of its subjective source in man, and objectify it in GUINNESS, amounts to alienation. Going by the marketing communication claim of GUINNESS, all the Alfred-the-Greats, Queen-Amina-the-Greats of today, and Nelson-Mandelas of tomorrow must consume the drink in order to earn the appellation of greatness. This is not only absurd, but a questionable denial of a natural human attribute. To claim that GUINNESS is great is sensible, since man, using his advantage of consciousness, can so describe an object; but to say that the same man has to drink GUINNESS in order to actualize or reclaim his property of greatness, makes man to lose the natural self-confidence to achieve, and consequently drop into a state of hopelessness without GUINNESS EXTRA STOUT.

Another example of alienation is the commonplace use of the word *care* in marketing communication messages such as KIA... *the car that cares*; PEARS BABY RANGE ... *takes good care of your baby*, VITAFOAM MATTRESS... *caring through the years*. *Care* is a burdened state of the

human mind, as that arising from heavy responsibilities. To *care* is to be concerned or interested, or, to provide needed assistance or watchful supervision. In these and all instances, care is an attribute of man. In other words, it is not the car (for example) that cares, but the man who made the car. The car is an objective expression of the subjectivity of the maker's (human) consciousness.

The question is often asked: *who cares?* This damning or searching question (depending on the circumstance) shows that care is a *who* thing, not a what, or where, or how thing; that care is a *man* thing, not a *thing* thing. In other words, it is a quality of subjectivity that cannot be objectified in a product like cars, baby products, mattresses, furniture, and any other product or projection of marketing communication. The objectification of a human attribute such as caring, amounts to painful alienation through misinformation and disinformation in marketing communication. To claim that man can only be cared for, by products in marketing communication negates the natural condition of man to conceptualize and express care. A proper understanding of the notion and definition of care provides a robust platform to debunk and reject its current communicative use in the marketing of KIA cars, PEARS baby range, VITAFOAM mattresses among others.

In the examples of alcohol and automobile above, *greatness* and *care* are stripped off man, deposited with the products; then marketing communication enjoins human beings to venerate these attributes in the same products by purchasing them. In the situation, man dissociates his attributes from himself and searches for the same traits in his own creations – the products. This is clearly unacceptable for it diminishes man, and negates man's right to his own attributes.

### **3.4.3 Separatism of Man in Marketing Communication**

Separatism, another word for social isolation (Morris, 1992) is the conceptual description of the desire to stay apart from other members of a group. For a man, separatism is attitudinal; while for groups, it is fired by certain external motivations.

In politics and governance, separatism is pursued by separatist movements, or social activists aspiring sovereignty for a particular group of people from a dominant political establishment under which they suffer. Also, a government could split a group of people into units through the force of law to live differently like the defunct apartheid regime in South Africa. Separatist consciousness in most societies is caused and sustained by religious, regional, ethnic, gender, cultural and linguistic — or the amalgam of these

factors (www.answers.com, 2008). These factors produce extended motivations for separatism such as: indoctrinations, feeling of inadequacy or economic exploitation or political marginalization within the group; or the conviction of socio-economic self-reliance.

Separatist tendency has crept into marketing communication through textual exigency, pedagogy and professional practices of its various elements.

Marketing communication is a mix of the elements of advertising, public relations, sales promotion, publicity personal selling and a host of others – and literature on each of these elements are largely silent on their interconnective character. For instance, Ogunsanya (1991) deals with the strategic nature and techniques of public relations in 317 pages, but not forthcoming on the relationship between public relations and advertising, publicity and others. Though Black (1976) wrote about the relationship between advertising and public relations in chapter 10, this work on practical public relations seems oblivious of other elements in marketing communication.

Dyer (1982) looks at advertising as communication and how it affects human life, how it persuades people into action and manipulates consumer behaviour. In two hundred and thirty pages, only two pages are dedicated to public relations without stating categorically, the nature of the connectivity



between it and other elements of marketing communication.

Bovee and Arens (1992) subsumed public relations in advertising as a special type of advertising. In their work spanning approximately 800 pages, nothing is written about the connection between advertising and other elements of marketing communication.

However, very few texts on marketing communication have acknowledged the relationship between the elements of marketing communication. For instance, Perreault and McCarthy (2002: 392 – 420) show systematically, the nature and characteristics of some of the elements of marketing communication, demanding that these elements must be integrated through proper planning and execution. The point is made that the messages of advertising, public relations, personal selling etc must blend into a singularity without blurring the professional differentiations of the various elements. Having established that the element should and could work together, Perreault and McCarthy failed to adequately describe or highlight the nature of the bond between them or how the relationship can be cemented holistically and philosophically.

Each element of marketing communication *should integrate with other tools ... so that a unified message is consistently reinforced*, says Smith (1993: 21) to reinforce the position of Perreault and McCarthy. For Smith, the relationship between the elements of marketing communication is a cost

saving symbiosis. In other words, as soon as the cost factor disappears, there no longer exists a basis for interconnection. That is probably why in spite of his generosity with case studies, Smith does not establish a lasting reason for his preachment for an interconnective relationship between the elements.

While little literature on marketing communication attempt connectivity, albeit, without any philosophical cord, other books and journal entries on marketing communication (including its individual elements) seem unwilling to close ranks, thereby exposing their separatist tendencies.

Pedagogical approach to the study of marketing communication strongly supports separatism in the field because higher institutions all over the world teach the same elements in separate departments. For instance, in the University of Lagos, advertising, public relations, etc are taught in the Mass Communication department of the Social Science faculty as well as the Business Administration unit of the Business faculty. At the Lagos State University, the school of Communications provides for separate departments for advertising, public relations, etc while the same subjects are taught at the university's School of Business studies. Interestingly, the same literature on marketing communication is used as instructional materials in the separate departments/faculties. What happens to the synergy or connectivity that a few of the texts are espousing?

Professional practice, like pedagogy, encourages separatism in marketing communication. While professionals are expected to develop the practice of marketing communication holistically in order to combine the elements for strategic brand development and synergistic marketing for the achievement of consistent message delivery, practitioners seem to be focusing on the creation and execution of ideas, events, messages, and tactics in their specific areas of practice. For example, advertising practitioners, their agencies, and association, are selfishly concerned about possessing the creative licence to use communication tools to the best of self-advantage, as well as having access to cost-effective media deliverables for the exposure of their creative productions. In active service, some advertising agencies claim that they are marketing communication outfits thereby attracting the criticism that their claim is spurious because in the real sense of practice, they are advertising agencies, structurally functionally and philosophically.

On their part, public relations specialists, their outfits, and professional union are only concerned about image-building in whatever circumstance. They also focus on the networking of corporate coexistence with communities of people for the procurement of goodwill and mutual understanding. On a separate level, personal sellers use their companies and

professional alliance to rely on individual mobility and interpersonal communication skills in order to achieve on-the-spot contact and sales. For them, as long as this can be achieved in the scale that is proportionate to the achievement of sales target, advertising which should have been an ally would not be needed. While each professional group builds its own tent such as Association of Advertising Practitioners and International Public Relations Association, there is no association of marketing communication practitioners as at now.

Controversy still exists between advertising practitioners and personal sellers as to whether advertising can sell a product. While advertising professionals respond in the affirmative, personal selling practitioners argue that they do the selling while advertising should restrict itself to creating awareness for product. On their part, publicists claim that public relations practitioners cannot practice two different things (that is: publicity and public relations) at the same time, as they are suspected to do. Many public relations practitioners observe that publicists are a leech that feeds on the glory and influence of public relations. The squabbles are endless and they promote separatism.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Instances of separatism, dehumanization and alienation in marketing communication probably influenced the assertions of Smith and Perreault/McCarthy that the deliberate integration of the various elements of marketing communication is long overdue. Separatist tendencies are the major reason why these elements fail individually, thereby revealing the necessity of mutual cooperation. Some advertising practitioners are beginning to admit that if a company's public relations image is warped, there is little that advertising can do to create positive perception for the same company's product. In other words, the contribution of each element ensures successful communication of the company and its products in the marketplace. As observed by commentators on the development of marketing communication, if the elements must stay together, separatism must be jettisoned so that they can work together for the benefit of humanity and professionalism. Also, if dehumanization is negated, the place of man can be properly articulated and man's relationship with product can be effectively and positively elucidated. In the same vein, if alienation is neatly reversed, man's qualities and attributes can be reappropriated and harmony can then have its place in marketing communication. But how can these be done? The answer to this question is considered in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Concepts of Man and Marcel's Intersubjective Solution to the Problems of Marketing Communication**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the conceptual offerings concerning the nature of man – from the Classical Greek, the traditional African, the ecclesiastical, through the anthropo-philosophical to the communicative – in order to establish the locus for Gabriel Marcel's existentialist philosophy or ontology of man. In the same vein, the chapter's elastic inspection of the nature of man from Socrates to Marcel prepares the ground for the argument that man is the core essence and the indispensable driver of the locomotive of marketing communication. With reference to the variety of puzzles concerning the nature of man and the hitherto stated problems of marketing communication, this chapter provides their solution based on the solid foundation of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy of man.

As analyzed in the previous chapter, it is stressed here that the problematics of marketing communication are man-centred. Dehumanization, as argued previously, is the negativization of human values by man; alienation is the misappropriation of human qualities and attributes by man; while separatism is the disconnection of man from man – in

marketing communication. For the sake of emphasis, the statement that man's being is at the centre of the problematics of marketing communication is so self-evident that it cannot be denied as an ontological fact.

As a concept, man is so familiar that little needs to be said about it, except that, its nature remains confounding, exhilarating and generative of continuous debates. Ontological concerns about the being of man remain relevant in all endeavors of life - whether in the humanities or the sciences (Unah, 2002). Being the traditional province of the study and thoughts about man, the humanities seem used to the challenges thereof. Conventions accept that man's state of being, with its metaphysical contingencies, should not be the concern of the sciences simply because of the empirical nature of the discipline. But this thinking is fading into obsolescence.

According to Krich and Koch (2004: 17), the time has come *for science to take on the previously forbidden subject of consciousness* – the handling of awareness *molecules* – the being-ness, which allows man to consciously or un-consciously partake in the everyday process of communication. However, unknown to both Krich and Koch, they were actually bringing ontology to bear on microbiology. They were concerned about the ontological components of *being* but attributed these to some empirical elements (such as DNA cells and molecules). We state that man is not just the genetic concoction of cells and molecules, but *being*. Man is his own

consciousness, an expression of his own mind. In the assumptions of Krich and Koch however, the point is made that the matter of man is the concern of all endeavours of study – humanities, sciences and social sciences alike. What then is man? Who is man?

## **4.2 Concepts of Man**

Concepts of man are as multitudinal as there are philosophical temperaments; and a detailed examination of all of them should be unwieldy, tiresome, distracting and uncalled for in this particular academic construction. However, relevant concepts of man have been selected for examination in such a way that they lead discerningly to the Marcelian bus stop. They are: the classical Greek, the fragments, modern, continental, ecclesiastical, ontologico-anthropological, communicative, marketing and existentialist.

### **4.2.1 Classical Greek Concepts of Man**

Early philosophical treatment of the nature of man can be found in the works of the classical era to which Socrates, Plato (his pupil), and Protagoras of Abdera, belonged. According to Socrates, self-knowledge is the characteristic pursuit of man. For him, self-knowledge is virtue and a virtuous person is full of happiness. Self-knowledge helps social networking and the



consummation of relationships. Socrates conceives man as a being created to pursue self-knowledge.

After the persecution and execution of Socrates by the Athenian authorities, Plato presented another perspective on the nature of man. According to him, the concept of justice articulates and elaborates the true nature of man as the finite link of all things in the society. Drawing from the socio-political skews of his time, Plato argued that:

*Man is a soul structured into three parts. There is the rational part of the soul, the spirited part of the soul and the appetitive part of the soul... the function of the rational part of the soul is to coordinate and guide the activities of the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul... justice in both man and his alter ego (society) would consist in each part performing its function effectively without undue interference with the function of the other...(Cf. Unah, 2002:132)*

After Plato was Aristotle who says in his works that man is that which is *perfected by society and the best of all animals* (Radcliffe, 1998: 223). Taking a cue from Plato's thought about man, Protagoras of Abdera rendered that: man is the measure of all things; of things that are, that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not. Protagoras' pontification simply means that man is the chief architect of all relationships, connections, and

meaning in society. In other words, man creates and supervenes in all things that have to do with humanity.

#### 4.2.2 Fragments of Concepts of Man

Though the classical era pioneered the philosophical dissection of the nature of man, the matter remained inconclusive as it was left hanging like a question mark.

Rhine (1954: 7) puts the question about the nature of man in the form of a puzzle: *What are we human beings, you and I? No one knows. A great deal is known about man, but his fundamental nature – what makes him behave as he does – is still a profound mystery... such ignorance about the knower himself is scarcely credible.* Direct and indirect responses to Rhine's puzzle differ.

Morris (1982: 792), says that man is *any human being regardless of sex or age: a member of the human race; a person...characterized by erect posture and opposable thumbs...homo sapiens distinguished by the ability to communicate by means of organized speech and to record information in a variety of symbolic systems.* Taking a cue from this definition, the point is asserted that man is both male and female *homo sapiens*, members of the human race, who have the natural ability to communicate. Man is universal and multilateral as characterized by the ability to think, verbalize and act.

Accordingly, man is best positioned to create and sustain his own creations, the capability that separates man from animals.

There are fragmented commentaries concerning the nature of man. In his commentary, Marcus Aurelius points out that *man whatever it really is, consists of a little flesh, a little breath and the ruling Reason* (Cf: *Ibid*). John Stuart Mills contends that men are men before they became any thing else (Cf: *Ibid*). According to Pope Paul VI, *man is also, preeminently, intelligent and free; and thanks to these powers, he is, and must remain, superior to the rest of creation* (Cf: *Ibid*, 224).

#### **4.2.3 Modern Concept of Man**

From the rationalist temperament of Rene Descartes, man is presented as a thinking being, and marked out from any other thing in this world by thought. Man thinks in order to exist. Man is, because he thinks. British empiricist thinking as exemplified by David Hume, presents man as a bundle of perception, a combination of senses, whose essence is in being sociable and reasonable. David Hume says:

*Man is a sociable, no less than a reasonable being: But neither can he always enjoy company agreeable and amusing, or preserve the proper relish for them. Man is also an active being, and from that disposition, as well as from the various necessity of human life, must submit to*

*business and occupation: But the mind requires some relaxation, and cannot support its bent to care and industry. It seems then that nature has pointed out a mixed kind of life as most suitable to the human race, and secretly admonished them to allow none of these biases to draw too much... (Hume, 1952: 452).*

#### **4.2.4 Continental Concepts of Man**

Man in the Ancient Chinese philosophy is one that is essentially committed to the breeding and transferring of ideas. Confucian philosophy of the Ancient Chinese for instance, avers that man is an embodiment of his past, his present and his future - a being that is always looking for sources of creative self expression either in "doing for nothing" or "doing nothing."

African existential thinking of the Zulus says that man is a *person*. The thinkers of Kasongo Niembo of the Baluba Kingdom and the Bantu philosophers call man, *Muntu, the Great Great One*, the God of the land (M'Timkulu, 1977: 14). Booth, in presenting the African thought further, says that man *stands at the center of things; he participates both in nature and in supernature, both in the material and the spiritual* (Booth, 1977: 35). Man is given to the world and man is taken out of the world. Yet man is the link between that which is the world and that, which is beyond the world. Donald M'Timkulu says that man, to the African, is the chief revelation of the God of

the land; and that the God is concerned *first with relationships between man and man* (M'Timkulu, 1977: 15). Clearly, man is a being, a *who* or *whom* linguistically, and a universal one, fundamentally.

#### **4.2.5 Ecclesiastical Concepts of Man**

Ecclesiastical commentaries and characterization of man show themselves generously in the Holy books – the Bible and the Qur'an. In 70 verses between Genesis 1:26 and Revelation 21:3, the Holy Bible presents man as the entire human race: a product of the creative power of God, abundantly endowed to dominate and recreate his environment, spiritually connected to God, always in the process of self-renewal through faithful prayer and obedience to God, and provided with the access to divine salvation in sinful and unsavory circumstances. The quintessential man, according to the Holy Bible, is the one who, like Jesus Christ, shows love to others. Love thy neighbour as thyself is a neo-Marcelian Biblical dictum, which is indicative of God-ordained activity of man, and also reflective of the divine acquaintance with intersubjectivity. Medieval Christian thinkers such as St. Augustine of Hippo and St. Thomas Aquinas drew their thoughts from the Holy Bible that man is conceived and endowed by an omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient God.

With 92 mentions of man, the Holy Qur'an raises 51 issues which broadly characterize and locate man in the divine supremacy and injunctions of ALLAH, reaffirming the Christian religious argument that man, God's *vicegerent* (Surat 2:30; 6:165) on earth, is the creation of ALLAH. Man is contemplative and prayerful according to the first *Surat* of the Qur'an; and this religious character of man is indicative of his possession of a soul, and the capacity to love and care according to the grace, mercy, power and justice of ALLAH. Man is covetous, duty-bound to God, prayerfully communicative with God, personally responsible for his/her own ways with limited freewill, always targeted by Satan, sinful, condemned to toil and struggle, and created in the *best of moulds* (S 95:4). Surat 2:1–29 presents three broad categories of man according to how they receive ALLAH. First is the category of man who fears and believes in the existence, revelations and provisions of ALLAH and life hereafter; second is man who is an avowed unbeliever; and the third is the man, a pretentious, self-deceiving rejector of Faith. Qur'an's quintessential man is one who is like others in the first category; who does not mock others but is like light, which shows the way to others. The signification of otherness is quite useful in considering the intersubjective slant of the Holy Qur'an. The holy book stresses the divine relationship between man and ALLAH as the ultimate prototype for

man-to-man relationship in which love and care for others, intersubjectively speaking, take the centrestage.

Medieval Islamic philosophers like Alghazzali and Alfa Rabi drew their conception of man from the Holy Qur'an. Alghazzali for instance, argued in a neo-Platonic manner, that man possesses knowledge and will, which characterize and separate him from animals. Being at the higher level of conditioning, man, according to Alghazzali, possesses a divine capacity to reason. He is quoted as saying:

*Man's nature is made up of four elements, which produce in him four attributes, namely, the beastly; the brutal, the satanic, and the divine. In man, there is something of the pig, the dog, the devil, and the saint. The pig is the appetitive which is repulsive not for its form but for its lust and its gluttony. The dog is passion, which barks and bites, causing injury to others. The devil is the attribute, which instigates these former two, embellishing them and bedimming the sight of reason, which is the divine attribute. Divine reason, if properly attended to, would repel the evil by exposing its character. It would probably control appetite and passions. But when a man fails to obey the dictates of reason, these three other attributes prevail over him and cause his ruin (Cf. Runes, 1955:35).*

Both Christian and Islamic concepts of man agree that Adam was the first man. But fundamentally, both Religions, in their renditions of man, throw up ontologico-anthropological considerations of man.

#### **4.2.6 Ontologico-Anthropological Concepts of Man**

From Immanuel Kant, through Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, to Charles Darwin, the point is made that man is at the centre of being-ness, albeit, from the theistic and atheistic modes of thought.

In the philosophical consideration of Immanuel Kant, man is best comprehended metaphysically, as a thinking being with the native capacity to "go beyond experience" (Cf. Unah: 2002, 216). Kant's presentation of man as a metaphysical being requires that the natural endowments of intelligence and rationality

*...which make man a thinking being are the natural properties of every individual, race or culture notwithstanding. The point being made here is that a journey into pure human ontology would have totally discouraged the imperial, impositional and absolutist attitude of discrimination. In essence, since ontology evaluates man in his universal essence as pure being, it does not create a dichotomy, divide or demarcation between this or that race, ethnicity, woman or man.*  
(ibid. 223-224).



Immanuel Kant analyzed man from the transcendental and interdisciplinary perspectives, arguing that the structures of man are pure and uncomplicated in themselves.

In his anthropo-philosophical analysis of man, Ludwig Feuerbach demonstrates through his materialistic dialectics, that man relies on his daily interaction with nature to discover his essence. Departing from Hegel's theistic anthropology, Feuerbach argued that man is naturally endowed to dominate and recreate his environment for the purpose of development (Feuerbach, 1989). He characterized man as *unlimited, infinite, true, complete... and absolute*, (Cf. Copleston, 1963:67) like the God of the Holy Bible or ALLAH of the Holy Qur'an. By his argument, man fundamentally embodies the totality of all things, centrally and peripherally.

Atheistic or anti-religious characterization of man underlines Karl Marx's anthropology in which man is contentiously defined as consciousness. He says that all things are products of man's thought which itself advances with time, providing the required force for the transformation of nature and transmutation of essences. For Marx, only man can provide pragmatic and empirical solutions to all manners of problems within the environment. Man is historically imbued with potentiality, the natural capacity for initiative, the

energy for productive activity, and the ability to design dialectical laws, which scientifically govern all things.

Though the positions of Kant, Heidegger, Feuerbach and Marx concerning man are diametrically opposed to that of Medieval scholars whose guiding books were the Bible and Koran, none of them was able to deal with the matter of the creation of man in fashion of the holy books. Charles Darwin was the first to chart an anthropological path in that direction – challenging the ecclesiastical account of the beginning of man.

According to Charles Darwin's anthropogenetic or evolutionary theories, man was not created by any supernatural entity, and neither is man self-crafted. Fundamentally, man evolved from one form of specie or another in nature, the nearest semblance of which is in the kingdom of animals, (Darwin, 1945) specifically, the apes. Man is an evolutionary being that is always involved in a struggle for survival in the process of natural modulation of population. The Darwinian man is eternally involved in sexual selection, whereby males struggle to possess females as partners in procreation (Darwin, 1901). Copulation becomes the essence of man, the principle of which man transfers to plants and animals. Man's hunger for sex, suffering from illness, starvation, experience of pain, growth, and death are not only natural; they ascertain that man is at the same level with animals.

Accordingly, the man-animal levelism institutes the link among all things and states of affairs in the world.

#### **4.2.7 Communicative Concepts of Man**

Kenneth Burke provides one of the philosophically vivid communicative concepts of man which states that *man is the symbol-using inventor of the negative separated from his natural condition by instruments of his own making goaded by the spirit of hierarchy and rotten with perfection* (1966: 16). Essentially, Burke's definition maintains that man is distinct from other creatures by virtue of his use of symbols to communicate, his understanding of negation, his separating himself from nature by his own techniques, his existence in differing social structures, and his goal to become better than he presently is. Burke explains that man's ability to condense symbols into categories brings about the understanding by others (ibid: 7) and leads to man's quest for identity and social belonging (MacLennan, 2005). Burke sees all human action as infused with symbols, which are used to help create our sense of who we are and how we connect. In order to accomplish these, man seeks for differences and commonalities respectively.

In Burke's thinking, man's natural state is that of basic needs and appetites. However, using the instruments of communicative tools and language, man has taken on a nature, which is completely different from that of his original state. One major example of man's instruments is exemplified in technology. Technology has accomplished the task of separating man from nature.

#### **4.2.8 Marketing Concept of Man**

Man is a commodity, according to Erich Fromm's marketing concept of man. Man's acquisition of a twentieth century *marketing character* (1981: 132) through which a neo-capitalist, man-for-himself orientation holds sway, has turned man into an item of sellability. Fromm's conception of man is based on his idea of a personality market where man is nothing but a commodity available for sale as a trade and utility value. Here, man competes with and seeks to defeat and buy others; and marketability therefore becomes a function of

*... how well persons sell themselves on the market, how well they get their personality across, how nice a package they are; whether they are cheerful, sound, aggressive, reliable, ambitious; furthermore, what their family backgrounds are, what clubs they belong to, and whether*

*they know the right people. The type of personality required... must fulfill one condition: to be in demand. ... one must be able to win in competition with many others in order to have success. If it were enough for the purpose of making a living to rely on what one knows and what one can do, one's self-esteem would be in proportion to one's capacities, that is, to one's use value. But since success depends largely on how one sells one's personality, one experiences oneself as a commodity or, rather, simultaneously as the seller and the commodity to be sold (ibid: 133).*

Fromm averred that man is no longer concerned about ontological connectivity with himself and others but his marketability. Marketing conception of man ensures the disappearance of the other.

#### **4.2.9 Existentialist Concepts of Man**

Man is Being, in existentialist thinking. But this concoction of man varies in alignment from Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Buber and Gabriel Marcel to many others in the existentialists' fraternity.

In the existentialism of Martin Heidegger, man is Being of beings, which he calls *Dasein* (Heidegger, 1962: H.27). *Dasein* (Das: the; Ein: Man) or Man means: *the Being of beings as such that is ecstatically disclosed in care, not only of human Being...Dasein is itself by virtue of its essential*

*relation to Being in general* (Heidegger 2000, p. H.31). Heidegger's man is the ultimate being who is in an existential position of freedom to appear as he is and bring about other things in the world through the ontological process of transcendence. Man, according to Heidegger, is the only one who can appear as is and still go beyond himself to make being a possibility in a continuous process of transformation: *insofar as Being constitutes what is asked about, and Being means the Being of entities... we must make an entity – the inquirer – transparent in his own being... This entity which each one of us, is himself and which includes inquiry as one of the possibilities of its Being, we shall denote by the term DASEIN...* (Lowith, 1966: 35). From the position of phenomenological ontology, Heidegger says that man is isolated but lives a life of coexistence where self-consciousness implies the consciousness of others (as they are).

In the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre, man is Being-for-itself, which is always in a situation of tension with Being-for-others or other people. Being-in-itself refers to objects in the external world - a mode of existence that simply is - not conscious and therefore, neither active nor passive, and without capacity for transcendence. On the other hand is Being-for-itself or man, who is constantly recreating himself but unfortunately focusing on himself as Being-in-itself and not Being-for-itself. He becomes a "man for

others," committing an act of bad faith instead of being true to his own freedom. For Sartre, "Thou" is an intrusion and a threat on the freedom of "I", and the desire of "I" to live for "Thou" is an expression of inauthenticity.

In Martin Buber's existentialism, man is a Being which is "I" at the same time. For him, this "I" exists in relation to other entities referred to as "You", "He", "She" and "It". Man is *an actual human being, of you and me, of our life and our world, not of any I-in-itself and not of any Being-in-itself* (Buber, 1970: 65). Consequently, man is compulsorily a member of a human community in which exists an interpersonal dialogue with other persons and God, who are denoted as Thou. Buber's existentialist theory is that there is always an "I" (the individual) and a "Thou" (the community). "I" is the human being, which experiences the "Thou" or the community of other human beings.

Generally, existentialist presentations of man are either theistic or atheistic, revolting or accommodating. However, there are grounds that are common to them all: that man is singular and individual; and that man is all about the self. In other words, man is the self, which is technically logged out of abstractions and generalizations. Man discovers and lives in self-existence as nothing can live for him or on his behalf, because he is the agent of

self-expression empowered by the fact of freedom to take self-motivated actions and simultaneously, be self-accountable.

Theistic existentialist conception of man subscribed to by Kierkegaard and Buber says that man is structurally deficient and therefore is in a continuous search for something to fill the vacuum of the self through an omnipotent God. On the contrary, atheistic existentialists such as Sartre and Nietzsche, argue that man is chiefly a purposeless being in a precariously hostile and irreverent universe. In the circumstance, man lives in despair, anxiety, and without the sense of self-worth. Thus, they aver, man cannot be completely described and neither can man be flawlessly understood.

Though Gabriel Marcel draws from the theistic existentialist concept of man, he presents it from an angle that is fresh and most relevant in the present endeavour.

#### **4.3 Gabriel Marcel's Concept of Man**

Man is a *being* in the world whose existence is not ostracized from the universe, but fundamentally connected to it, argues Gabriel Marcel. In his concept of man, Marcel consistently used the word *incarnation* to justify his position that man's body is the indivisible personification of a wholesome entity. He identified two genres of man – inauthentic man and authentic man.



Inauthentic man is characterized by the disposition towards the Cartesian disconnection of mind from the body, alienation of himself from the rest of humanity, and separation of his activities from the endeavours of others. An inauthentic man lives and cherishes the Heideggerian isolated but transcendental existence; and for him or her, another man is a faceless specimen, an anonymous statistical item, or even a deliberately separated commodity. According to Marcel, the inauthentic man is the agent of dehumanization who does not have enough vision to see himself in the other or the other in himself. The inauthentic man uses the instrument of technology to distance himself from others in the name of civilization. For the inauthentic man, sharing is estranged, freedom is used for selfish denial of access to being, and relationships serve to skew opportunities only in his direction. Marcel laments the existence of the inauthentic man and upholds the virtues and relevance of the authentic man.

An authentic man, according to Gabriel Marcel, is reflective of being and possesses the capacity to transcend the barriers of objectification into an intersubjective existence and co-essence. Just like the body is ontologically attached to being, the authentic man understands that he is fundamentally linked to himself and therefore necessarily seeks attachment to other beings like him. Authentic man lives with others in the *I-Thou* relationship in which there is reciprocal sincerity and personal generosity. The authentic man,

according to Marcel, is not and does not regard the other as a *he* or *she* or *it*, because to do so is to objectify the self or the others and render existence ordinary, meaningless and unproductive.

*When I opt to regard the other as a Thou, instead of a he or a she, I no longer look upon him as an object to be exploited, as a freedom to be possessed and appropriated. And paradoxically, in the generous giving of myself without any reservation or qualification, in my spiritual openness and availability to the other, I actually discover my own freedom (Cf. Lescoe, 1974: 99-100).*

Marcel avers that the authentic man is an agent of fraternity because in relishing in his own freedom, he appreciates the freedom of others and gets close in order to help bring out the best that the freedom can offer in terms of potentiality and actuality. To recognize that the other is free, Marcel says, is to deal with the stifling imprisonment of selfishness and permanently banish inauthenticity.

*Two human beings open themselves up for one another, appeal to one another in a free, inner movement of love, by which they break through their narrow individuality and thus become themselves. It is in my relationship with the other that the process of my becoming a person takes place. I do not want to comprehend the other methodically but rather to reenter into myself in the*

*concrete experience of being with the other* (Cf. Ewijk, 1965: 68-69).

Authentic man personifies presence in such a way that the other man knows and acknowledges that he is actually available. Presence is expressed through communication, which transports concern, love, appreciation and beingthereness. For instance, knowing that a neighbour exists is one level of existential awareness, greeting the neighbour daily is another. But showing concern and rendering assistance when the neighbour is in distress or anguish is the ultimate expression of genuine existence. Marcel gives an example:

*Let us think, if you like, of a conductor whom we have habitually to deal with in the train or bus ride to our work – to our office. At the start, this man has for us only the functional reality bound up with the fact of punching the tickets or driving the bus. But let us imagine that something unusual draws our attention to him. For instance, a sign of physical suffering, or perhaps some moral distress. The link between us seizes to be purely functional. This man really becomes a human being for us – a presence! And this will perhaps extend itself through the question, which I shall perhaps ask him if I succeed in mastering my discretion or my natural shyness.*

*Let us suppose I ask him what is the matter? and he answers me, perhaps moves to see that he has aroused my interest. In this way, we become really present to one*

*another, at least for a brief moment. It is the dawn of what I have called intersubjectivity, that is to say mutual openness. It would be useful to note that this cannot be conveyed in strictly relational language, from the moment we become presentially aware of one another, we can no longer be considered as two terms external to one another. We are on the verge of becoming internal to one another... (Marcel, 1963: 254-255)*

The Marcelian man is fundamentally intersubjective; an attribute which transcends (one step beyond) *presence* with others or an expression of the critical beingthereness. The intersubjective man consciously participates with other humans who he does not regard as things and therefore experiences being in the world. Participation for the intersubjective man, according to Marcel, is evoked through direct metaphysical consciousness. It is not an expression of the will to do, but a self-revealing experience to which man must not throw an obstacle. In the intersubjective *I-Thou* relationship, both *I* and *Thou* possess similar individual human attributes; in which case the *I* is potentially a *Thou*, if positions swap. In other words, *I* could become *Thou*, and *Thou* could be *I*. Since *I* and *Thou* can interchange positions, it is possible for every man to experience the same states of affairs and acquire the capacity to share the similitude of understanding through presence and participation. Through participation, the authentic intersubjective Marcelian man is himself a gift for the other to

receive, and the other is a gift for him to appreciate - in a reciprocal atmosphere which Marcel calls *co-presence* (1960: 90).

#### **4.4 Marcelian Man: Solution to Marketing Communication Problems**

Concepts of man from Socrates to Marcel as examined above prove one fact: man is concerned with all things in the universe, and all things find meaning and value, based purely on man's existence. Nothing, if at all it exists, can question or assert its own existence without the humanistic or scientific prompting of, or motivation by man. Even in the face of nothing, only man can talk about it. Nothing, like something, is the concern of man. Man speaks for and about all things, including the self; but nothing can speak for man. Subjects of human endeavour such as education, law, and even marketing communication are included in the purview of man. To apply the dictum of Protagoras of Abdera, it can be stated that: man is the measure of all things, including marketing communication.

However, a discerning question may arise as to the appropriateness of Marcel's concept of man in the consideration of the problematics of marketing communication. Why should we not apply the concepts of man as availed by the classical works of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Protagoras of Abdera? Is the man of the modern thinkers like Rene Descartes and David

Hume not appropriate? Why should the continental and ecclesiastical accounts of man be inadequate? Ontologico-anthropological conceptions of man seem large enough to be useful in solving marketing communication problems, yet Marcel's account is preferred. Why is that the case? Why are the communicative and marketing concepts of man not appropriate since the focus here are the problematics of marketing communication? The existentialist movement, which is Marcel's philosophical constituency, provides many concepts of man to choose from; but why is Gabriel Marcel theory best suited for the purpose at hand? To briefly answer these questions, we start with Socrates.

To place marketing communication on the platform of Socratic concept of man is to look at the enterprise as an epistemological activity in which self-knowledge solves all problems. Perhaps, in this area of consideration, the Socratic dictum would say: marketing communicator, know thyself. That could be true; but if it were absolutely accurate, where then is the man who the marketing communicator seeks to communicate with? Of course he cannot be found in the Socratic epistemic roundabout. Having left out an essential component of focus, mere self-knowledge, as virtuous as it may be, cannot deal with the daunting problems of dehumanization, alienation and separatism in marketing communication.

Plato's concept of man would not suffice either, since marketing communication is not structurally tripartite as we observe in the philosopher's argument concerning the nature of man. As explained earlier, marketing communication consists of many parts or elements such as advertising, public relations, publicity, sales promotion, personal selling, etc. Though the concept of justice could serve to enjoin each element of marketing communication to perform its role according to its calling, Plato's idealism is tailor-made for the socio-political arena.

The tendency of modernists like Descartes and Hume to dissect man into mind and body and then subsume one under the other does not help marketing communication, which is plurally interactive rather than mono-structural.

Man, as traditionally conceived in various continents of the world are, simply acknowledged, religious. As clearly argued earlier, the God of the land in Africa is concerned about supernatural relationships that dissolve into man-to-man connectivity. The God of the Holy Bible emanated from continental Europe; while the Allah of the Holy Qur'an originated from the Middle East. Both divine creators have spread in terms of their influence, to other continents of the world with their worshippers preaching peace, love and happiness for mankind. Such preachments come with the injunction: love neighbour as yourself. Perhaps, peace, love and happiness could add

something positive to marketing communication; but whatever this may be, cannot be primary. The primary thing in marketing communication is the business-like announcement of the physically beneficial process of exchange. It cannot be denied that the love-thy-neighbour injunction is reminiscent of the Marcelian man, wrapped in the agape attitude. But the holy books did not provide the systematic and directional approach the way Gabriel Marcel has enunciated (see Chapter 2) in order to grapple with the unsettling problems of marketing communication. Another relevant point is that in the holy books, love-thy-neighbour is a statement that is internal to churches, mosques, and believers alike, but external to marketing communication. Through Marcel, it is a way of coexistence that is effectively locatable in the core of marketing communication. Perhaps, the point should be made that marketing communication is not a spiritual activity requiring divine control or intervention, as would be needed by the faiths, traditional beliefs and prayer warriors. No doubt, the Marcelian man has an edge over the continental and ecclesiastical man in providing the solutions to the problems identified in marketing communication.

Man in the anthropological philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx does not fit the mould required by marketing communication. While Feuerbach's man is a being who is in a dialectical relationship with nature for the purpose of environmental development, marketing communication is in



dire need of the man who is in a communicative relationship with another, for the purpose of exchange development and purposeful achievement of processes. For Marx, man is consciousness; but marketing communication requires more than consciousness to function.

Marketing communication does not concern itself with the archaic question pertaining to creationism and evolution, as did Charles Darwin (though he championed a revolution in science) in his conception of man. Darwin's man is an evolutionary being in an eternal struggle for survival through ejaculative expression of sexual desires. Though present-day marketing communication often uses the element of sex in packaging messages for today's audience, it is an act of dehumanization, which the world is not at peace with.

Perhaps, Burke's communicative conception that man creates a sense of belonging and human connectivity could be relevant in marketing communication, particularly with reference to the usage of signs and symbols of communication. But Burke derails as he concerns himself centrally with comparative man-animal relationsing. For the sake of emphasis, marketing communication is about man-man relationship – a fact that is accommodated by Marcel's account of man.

Eric Fromm's conception of man as a commodity is a curious thought, which cannot solve but accentuate the already nerving problems of

marketing communication. If it is true that man is a commodity, then man has dropped from a higher level of existence to the lowest level ever thought of a thing. Fromm's idea of man has thingified humanity in a market that is strictly personified and reopened the chapter on the disturbing subject of dehumanization. We agree with Fromm that man can be packaged like a product and backed with the elements of marketing communication. But how do we reverse the dehumanization in Fromm's commoditization of man? To answer this question, Marcel's man replaces Fromm's man.

Existentialist thoughts of man pose the greatest challenge in determining the best concept of man for dealing with the problematics of marketing communication. Perhaps, existentialists would see eye-to-eye that man is Being in an ontological repositioning of marketing communication. Perhaps, they would all concur that man's existentialia determines all marketing communication activities and their domino effects. However, a reference to the variety of existentialist renditions of man above indicates clearly that all of them cannot serve the present purpose of solving the acknowledged problems of marketing communication. For instance, Heidegger's Dasein is a transcendental man, which is given to the tendency to be isolated or separatist; an attribute which has been discovered to be presently negativizing marketing communication. Sartre's Being-for-itself or man for himself, in its authentic frame, is a threat to others and therefore

serves the purpose of selfishness which is inimical to the search for progress in marketing communication. Like Heidegger's *Dasein*, Sartre's *Being-for-itself* aids the separatist tendencies which is currently plaguing marketing communication.

Much as the I-Thou theory in Buber's concept of man subjectifies marketing communication and seemingly renders its meaningfulness and relevance therein, its lack of intersubjective approach makes it impotent in resolving the problems at hand. If carefully observed, the *Thou* in marketing communication is necessarily singular as an *is*; but the *Thou* in Buber is plural (an *are*), being indicative of the community, the collective and multiple coessences. Under closer scrutiny, it should be observable that the *I* in marketing communication is flexible enough to interchange position with another *I*; but the *I* in Buber cannot do so because it suffers fixity in singular-plural relationship with the *Thou*. But with Gabriel Marcel, the singularity of *Thou* and its spatio-temporal interchangeability of position with *I*, raise it above Buber's concept of man. Also, the singularity of *Thou* and its spatio-temporal interchangeability of position with *I* is the kernel of Marcel's intersubjectivity theory which elevates his concept of man above other existentialists conceptions of man, particularly Buber's. It also suggests the automatic relevance and applicability of the Marcelian intersubjective (I-Thou) theory in marketing communication. Because of this relevance and

applicability, the fundamentality of Marcel's man in resolving the problematics marketing communication becomes easily discernible. Also, the domiciliation of Marcel's *I-Thou* intersubjectivity theory in marketing communication is finally confirmed. This is even coupled with the agreement that Marcel pioneered the *I-Thou* concept of man:

*...Gabriel Marcel is the originator of this now world-famous phrase, I-Thou. As early as 1915, Marcel was already studying the metaphysical nuances of the different kind of relationships, i.e. between an I and a he, she or it and between I and Thou. Martin Buber's volume Ich and Du did not appear until 1923. Today, this notion is one of the best know existentialist themes and while it is absolutely true that Buber's small volume made the notion known to millions of people, it would seem that Marcel is the originator of this very important notion (Keen, 1967: 29)*

Having answered the question about the significance and applicability of the intersubjective Marcelian concept of man in the present context, it should not be out of place to restate that the problematics of marketing communication remain man-centred. In tune with Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity, the point is asserted that man in the center of today's marketing communication is inauthentic.

As argued earlier, contemporary marketing communication objectifies man and consequently negativizes subjective human values through dehumanization; alienates man from himself by stripping him of his human qualities and turning him into a mere statistical unit; and relishes in selfish isolationism that disconnects rather than bring about the mutuality of beingthereness. The man under probe is the practitioner of marketing communication, which we locate in advertising agencies, public relations firms, publicity outfits, sales promotion companies and personal selling bureaus. The man under our searchlight, due to his tendency to objectify another man, can also be found in the marketing communication departments of companies, organizations and government establishments.

However, there is the other man who is objectified due to his non-recognition as an active agent of marketing communication. This other man is the target of usage and abandonment in marketing communication. This other man is the one a marketing communicator would refer to as the consumer, the buyer, the respondent, or simply the target, because the marketing communicator goes after him in order to convince him to buy and consume a product or patronize a particular service, for selfish profit-maximization considerations.

Going by the Marcelian concept of man, it seems that the marketing communicator (the objectifier) recognizes the other man who we denote as

‘the objectified’, as being there, because without this acknowledgement, the marketing communicator himself lacks the locus for existence. As a maxim therefore, the marketing communicator cannot but communicate with the objectified. Without the objectified, who shall the message about a product be aimed? Without the objectified, to who shall a product’s properties be communicated? Without the objectified, who would answer the searching questions of the marketing communication researcher? However, the point should be made that the linguistic label of the objectified or thingified man in marketing communication – as the consumer, the buyer, and the respondent – obliterates his human essences.

According to the Marcelian paradigm, to refer to man as a consumer, buyer, or respondent in marketing communication is a signification of objectification or thingification and a dangerous pointer to inauthenticity. While the marketing communicator would reflect about himself as being “inside marketing communication”, he would think of the objectified, the thingified, who he refers to as the consumer, the buyer, the respondent as being “outside marketing communication.” When one is inside and the other outside, then the genuine meeting point is difficult to observe and comprehend; and where there is no mutually felt human appreciation, then there is no genuine relationship between the *objectifier* and the *other* who is *objectified*.

Since the marketing communicator is inside and the other is outside, the former forces the latter to depend on him; using the insight of his creative freedom to trample upon the freedom of the other by excessively bombarding him with messages he does not want or need – at home, on the road, at work and even at rest. Consequently, the other is disarmed and cannot use the strength of his freedom to reject the unsolicited overtures of the marketing communicator. One example is where man buys a product, not for the reason of need but because of the sudden price reduction. Another example is where a product is purchased just to stop the direct seller from further knocking at the door. Clearly, it is arguable that through the expression of freedom, the marketing communicator is selfishly consuming the freedom of the consumer. According to Marcel's ontology of man as analyzed above, this can be referred to as the exclusion of man from man, which is characteristic of inauthenticity.

#### **4.4.1 Rehumanization**

Rehumanization is the antithesis of dehumanization. Whereas dehumanization is the deprivation of human qualities and attributes, rehumanization is the restoration of the hitherto deprived human qualities and attributes. Whereas dehumanization justifies the exclusion of man from man, rehumanization justifies the inclusion of man in man. Whereas

dehumanization is the disengagement of man from man through the perception of inferiority, rehumanization is the engagement of man with man from the standpoint of human equality. Whereas, dehumanization in marketing communication is the objectification or thingification of man's subjectivity, mechanization of his consciousness and his subsequent replacement by product in virtue of positioning and relevance; rehumanization is the ontological reinstallation of man's subjectivity, civilizing of man's consciousness and repositioning of man ahead and above product in marketing communication.

In this mission of rehumanizing marketing communication, man's freedom to cultivate relationship is restored and the first problem is solved. But is the problem solved by mere declaration? No. The problem can be resolved by applying Marcel's intersubjectivity theory, (as explained above) to institutionalize rehumanization in marketing communication, and humanize marketing communication as a discipline.

Rehumanizing marketing communication through the Marcelian intersubjective theorization means that man must first of all be seen, understood and respected as the authentic being, the *presence*, the *participant*, and the *meta-problematique* of the *problematique* of marketing communication (i.e. the fundamental mover of the enterprise of marketing communication). Second, creativity in marketing communication must



respect the sensibilities and intersubjective space of man. In this scenario, all stakeholders in marketing communication must, for instance, discourage excessive sexuality/nudity (typified by the marketing communication of many body care products), remove outlandish abstractions (exemplified by BankPHB marketing communications), abolish the perpetuation of violence (in entertainment products), and out rightly reject deceptive messages (in virtually all categories of product communication).

Also, marketing communication researchers must perceive their respondents as man like themselves and not mere figures or data instruments or sampling objects, willy-nilly denoted as demographics and psychographics. Researchers in marketing communication must understand that they themselves could turn out to be the subject of research as positions necessarily change, given the intersubjective character of human relationships. In other words, the researcher can be the researched, while the researched could be the researcher at any given space or time. Research in marketing communication must conform with the Marcelian intersubjectivity and consequently become a form of dialogue between equals in a man-to-man relationship; and marketing communication research results should assist man to cultivate mutual understanding, genuine concern for all involved and general well-being of humanity.

Rehumanization means that all communicative cover-ups for excessive sexuality, nudity, outlandish abstractions, and perpetuation of violence, cheating, adulterations, dishonesty and deceptions must be dispensed with urgently. For instance, a liquid product, which claims to be 35cl, when measured at all times, must remain the acclaimed quantity. In the same vein, a product or service sales promotion should not contain hidden conditionalities or clauses, which could generate human disaffection with manufacturers and service providers. The conditions of acquiring a bank loan for instance, must be spelt out in the communication of such an offer if those in that sector are to be authentic. To stress this point, it should be inauthentic to apply hidden conditions, concealed charges, and veiled values to a product. Also, a product, which could kill man, such as cigarettes, must never be promoted with the tools of marketing communication. In other words, using marketing communication tools to aid the smoking of cigarettes, which is already known for its destructive potentials for instance, is an act in inauthenticity.

In rehumanizing marketing communication, authenticity is enthroned and the banishment of inauthenticity is achieved.

#### **4.4.2 Disalienation**

Disalienation is opposed to alienation, which is a condition of estrangement between man and parts of his personality. Alienation is also known as the act of transferring human properties to non-human entities. It is the condition of being an outsider of oneself.

Alienation in marketing communication is the inauthentic action of stripping and transferring of inherent attributes of man to products and man's veneration of the same attributes. It is a condition, which may be precisely described as product anthropomorphism.

By product anthropomorphism it is meant that: in the process of marketing communication, a product acquires the attributes of man such as caring, achieving, enjoying, and human abilities such as speaking, seeing, washing, dancing, giving, empowering, sharing and hoping. In some cases, the product is touted as life itself. For instance, to drink STAR beer is said to be enjoying "the brighter LIFE". That is how the man at NIGERIAN BREWERIES communicates STAR BEER in the process marketing. Like the example of greatness in GUINNESS communication given earlier, this STAR BEER example aptly represents product anthropomorphism, which itself replicates inauthenticity, according to Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity. Another example is the marketing communication of the car CHEVROLET EPICA that says that the car "speaks volume." In other words, the car has

acquired man's natural ability to speak; in which case it does not need any man to speak for it. Since the car speaks volume, man should purchase it. This is a clear case of product anthropomorphism, signifying inauthenticity.

However, disalienation in Marcel's intersubjective ontology has come to the rescue by automatically negating alienation and exterminating product anthropomorphism. Through its natural antithetical position, disalienation articulates a subjective reconstruction of this particular condition of man and sets the stage for a turn-around. Disalienation, in Marcelian paradigm, is the authentic reappropriation of what has been expropriated, the genuine adjustment of the misadjusted and the valid recognition of the misrecognized.

In marketing communication, disalienation is the authentic industry of restoration, the ontologically legitimate business of retrieving human qualities from product and returning them to man – the rightful owner. Disalienation is the projection of man as the core of the essences and the essence of the core of marketing communication. For instance, it reappraises the inauthenticity in the BRIGHTER LIFE communication in STAR beer; and rephrases that man's STAR shows the bright-ness of his life. Creative works in marketing communication should carefully express human attributes and abilities as such, in order to banish alienation and obliterate its surrogate, product anthropomorphism.

In disalienating marketing communication according to the Marcelian ontology, alienation is exiled and authenticity finds its rightful place in the enterprise.

#### **4.4.3 Connectivity**

Connectivity is the quality or condition of being connected or connective. By virtue of its character, and speaking ontologically, connectivity demands the existence of two or more beings before it can express itself as something that is obtainable out there. Apart from being an ontological necessity, connectivity is a phenomenological tendency to present oneself for association or attachment with another entity for sustenance. Just like the butterfly seeks connection with the nectar of the flower and animals seek contact with water at all times, so do humans seek contact with many other things, especially one another. The basic difference between human connectivity and non-human contact is the facilitation of communication through an exchange process by man. In other words, two or more people make it possible for connectivity to show itself through an atmosphere of human networking, interactionism and synergy.

Connectivity is also an intersubjective disposition; an expression of man's desire or readiness to reach out and touch another man that is available, visible, contiguous, proximate, reachable and touchable. This point is made in Marcel's intersubjectivity theory that connectivity is the creation and maintenance of the union between *I* and *Thou*. The connectivity of man means that all of human kinds are linked in such a way that each individual contributes to the well-being of the other specifically and humanity in general. Marcelian intersubjectivity packages connectivity as an ontological interactionism with friend(s), family, neighbour(s), co-worker(s), mentor(s), associate(s), peer(s), and even co-professional(s). It needs no further proof that connectivity is an ontological possibility; but where it is deliberately denied, separatism takes over.

Separatism stems from the lack of consideration for others. It is the 'I' situation where the 'Thou' has been disconnected and therefore not recognized. It is an offshoot of selfishness, the root of self-smugness, the perpetuation of self-enclosure and the belief in the irrelevance of another man. Unlike connectivity that is an ontological essential, separatism is a deliberate dismemberment of association, an intentional exfoliation of availability, and a premeditated foreclosure of relationship. By obliterating

visibility, contiguity, proximity, reachability and touchability, separatism creates what can be called ontological gap.

Ontological gap is the space created between man by man in order to disconnect or institutionalize separatism among humanity. Ontological gap in marketing communication is the current situation where, in practice, each practitioner (of advertising, public relations, publicity, sales promotion and personal selling) separates himself from another and therefore fails to admit the fact that he cannot do business without recourse to an advertising professional, public relations person, publicist, sales promoter or salesman. Another angle to the ontological gap or separatism in marketing communication is where, as argued earlier, a literature on of advertising, public relations, publicity, sales promotion and personal selling is mute on its inherent connection with the other elements. Here, each element refuses to admit the contribution of other element to its sustenance. To others, each element of marketing communication plays the card of unavailability, unreachability and untouchability to the detriment of all.

With ontological gap, separatism has created a situation where the messages of marketing communication are haphazard, disjointed and often confusing. What this means is that while advertising says one thing about a product, sales promotion would say something different about the same

product; publicity would say something else, and public relations would present a message about the company, which would be incongruous with what is being said about the company's product. In this confusion, man experiences dissonance, and rejects the product, which he created. By so doing, man kills the enterprise, which he established and sweated to sustain. But more distressful is the fact that the broad spectrum of humanity suffers from this condition, which Gabriel Marcel would yet refer to as inauthenticity in marketing communication.

In Marcel's intersubjectivity, connectivity is an act of authenticity that reverses separatism, for, it provides that all practitioners of advertising, public relations, publicity, personal selling and others are linked together like threads in a large cassock, little clouds in the sky, heaps of sand in a vast desert, and even seconds in the huge account of time. In other words, the advertising professional, public relations person, publicist, sales promoter or salesman can enjoy the benefits of connectivity, if none undermines the relevance of the other in marketing communication. With consideration for one another, all practitioners under the roof of marketing communication would contribute to their common good and reap the bountiful harvest of mutually inclusive professional practice. Also, products would enjoy the benefit of strategic direction, creative synergy, and the essential human



interactionism. This way, separatism can be sent packing, ontological gap can be negated and connectivity can take its rightful place in a man-centred practice of authentic and intersubjective marketing communication.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

From the forgoing in this chapter, the point has been made about the intersubjective solution to the problems of marketing communication. Thus, if it is agreed that dehumanization of man threatens the practice of marketing communication; if it is agreed that alienation estranges man to the point of irrelevance in marketing communication; if it is realized that separatism breeds selfishness and egocentric tendencies which could potentially ruin marketing communication, then Gabriel Marcel's intersubjectivity theory should be summoned here and now, to the rescue of marketing communication. Marcel himself preaches that if we should live at all, we must live an authentic intersubjective life. By the same token, if we should teach, study, understand and practice marketing communication, we must do so authentically and intersubjectively.

But how can the thesis (that the apparent dehumanization of man in the course of marketing communication can be addressed through the

adoption of Gabriel Marcel' theory of intersubjectivity) under focus uplift the study, teaching and practice of marketing communication? This issue will be dealt with in the succeeding chapter entitled "Proposing a new Approach to the Study of Marketing Communication."

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Proposing a New Approach to the Study of Marketing Communication**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

How do we humanize marketing communication as a discipline? How do we study marketing communication authentically, intersubjectively and therefore, philosophically? In order to answer these questions in a rewarding manner, it is imperative to first of all, pose the question concerning the definition of the philosophy of marketing communication. That is the chief concern of this concluding chapter.

In the attempt to provide the best background for this chapter, the discovery is made that there seems to be no answer to the question "what is the philosophy of marketing communication?" Many international libraries were searched for this question in the course of this study without any plausible answer. A google search through the [www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com) shows 348,000 answers, which are either about philosophy or marketing or communication. None of the answers is about the meaning or definition or even the existence of the philosophy of marketing communication.

Another search on [www.alibris.com](http://www.alibris.com), a website for used books, new books of note, college textbooks, bargain books, and rare books, returns the answer that no literature exists, which deals specifically, wholly, or in parts

with the philosophy of marketing communication. [www.questia.com](http://www.questia.com), the world's largest on-line library returned 16,777 answers to the search for any book, journal article or encyclopaedia article on the philosophy of marketing communication. Like other sources, each answer is either about philosophy or marketing or communication.

This means that today, there exists no literature, which could serve as the foundation for studying marketing communication philosophically. If this is allowed to continue unchallenged, then the problems, which are discovered to be plaguing marketing communication, would linger. It would also signal the premature death of marketing communication as explicated in the literature review (Ben Wightman 1999) of this work. Concerned about this disturbing development, this chapter shows the necessity for the philosophical re-endowment, rebirth, revitalization, and restructuring of marketing communication. Once again, Gabriel Marcel's philosophy of intersubjectivity, which has been analyzed earlier, provides the hitherto obscure opportunity and the philosophical instrumentality for this purpose.

Apart from concretizing the foundation of marketing communication with philosophical materials, the chapter shows how practitioners, teachers and regulators of marketing communication can benefit from the exposition of marketing communication by means of their understanding and applicability of the intersubjectivity theory in Gabriel Marcel's ontology.

## **5.2 Marketology: The new Philosophy of Marketing Communication**

One way of providing the philosophical instrumentality for studying marketing communication is to necessarily combine the concepts of "philosophy" and "marketing communication." In this connection, the chief concerns of the two concepts are called forward for scrutiny of relevance. This work has so far established that the chief focus of philosophy is man, whose domain is the world, while the centre of attention of marketing communication currently is product, which, as argued earlier, domiciles in the market. Noteworthy is a popular assumption that the world itself is a market.

Therefore, if it is accepted that the world is a market in which man creates products, mingles with products and actually consumes them, then it is richly responsible to study such an interesting phenomenon. By the same token, if it is accepted that it is possible to study this exciting phenomenon, then it is feasible to develop a philosophy of marketing communication, which focuses on man's communicative activities in the marketplace. But a problem arises as to what to call such a fascinating endeavour. In other words, what shall we call that area of philosophy, which concerns itself with marketing communication or communication activities in the marketplace? Which single word best describes philosophy of marketing communication in

deed and in truth? The problem leading to these fundamental questions arises because the word "study" (rendered in the tradition of philosophy as "logos") which should link the two concepts ("philosophy" and "marketing communication") begs for inclusion. Therefore, if this wish is legitimately granted and the term "logos" is added to the word "market", then we have a new concept or term or idea, which may not exist in any dictionary, but which should be referred to as **market-o-logos**, which can be rendered conveniently in modern speech as **marketology**.

In the spirit of the foregoing, **marketology** becomes apparent to us as the philosophical study of marketing communication. The confidence that this new concept (or this new area of study) gives, permits a few pioneering attempts at defining or rendering what could be meant by marketology.

Marketology can be defined as the application of philosophical principles to the activity of marketing communication. Marketology can also be defined as the study of the philosophical issues and assumptions in marketing communication. Marketology could also mean the examination of the philosophical theories in marketing communication. In this connection, one theory, which has been discovered so far to meet these, is the intersubjectivity theory of Gabriel Marcel.

By virtue of the discovery of marketology, it is then possible to examine the global relationship between philosophy and marketing

communication and pinpoint where Gabriel Marcel's intersubjectivity theory neatly fits in. One of these correlations between philosophy and marketing communication is in terms of the contents of philosophy themselves.

The contents of philosophy are the branches of philosophy, which include metaphysics, epistemology, logic and ethics. Many agree that philosophy is a cultural and rational study about the nature of man and the goal of man in the world. It is the study of the ultimate knowledge, value, reality and reason. Therefore, in conceiving marketing communication, three things may be considered: man without product messages; man with product messages; and product messages without man. A product is something that man must create; and as long as man has a product to put forward, man must take the next step of creating messages for the product offered. Therefore, if man cannot but create products for exchanges in the marketplace, then man cannot but create messages for his creation in the same marketplace. The creation of product and its attendant message is based on certain ideals, principles and values that affect and determine man's life. It is at this point that theories are developed and the whole endeavour of marketing communication becomes a philosophical concern. This is the point of pioneering relevance of Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity in marketing communication.

In looking at the relationship between philosophy and marketing

communication, it is evident that marketology or the philosophy of marketing communication is a philosophy of other disciplines – that is, it is outside the traditional areas of logic, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, etc. Marketology or the philosophy of marketing communication is what is called infrastructural philosophy or inter-disciplinary philosophy because it provides an underlying base or supportive structure (theories, characteristics, problems, presuppositions and fundamental questions) for the discipline of marketing communication, which is outside the formidable walls of philosophy. So far, by using the infrastructures of Marcel's intersubjective ontology, the characteristics, problems, presuppositions and fundamental questions of marketing communication are relocated from the outside to the inside of philosophy and laid bare for all to see. Without gainsaying, Gabriel Marcel's intersubjectivity theory has shown the relationship between philosophy and marketing communication in this avowed inter-disciplinary connectivity.

Another way of looking at marketology is through the consideration of a scholar's or philosopher's application of a philosophy to the field of marketing communication or where philosophers in general, turn their attention to marketing communication. Here, the philosophy of marketing communication or marketology becomes the application of philosophy or philosophical questions to marketing communication. It should be stated



clearly at this juncture that Gabriel Marcel (and any philosopher before or after him) did not applied any philosophical theory to marketing communication. However, unlike any other philosopher, Marcel offered humanity the unique philosophical theory, which is now found to be applicable to marketing communication. Though his intersubjective theory predates marketing communication, the relevance of Marcelianism shows itself clearly in the industry of marketing communication transactions as espoused above.

But the question may arise as to what is the business of philosophy with marketing communication. What is philosophy looking for in marketing communication? Why would philosophy not mind its own business but poke into marketing communication like a busybody? In other words, why go the full length to develop a new concept of marketology for the purpose of studying marketing communication philosophically? The answer is very clear. The interest of philosophy is to direct attention to problems plaguing any area of human endeavour, which the resident practitioners and other communal stakeholders are too preoccupied to see. Marketing communication is not an exception. The interest of marketology is therefore, to call attention to the neglected or submerged but critical problems (such as dehumanization, alienation and separatism) in marketing communication. This way, marketology builds the bridge between philosophy and marketing

communication, (as observed in the application of Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity) by providing the right principles for professional reappraisal, academic enrichment and sound scholarly intercourse.

However, it should be sensible to say at this point, that at the moment, marketology diagnoses and dissects the problems of dehumanization, alienation and separatism in marketing communication, which may generate renewed interest in this nascent area of learning. This is because philosophers are likely to exhibit different attitudes and varying temperaments towards marketing communication. In accordance with the tradition of philosophy, a myriad of definitions of marketology should be expected. But for now, Gabriel Marcel's ontological rendition of marketing communication holds out as a pioneering effort.

In proposing solutions to the identified problems of marketing communication, it should be expected that marketology might be tested on the grounds of logic. Logic is the branch of philosophy, which deals with the principles and structures of reasoning as well as the structures of propositions. Logic attempts to present the rules of rational thinking through codes; it explores the configuration of arguments that maintain precision or permit the best possible drawing out of knowledge from proof. Logic is one of the primary tools philosophers use in their inquiries; the precision of logic helps them to cope with the subtlety of philosophical problems and the

often-misleading nature of conversational language (Vuletic, 2008). Deductive logic, inductive logic and symbolic logic make up the list of the types of logic in use. The question therefore would be: what type of logic would be the best in dissecting marketing communication?

In answering this fundamental question in marketology, reference points to the fact that logic is basically dialectical and synthetical. Through Socrates, Aristotle, Kant and Hegel, logic acknowledges two or more propositions, each recognizing the other, albeit, as opposites or contradictions which must midwife something new in a synthetical intercourse. Logic, in this form, describes the soul of intersubjectivity, though it may not solve the problems of marketing communication in a neat way. However, Marcelian intersubjectivity as applied in marketology is a radical form of logic, which recognizes the existence of two or more reasoning or propositions, not necessarily as opposites or contradictions but related and productive cooperators that abstract truth from dialogical encounters. Advanced intersubjective logic, which applies in marketology, is that in which, forms of human reasoning assist one another in an accommodating manner, productively and futuristically. A trained logician may be able to employ this advanced form of intersubjective logic in marketology effectively. Therefore, instead of being irrelevant in marketology, logic gains its significance (in the new area of scholarship) in its

advanced form of intersubjective logic.

Epistemology presents another potential problem for marketology. Epistemology deals with the central questions concerning the origin of knowledge; the place of experience in generating knowledge, and the position of reason in doing so; the relationship between knowledge and certainty, and between knowledge and the impossibility of error; the possibility of universal scepticism; and the changing forms of knowledge that arise from new conceptualizations of the world. According to entries in [www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com) (2008), all of these issues link with other central concerns of philosophy, such as the nature of truth and the nature of experience and meaning. It is possible to see epistemology as dominated by two rival metaphors. One is that of a building or pyramid, built on foundations. In this conception, it is the job of the philosopher to describe especially secure foundations, and to identify secure modes of construction, so that the resulting edifice can be shown to be sound. This metaphor favours some idea of the 'given' as a basis of knowledge, and of a rationally defensible theory of confirmation and inference as a method of construction. The other metaphor is that of a boat or fuselage, that has no foundations but owes its strength to the stability given by its interlocking parts. This rejects the idea of a basis in the 'given', favours ideas of coherence and holism, but finds it harder to ward off skepticism. That is the summation of the nature of

epistemology.

Nearly every great philosopher has contributed to the epistemological literature in one way or the other as the historicism of epistemology shows that philosophers have always posed the questions: whether knowledge of any kind is possible, and if so what kind; whether some human knowledge is innate (i.e., present, in some sense, at birth) or whether instead all significant knowledge is acquired through experience; whether knowledge is inherently a mental state; whether certainty is a form of knowledge; and whether the primary task of epistemology is to provide justifications for broad categories of knowledge claim or merely to describe what kinds of things are known and how that knowledge is acquired.

Clearly, all epistemological theories have their problems and therefore, which theory of knowledge do we use for understanding marketology? Is it rationalism or empiricism? Rationalism says we should believe the self-evident truth. But the problem is how do we define "self-evidence" in marketing communication? If we employ empiricism, then we understand what we know through the perceptions of our senses. What happens if we cannot know certain concepts, such as marketology, through our senses? In general, epistemological theories have one problem or the other – they all lead to dilemma, which Marcel's intersubjective ontology as a radicalized epistemology removes. How is this possible?

First, epistemological facts are numerically and quantitatively decidable. Second, epistemic actions are man-propelled. Third, epistemological arguments are based on the convictions of being. All these point at the phenomenological bent of Marcel's intersubjectivity because they surrender to ontologized reductionism. This way, Marcel's intersubjective ontology comes out clearly as a radicalized epistemology in which objective knowledge is numerically pluralized, and counts as a body of public information arrived at by two or more people. Unlike the *cogito ergo sum* (which is the Cartesian restriction of everything and anything to the self, and nullifying others), Huserlian *ergo cogito cogitatem*, provides the platform for Marcelian intersubjective existentialism in which man must think, not only about himself but about others because thought must have content, which includes the self and others. Therefore, the Marcelian intersubjective ontology as a radicalized epistemology, strengthens marketology with a phenomenological thought, which recognizes the *noesis* and the *noema* in consciousness, revealing that genuine knowing arises from the cooperation of the sensuous and intellectual intuitions in the immediate affirmation of existence.

Through phenomenological "seeing", consciousness is corroborated intersubjectively, making phenomenology the capstone of the brand of epistemology, which produces the consensus required in marketology. That

is why it is meaningful to state that epistemology in its traditional form may not be able to address the problems of marketing communication, except in its radicalized intersubjective mould.

Testing marketology on the grounds of ethics is another possibility. Ethics is the branch of philosophy, which is concerned with the nature of ultimate value and the principles by which human actions can be judged right or wrong. Ethics is traditionally subdivided into normative ethics, metaethics, and applied ethics. Normative ethics seeks to establish norms or standards of conduct; a crucial question in this field is whether actions are to be judged right or wrong based on their consequences or based on their conformity to some moral rule, such as "Do not steal." Theories that adopt the former basis of judgment are called consequentialist; those that adopt the latter are known as deontologists. Metaethics is concerned with the nature of ethical judgments and theories.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, much work in metaethics has focused on the logical and semantic aspects of moral language. On its own, applied ethics consists of the application of normative ethical theories to practical moral problems (e.g., abortion). Among the major fields of applied ethics are bioethics, business ethics, legal ethics, and medical ethics where human duty, body of rules, and regulations of practice, among others are examined. Which of the ethical theories shall we apply in marketing

communication?

It may be argued for instance, that the dehumanization, which this work addresses, is an ethical issue. While some ethicists would argue that dehumanization is an inevitable human action, that man, historically speaking, would always thingify a fellow man; other ethicists would submit that dehumanization, being a wrong action, signifying injustice, should be repudiated. Concerning dehumanization therefore, ethicists would take positions that are estranging, unempathetic and castrative of each other, simply because they lack the intersubjective understanding of contrasting strongholds. Like the bitter opposition between pro-abortionists and anti-abortionists, pro-gays and anti-gays, ethicists tend to apply fixism in their subjective convictions. In situations as this, ethics in its traditional form would only bring the problems of marketing communication to the marketplace of moral analysis and irresolution. However, an advanced form of ethics with an intersubjective embodiment as that of Gabriel Marcel would be useful and problem solving in marketology. Combined with Marcel's intersubjective thinking, conventional ethical theories (such as metaethics and normative ethics) become radicalized or ontologized and therefore useful in the handling of the problems of marketing communication.



Metaphysics is another branch of philosophy the ground of which marketology may be tested. Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that examines the ultimate nature of reality, including the relationship between mind and matter, substance and attribute, fact and value. It is also concerned with explaining the nature of the world. Its name derives from the Greek words *metá* (meaning "after") and *physiká* (meaning "physics"), "physics" referring to those works on matter by Aristotle. As a result of Aristotle's usage, "meta" has come to mean "beyond; over; transcending" in English language. Therefore, metaphysics is also the study of that which transcends physics. Many philosophers such as Immanuel Kant would later argue that certain questions concerning metaphysics (notably those surrounding the existence of God, soul, and freedom) are inherent to human reason and have always intrigued mankind. The recurrent questions of metaphysics are: What is the nature of reality? Why does the world exist, and what is its origin or source of creation? Does the world exist outside the mind? If things exist, what is their objective nature? In answering these questions, metaphysics breaks into ontology, theology and universal science.

Playing a central role in metaphysics is ontology, the investigation into what types of things there are in the world and what relations these things bear to one another. Ontology is the study of Being and existence; including

the definition and classification of entities, physical or mental, the nature of their properties, and the nature of change. Through ontology, the metaphysician also attempts to clarify the notions by which people understand the world, including existence, objecthood, property, space, time, causality, and possibility. Chapter two of this work examined the whole gamut of ontology, wherein Marcel's ontology was located. From the ambit of Marcel's ontology, his intersubjectivity theory was positioned for application to marketing communication. That is how marketology was discovered. Therefore, it seems safe to state that marketology domiciles in the department of ontology, faculty of metaphysics.

### **5.3 Marketology based on Marcel's Intersubjective Ontology**

As earlier noted, man is at the center of communication as well as the main actor in the marketing transaction of the exchange of products. That is why marketology sets out to show that there is no reliable reason why man's foundational position in marketing communication should be discounted, disregarded, disaffiliated and disestablished. So far, the point has been made that this marketology in reference must conform to the demands of Marcel's intersubjective ontology. Building marketing communication on Marcelian ontology means that marketology or the

philosophy of marketing communication must conform to the structural requirements of: formal ontology, formalized ontology, applied scientific ontology and pure philosophical ontology, all of which are elucidated below.

### **Formal Intersubjective Ontology**

As part of formal intersubjective ontology, marketology or the philosophy of marketing communication must have certain fundamental categories, which are necessarily interconnected or intersubjective as prescribed by Marcel. These categories in marketing communication are man-driven aspects of strategy, creativity, branding, and research.

Here, marketology directs its attention on man as the creator (in the process of communication in marketing) whose creation cannot possibly replace. Man is the general focus of all that encompass marketing communication instead of product. Marketology or the ontology of marketing communication does not annihilate product. Rather, it places product next to man in the scheme of things and categories. Others then follow. In the same vein, the interconnective role, played by the category of communication in marketing remains. In other words, while there is an existential swap of the human and product categories, their mutual connections are retained.

### **Formalized Intersubjective Ontology**

Marketology as formalized intersubjective ontology must have parts which are functional within a specific reality, but which cannot represent the general or the totality of experience. For instance, advertising should handle the specific reality of awareness creation but should not represent the totality of marketing communication. Formalized ontology in the philosophy of marketing communication, in the phenomenological fashion, analyses the categories and their dependent connections for each ontological level to thrive and remain mutually supportive.

### **Applied Scientific Intersubjective Ontology**

Here, marketology or the philosophy of marketing communication must possess an ambit of reality, which is usually given by a specific group of phenomena belonging to diverse regional types. This refers to the scientific media of marketing communication (radio, television, newspapers, magazine, internet), which must be available to all the categories of advertising, public relations, publicity, sales promotion and personal selling. As an applied ontology, marketology must be visible in practice and pedagogy, thereby going beyond theoretical explication. The emphasis would be on being versus doing and driven by the scientifically verifiable acts of promising, ordering, apologizing, requesting, inviting or sharing, all of which are media-driven.

## **Pure Intersubjective Ontology**

Under pure intersubjective ontology, marketology must have levels in terms of content and branches that work together. These are advertising, public relations, publicity, sales promotion, personal selling and others in a mutuality of synergy. Regarding these categories, we are growing increasingly aware that the top level of marketing communication, occupied by advertising, public relations, personal selling, publicity, and sales promotion is becoming difficult to handle, not least because the categorical distinctions that characterize it have the disconcerting habit of multiplying exponentially. While there are increases in the number of self-regulatory categories (AAPN, ADVAN, OAAN), laws of the chief regulatory category (APCON) of advertising, for instance, have also multiplied, although ineffectual. In spite of this, the top category of marketing communication (advertising, public relations, personal selling, publicity, and sales promotion) is still problematic and often disconnects from other lower categories such as marketing public relations, issue marketing, event marketing, marketing politics, sponsorships, etc. For this reason, it is of maximum importance in marketology to employ an organization of the prime categories that is as transparent as possible and fundamentally based on the understanding of man, which would put advertising in check and essentially link the top category with the lower categories by regulation.

There are fundamental categories that apply to all the ontological levels in marketing communication: for example, the category of regulation, which means that media is a category of the formal ontology of marketing communication. However, the fact that this is a fundamental category does not entail that it is a univocal category. In effect, the concepts of media that apply to the material stratum differ substantially from the concepts of the elements, which are typical of the mental or social strata. We are therefore in need of both an extremely general characterization of the role of the media and of the definition of its specifications for each ontological level of all the elements (higher and lower categories), as well as the regulatory (APCON, AAAN, NIPR, NIMARK, ADVAN, NAFDAC, CBN, SEC, LASAA) arm of the industry (see glossary of abbreviations).

The pure philosophical ontology of marketing communication ensures that marketology studies the various ways in which a category is realized within the ontological levels, ascertaining the presence of the Marcellian intersubjective theory, which subsumes its various concretizations. While formal intersubjective ontology is more concerned with the architectonic of the theory, formalized intersubjective ontology is more sensitive to the details of the individual categories. Both of them, however, are obviously necessary. It should be repeated that the theory that must always be applied in marketing communication is the theory of intersubjectivity because it

takes care of and interconnects all the categories, at whatever human or professional levels of theorization, practice and pedagogy.

Therefore, it is clearly understandable that as an interconnective enterprise, marketology requires that some phenomena can be properly categorized only as groups of categories pertaining to several levels. Human category, marketing communication category, media category, theoretical category, professional category and regulatory category work in this modus of combined categorization with others because in spite of the fact that they have their own domain, they still belong to sub domains at different levels. Two important points are key in the use of this marketology approach. The first is that one always talks of groups of categories. There are no real domains characterized by one single top-category. In general, complexes of categories, which interact with one another, characterize a domain.

Finally, by pure philosophical ontology, marketology is meant to be applicable to money, goods and ideas, either as internal categories or external categories. Either way, it is conditioned to abide by the intersubjective parameters of the entire ontology. That is, that money, goods and ideas remain in a network of exchange. This is the application of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy of intersubjectivity in developing the ontology of marketing communication and helping to solve the problems currently confronting the enterprise.

## 5.4 Marketology for Practitioners of Marketing Communication

Practitioners of marketing communication should, by all definitions and characterizations, be professionals. By being so called, it is assumed that the profession of marketing communication is already in place. But what is a profession? Is marketing communication, as practiced at the moment, a profession? If it is a profession, how does marketology or the philosophy of marketing communication enhance its practice? If it is not truly a profession, how can marketology assist it to be one, knowing that there are many people out there who call themselves marketing communication practitioners?

According to the wikipedia entry on the Internet, a profession refers to an occupation, vocation or career where specific understanding of a subject, theory, or science is applied. A profession is an occupation that involves long-term academic training and requiring a formal qualification. A profession is said to exist when any trade or occupation transforms itself through *the development of formal qualifications based upon education and examinations, the emergence of regulatory bodies with powers to admit and discipline members, and some degree of monopoly rights*. (Bullock and Trombley, 1999:689). The process by which a profession arises from a trade or occupation is often termed professionalization and has been described as



one, *starting with the establishment of the activity as a full-time occupation, progressing through the establishment of training schools and university links, the formation of a professional organization, and the struggle to gain legal support for exclusion, and culminating with the formation of a formal code of ethics* (Roberts & Dietrich, 1999).

Other factors, which distinguish a profession, are regulation, autonomy, status and prestige, and the power and population of membership. By regulation, which is enforced by statute, a profession distinguishes itself from other occupations. In all countries of the world, professions have their regulatory or professional bodies, whose function is to define, promote, oversee, support and standardize the affairs of their members. By autonomy, professions have a high degree of control of their own state of affairs, guided by agreed norms and practices self-judgement, self-interest and a continuous process of critical evaluation of ethics and procedures from within the profession itself. By status and prestige, it is meant that a profession enjoys a high social standing and respect conferred on it by society by virtue of its valuable contribution to society, economy and industry. Any profession has power for controlling its own members, its area of expertise and survival.

Going by all these definitions and characterizations, it is clearly evident

that marketing communication is not yet a profession because it lacks a theoretical foundation, having no long-term academic training of its own and without a formal qualification for its practice. As it is, marketing communication cannot boast of a professional association, extensive period of education, parameters for competence testing, institutional training, licensed practitioners, work autonomy, code of professional ethics, self-regulation, control of remuneration of members, to mention but few. All these deficiencies, which are confirmed on the Internet, call to question the practice of marketing communication inspite of its relevance in developing communicative messages for marketing. With such a professional paucity, it would not be demeaning to state that marketing communication “professionals” currently out there, are non-starters, and the problems identified in their field, unsurprising. To take off, marketing communication needs a philosophical foundation like other professions of note and other practitioners of excellence. Therefore, to kick-start their laudable venture, marketing communicators should, as a matter of urgency embrace marketology, as midwifed by the Marcelian ontology of intersubjectivity, which is, without doubt, for now, the only hope for the emergence of a true profession of marketing communication.

As stated above, the spinal cord of any profession is a theory, which

must be taught through a long-term academic training in order to benchmark and demand for a formal qualification for practice. This can only be achieved in marketing communication through pedagogy that is powered by marketology.

### **5.5 Marketology for Pedagogists of Marketing Communication**

Towards the end of chapter three, the point was made that the pedagogical approach to the study of marketing communication is separatist and therefore requires some modicum of unification in its teaching. Therefore, if at this point, a new approach to the study of marketing communication is being proposed, then pedagogy has to take a central position.

Pedagogy is, the art or science of being a teacher, generally referring to strategies of instruction, or a style of instruction. The word comes from the Ancient Greek literally meaning, "to lead the child". Education, the Latin-derived word for pedagogy, is nowadays used in the English language to refer to the whole context of instruction, learning, and the actual operations involved therein. In other words, pedagogy refers to the science or theory of educating in a situation where the teacher and the pupil coexist. The teacher gives his instructions based on a philosophy of teaching, the

challenges facing the pupil, the pupils' background knowledge and experiences, personal situations, and environment, as well as learning goals set by both the student and the teacher. The Socratic school of thought is one example. Marketing communication professionals need to get some education in order to understand better, the problems that are stunting the growth of their industry.

To educate marketing communication professionals and assist them in understanding the problems and challenges of their business, the teaching of the philosophy of marketing communication has become imperative. Presently, there is no department of marketing communication in any higher institution of note, and neither is it taught in any school or college of education worthy of mention. In view of the fact that pedagogists are resident in schools or colleges of education, it should be necessary to introduce the subject or training in marketing communication with a curriculum built around marketology in faculties of education. Since any educator must know the first principle or philosophy of his field, and would therefore be schooled in philosophy, what he must learn first is marketology. Marketology or the philosophy of marketing communication should be taught in faculties of philosophy and in combination with efforts in education, produce new graduates who are academically sound to pioneer a new

department of marketing communication. The newness of this pedagogy of marketing communication does not preclude existing professors and other academic experts from learning and teaching marketology. The key point is that marketology based on the intersubjective ontology of Gabriel Marcel is here to pioneer the philosophical study of marketing communication.

## **5.6 Marketology for Regulators of Marketing Communication**

One of the distinguishing factors of a profession is regulation. As stated earlier, regulation defines, promotes, oversees, and standardizes the affairs of the practitioner and his area of professional practice. Regulation is a canon of organization backed by the might of law, set by a competent authority, relating to the actions of those under the authority's control.

Various government departments and agencies issue regulations in order to carry out the intent of legislation enacted by the National Assembly. Administrative agencies often perform a number of different government functions, including rule making. Regulations are designed to guide the activity of those institutions supervised by the agency and also the activities of the membership. Regulations also function to ensure homogeneous application of the law and conferment of legitimacy.

Except for a few elements, there is no umbrella regulatory agency for marketing communication. For example, advertising practice is regulated by the Advertising Practitioners' Council of Nigeria (APCON), backed by Decree 55 of 1988, while public relations is regulated by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR). The Institute of Direct Marketing regulates direct marketing. Other elements within the marketing communication ambit do not have regulatory bodies. Yet, regulation is critical to the rebirth, survival and growth of marketing communication. For instance, National Foods and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) would be needed to check the dehumanization of man through the communication of fake or adulterated consumables in the marketplace; the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) would play a role of checkmating the incessant deception and alienation in the communication of financial products. In the area of pedagogy, the National Universities Commission (NUC) would regulate the teaching of the curriculum of marketing communication and properly situate and control the content and pedagogy of marketing communication before the area of learning attracts every higher institution in the manner of a band-wagon, after which NUC might begin to struggle for control and accreditation. NUC, like other essential regulatory bodies, need to understand the problems, challenges and the newly erected philosophical superstructures of marketing communication referred to as marketology. An understanding of

marketology based on the intersubjective ontology of Gabriel Marcel would pave the way for a friendly regulation of marketing communication.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

From our articulation of marketology, it has become clear that a research in the intersubjective ontology of Gabriel Marcel can be productive. Our study has shown that the problems of marketing communication can be solved theoretically, practically and academically. By declaring the problems that threaten the well-being and survival of marketing communication and overcoming them, it has become necessary to create a new temperament for the handling of communication in marketing.

Up till the end, our thesis still stands that the dehumanization, alienation and disconnection of man in marketing communication can be addressed through the adoption of Gabriel Marcel's philosophy of intersubjectivity. Therefore, our thesis can be regarded as an ontological foundation for the rebirth of marketing communication. This is because man remains at the centre of the activity; and man must remain in a relationship with a fellow man.

One of the brutal consequences of ignoring marketology is the perpetuation of deception, misinformation, and disinformation in the

marketplace where knowledge is substituted with ignorance.

Discerning observers of emerging facts about marketing communication are disturbed that an area of communication, which, to a large extent, controls human consciousness, is being left on its own moderation while humanity suffers without any mitigation. But with this work, the clarion call goes out to humanity to wake up and take a second look at marketing communication before it becomes too late to do so.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MARCELIAN**

#### **INTERSUBJECTIVITY THEORY**

##### **6.1 Introduction**

Marcelian intersubjective communication means the communication between two or more subjects with a metaphysical application of language - verbalized, lettered, signified and symbolized. According to his theory, communicative powers domiciles in the transcendental activity of the thinker, because except the thinker of the thought, no one can really and convincingly state the language which the thinker is deploying for the exercise and act of intersubjective thinking. That is the thinker's prerogative. Language in subjective communication is clearly and doubtlessly speechless. But as soon as the expression of thought takes place in the intersubjective mould, the spoken language of the speaker surrenders to the mercy of the meaning ascribed to it (the speech) by the listener. In many cases, the meaning ascribed to the speech could be incongruous to what the speaker intended. This is factual about meaning and communication. In order to avert this problem, Marcel does not rule out the method of writing in the process of intersubjective communication. Ambiguities and clashes of meanings become pertinently avoidable, which explains why the generality of mankind has accepted writing as a method of

intersubjective communication, and even Marcel's writings themselves are truly demonstrative of his theory. Among the auditorily impaired, intersubjective communication requires the use of signs and symbols, another fact that is embedded in the Marcelian intersubjective communication. This is why it is argued in this last chapter, that the Marcelian mode of intersubjective communication shows itself in our actions, and even among infants.

## **6.2 Intersubjectivity and Action**

Human beings sometimes seem to understand one another intimately and at different levels. To analyze this ability of persons to act together and to share experience in harmony, communication has been presented in relation to the private activities of conscious, purposeful action. All voluntary actions are performed in such a way that their effects can be anticipated by the actor subjectively and then adjusted within the perceived situation to meet the intersubjective criteria set in advance. Intersubjective communication is controlled by feedback of information, as is all transcendental thoughts. But there is an essential difference between a person doing things in relation to the physical world and the control of communication between persons. In the intersubjective fraternity, two persons can share control, each can predict what the other will know and do.

### **6.3 Intersubjectivity and Infants**

Marcel's Intersubjectivity does not preclude infants. This is because infants share mental control with others through the rudiments of individual consciousness and intentionality. In order to communicate, infants are able to adapt or fit their subjective control to the subjectivity of others and therefore demonstrate intersubjectivity. For instance, the act of looking at each other is among the first intersubjective acts that permit inferences about the sharing of attention between adults and infants. In response to the mother's act of smiling, the infant smiles too. The infant knows when to stop smiling, waiting for the mother's next line of action. Attention-sharing between mother and infant represents the intersubjectivity of Gabriel Marcel, a state of affairs, which Trevarthen (1978) has called *Secondary Intersubjectivity*.

### **6.4 Importance of Disponibilite and Indisponibilite**

Against the backdrop of the above, it is reiterated here and now that Gabriel Marcel's concern about the *disponibilite* and *indisponibilite* of man guided the focus of this work. Marcel, it has been established, fears that building relationships on the foundational structures of technology, rather than ontology, can be problematic for the existentialia of man. For him, when

a person refuses to accept the existence of others by being uncooperative and uncommunicative, his Being becomes purposeless and meaningless. Marcel's fears ring the bell in marketing communication. With this work it is hoped that the bell would stop ringing.

## **6.5 Recommendations**

It is not uncommon for people to claim that advertising is a fraud. Many people also argue that public relations and publicity are laced with the corrupting influences of bribery. Virtually all the elements of marketing communication are standing accused for one thing or the other. No matter how the practitioners in these subunits of marketing communication try, the accusations and conflict of opinion do not seem to shift grounds. For this reason, there is the need to reattract peoples' faith in advertising, reinvigorate their confidence in public relations, and rebuild their trust in all the elements of marketing communication. But how is this possible? From the foregoing, the solution lies in applying philosophy (the Marcelian intersubjective theory) on all of the elements of marketing communication; and as argued earlier, reposition the enterprise.

In real and pragmatic terms, and in tune with the Marcelian intersubjectivity theory, the following recommendations will be useful:

### **6.5.1 Accept Marketology**

The starting point for the repositioning of marketing communication is to accept the new philosophical foundation being built by this thesis, which is called marketology. Either as a philosophical concept or principle, marketology provides the opportunity for a fresh, pure and untainted understanding of marketing communication, particularly, the role and importance of the being of man in the enterprise. With a fair understanding of marketology, it will be possible to comprehend and appreciate marketing communication, particularly its constituting elements, differently and positively from what obtains at the moment. Marketology is the way forward for marketing communication in theory, pedagogy and practice.

#### **6.5.2 Professionalize Marketing Communication**

The practice of marketing communication must be made clear and unambiguous and its nebulous character removed through proper professionalization. Practitioners of the subunits of marketing communication tend to reduce the enterprise to their own. For instance, in an advertising practitioner's narrow and self-serving view, marketing communication is nothing more than advertising; just as the problems and benefits of marketing communication are perceived as the problems and benefits of advertising. An advertising practitioner would also call himself a marketing communicator, inspite of having little knowledge or no

understanding of other salient elements of the umbrella enterprise. In other words, everyone (advertiser, publicist, public relationist, direct marketer, sales promoter, sponsor, event marketer) accepts the value of being a marketing communicator, but no one knows how to be one in practice. It is time to professionalize marketing communication and show stakeholders how to be authentic marketing communicators through the appreciation and acceptance of other elements within the fold.

Furthermore, in order to professionalize marketing communication, practitioners of advertising, public relations, publicity, sales promotion, direct marketers and others must be retrained and motivated to move up to the next level of professional practice where no one is less important to another. Qualification must be set for the professional practice, based on education and examinations and merit. Additionally, practitioners must take marketing communication as a full time occupation, which subscribes to formal codes of ethics and higher status of membership cum association.

### **6.5.3 Develop the Marketing Communication Curriculum**

As argued earlier, marketing communication presently lacks a theoretical foundation because it does not have long-term academic training of its own and the formal educational qualification for practice. Higher institutions have worsened the situation by not providing the required

curriculum for the study of marketing communication at the departmental, collegiate or faculty levels. The current trend where marketing is taught in a faculty that is different from that where communication is taught creates half-baked and ineffectual understanding of the nature, character and importance of marketing communication in theory and practice. Therefore, in order to establish marketing communication and place the enterprise in its rightful position, qualified institutions of learning must create a curriculum for its study which will in turn build the right theoretical and pedagogical backbone for its learning. This can be achieved through the creative and regulatory powers of the National Universities Commission, which must set the standard for the teaching of the subject and accredit deserving institutions to teach, examine and award degrees in marketing communication.

#### **6.5.4 Regulate Marketing Communication Practice**

Whilst the National Universities Commission regulates the curriculum for studying marketing communication in higher institutions of learning, its practice should not be without regulation. Presently, some of the subunits of marketing communication are regulated while others are merely floating without rudder. For instance, as stated earlier in the last chapter, the Advertising Practitioners' Council of Nigeria (APCON) controls advertising

practice in Nigeria, while the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) and Institute of Direct Marketing (IDM) control public relations and direct marketing practices respectively. Other subunits of marketing communication do not have regulatory bodies. Therefore, as a whole, marketing communication practice requires a regulatory organ, which must provide a level playing field for all stakeholders in the industry and strengthen each element within the fold for the purpose of mutual participation, cooperation and understanding. The regulation of marketing communication practice will produce the parameters of competence; provide codes and licence for professional practice, stipulate remuneration of practitioners, specify educational qualification required for practice, and lay down disciplinary guidelines for all members as provided by the laws and statutes of the government.

With the acceptance and execution of these recommendations, the intersubjectivity theory in Marcel's ontology reassures that the problems of marketing communication can be solved not only theoretically, but also realistically and pragmatically.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

In the course of this research, we have discovered through the application of methodology of phenomenology, that marketing



communication is a young and potentially active enterprise with weak foundational structures. Apart from these weak foundational structures, the problems identified as plaguing marketing communication appear as mere teething problems; but indeed, they are fundamental. It is a fact that any house built on a weak foundation soon collapses. It has therefore been discovered that if the identified problems are not properly and carefully removed, they would, in the manner of gangrene, cripple the enterprise of marketing communication.

The employment of Gabriel Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity, we discover in this research, comes in timely and useful for the purpose of helping to erect pertinent ontological structures in the theory and practice of marketing communication. In addition, Marcel's intersubjectivity helped in the endeavour to tightly focus on the general and specific content and character of marketing communication. Without being bullish, it has been useful in unearthing new marketing communication possibilities. It has also assisted in great measures, to reassert and reposition man within the scheme and themes of marketing communication. Needless to say, the findings of this research have helped to carve the path of growth for, and build newfound confidence in marketing communication.

With this work, it has been discovered that, it is indeed possible to recall man from obscurity into reckoning, from self-inflicted dehumanization

to self-reassuring discovery, and of course, from directionless independence to purposeful interdependence. It has been proved beyond possible doubts, that man is the main actor, the conceptualizer, and the executioner of the process and activity of marketing communication. As soon as this point is made, the veil dropped, the cloud cleared and a new horizon of scholarship opened for us to see man is his truest self, repositioned to power and oxygenate marketing communication into a new life.

Without any iota of doubt, the research has carefully established that Marcel's theory of intersubjectivity is the theory, the masterstroke, and the engine block for us, to carve out a new understanding of a new man in the new marketing communication.

Beyond the establishment of the intersubjective and ontological imperatives of marketing communication, the research showed how its findings could be applied within the Nigerian socio-economic and academic context. Suffice to say that marketing communication facilitates marketplace human interactions and engenders economic growth, the world over, the point was implied that Nigeria is not an exception. Also, the depiction of the world as one big marketplace covers Nigeria. Therefore, the application of Marcel's intersubjectivity here did not preclude Nigeria. In fact, its concluding part zeroed in on Nigeria, with emphasis on practice, pedagogy and regulation in all that have to do with marketing communication.

To do justice to the focus of the research, it was clearly argued that intersubjectivity predated Marcel's philosophical endeavours, but that his theory finds total relevance in the present effort, not only as a guide to a better understanding of marketing communication, but also as a provider of the solutions to the problems identified in marketing communication. It is abundantly argued that marketing communication professionals, teachers and students need the understanding of marketology to be able to combine instructions, content, adherence and techniques with business goals. It is marketology or the philosophy of marketing communication that takes care of all these and cultivates the right point of reference in marketing communication such as the Marcel's intersubjective orientation boldly treated in this work. With this, the range of vision and perspective of marketing communication have been widened and sharpened. Consequently, marketology is expected to stir up new issues in marketing communication as time goes on, especially with the deployment of philosophical reasoning and analysis.

It should never be forgotten that humanity, as well as stakeholders in marketing communication need a secondary reflection through which the discipline can be rebuilt on the unity of experience. This reflection should consider that marketing communication is not what it is thought to be, and it should not be negated by what it is thought to be. This way, it becomes easy

for all to discover the true identity and character of marketing communication. We should focus on marketing communication phenomenologically, so that what we feel, how we feel what we feel would not deny us the benefit of intersubjective participation in marketing communication.

There is no doubt that the problems of marketing communication as identified in this work, are convincingly resolved, particularly with the application of Marcel's theory of intersubjective ontology. Also, a new window of opportunity has been opened for further studies in the new area of the philosophy of marketing communication.

## **GLOSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS**

APCON	-	Advertising Practitioners' Council of Nigeria.
AAAN	-	Association of Advertising Agencies in Nigeria
NIPR	-	Nigerian Institute of Public Relations
NIMARK	-	Nigerian Institute of Marketers
ADVAN	-	Advertisers' Association of Nigeria
OAAN	-	Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria
NAFDAC	-	National Foods and Drugs Administration and Control
CBN	-	Central Bank of Nigeria
SEC	-	Security and Exchange Commission
LASAA	-	Lagos Signage and Advertising Authority

## **ELEMENTS OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

1. Advertising
2. Public Relations
3. Publicity
4. Sales Promotion
5. Direct Marketing
6. Event Marketing
7. Sponsorships

8. Marketing Public Relations (MPR)
9. Issue Marketing
10. Marketing Politics
11. Corporate Communication

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