

A STUDY OF THE AUTHENTIC SUBJECT IN THE LIGHT OF  
THE THOUGHTS OF BERNARD LONERGAN AND CARL JUNG

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A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

University of San Carlos

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Philosophy

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by

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May 1974

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## INTRODUCTION

Man is basically a being who asks questions. He is confronted with a multitude of beings, and he finds himself wondering, raising a variety of questions. Thus, he embarks on a relentless pursuit of the truth that brings him the answers which can satisfy his searching mind. The extent of man's inquiry is boundless and the objects of his interest, infinite; but, more than anything else, man asks about man himself.

Man used to be studied like any other being. He was viewed as something out there in the world among other objects. His essence was specified, his properties were described, and were frozen into concepts. The progress of human thought, however, has been accompanied by a growing interest in man, not as a passive and static being, but as a subject, a principle of free and responsible actions and thereby, defying the permanence of conceptualization. Such change in perspective with regards to man is exemplified in the existential movement which insists that there is no fixed human nature and that man must make his own essence.

Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism. And this is what people call its 'subjectivity' . . . But what do we mean by this,

but that man is of greater dignity than a stone or a table? For we mean to say that man primarily exists--that man is, before all else, something that propels itself towards a future and is aware that it is doing so. Man is, indeed, a project which possesses a subjective life, instead of being a kind of moss, or a fungus or a cauliflower.<sup>1</sup>

Existentialism, far from putting an end to man's queries about his own self, has, as a matter of fact, ushered his thinking into a new dimension in the study of himself. It has turned man's attention to a world within him and thereby, has created a mood that echoes and carries with it the true import of Socrates' famous words, 'Know thyself.' Thus, man has listened to his inner voices--his anguish, his fears, his hopes--so that in listening, he might understand; and understanding, he may come to know himself.

Since man must mold his own essence, he imposes on himself the task of finding his self. His life is characterized by a continual search. What is it that man is looking for? Is it a meaning in life to cling to, one that can cure the sense of emptiness within him? Is he perhaps, seeking for the answer to explain the feeling of anxiety about his existence?

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<sup>1</sup>Jean-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism and Humanism," Age of Analysis, ed. Morton White (New York: New American Library, 1955), p. 124.



Not a few men have sought and have found something to make their lives worth living for. Yet, their search has not stopped there. It goes on everyday as man journeys through life. It is here, in the course of his development that he must discover himself, his true self. But, what is the true self and how does one come to it? By what standard is one to say that a person is true to himself or not, that he is authentic or otherwise? When is a person said to be authentic or what makes him one? There have been attempts to answer these questions. But, for as long as these questions are raised over and over again, so will there be attempts to come up with richer insights.

One finds the fruit of such efforts to arrive at a more penetrating explanation of the matter in the thoughts of Bernard Lonergan. In his works, Lonergan gives an account of the process of human development and places authenticity in the harmonious co-operation of consciousness and the unconscious at work as man develops. "The necessity, then, of genuineness is the necessity of avoiding conflict between the unconscious and conscious components of a development."<sup>2</sup> This view

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<sup>2</sup>Bernard Lonergan, Insight: A Study of Human Understanding (London: Longman, Green & Co., Ltd., 1963), p. 476.

runs parallel to Carl Jung's concept of individuation that rests on the complementary relation of consciousness and the unconscious.

The answer obviously consists in getting rid of the separation between consciousness and the unconscious. This cannot be done by condemning the contents of the unconscious in a one-sided way, but rather by recognizing their significance in compensating the one-sidedness of consciousness and by taking this significance into account.<sup>3</sup>

Carl Jung gives an extensive as well as a concentrated treatment of the problem of the unconscious which when understood, brings one to grasp the profundity of Lonergan's insight into man's movement to self-knowledge and onward to becoming the authentic subject.

This work will, therefore, present the views of Lonergan and Jung, not to make a comparative study but to make use of the richness of the ideas of both thinkers to arrive at a deeper meaning of man's authenticity.

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<sup>3</sup>C. G. Jung, The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books Ltd., 1960), p. 73.