

CHAPTER 1

Major Contributions

This part of the book introduces modern Western views of consciousness. Chapters 1 and 2 unfold philosophical accounts of *ordinary* consciousness, that is, of consciousness as present and hence discernible in commonsense, artistic, scientific, or scholarly activities. Chapter 3 presents philosophical accounts of *mystical* consciousness.

We begin our quest for a model of consciousness by having recourse to four thinkers: Brentano, Husserl, Sartre, and Lonergan, later to be supplemented with more recent contributions (in chapter 2). Franz Brentano (1838–1917), who influenced Husserl, ushered in a new era for philosophical psychology. Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) founded phenomenology and endeavored to establish it as a rigorous science. Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) laid out fine distinctions regarding consciousness. Bernard Lonergan (1904–1984) adopted a version of the transcendental method that resembles Husserl's.

Common to both Brentano and Lonergan is their intimate acquaintance with the works of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas. In particular Brentano's and Lonergan's ideas on intentionality and consciousness are a direct result of their reading of those two classical authors. Common to Husserl and Lonergan is their appraisal of the transcendental, or cross-cultural dimension of conscious intentionality, albeit in a manner that differs from Kant's.

What stands out as most helpful for our purposes is the fact that Brentano, Husserl, Sartre, and Lonergan all distinguish, while uniting, intentionality and consciousness. These are two sides of the same coin: intentionality is the object-directedness of our mind; consciousness is the lived experience that we have of our intentionality. However, the first two philosophers emphatically lay stress on intentionality, whereas Sartre and Lonergan are equally interested in both themes and have more to offer regarding consciousness.

BRENTANO

According to Heidegger, Brentano's contribution must be situated in the following historical context. Under the influence of British empiricism (mostly of John Stuart Mill), Wilhelm Wundt and other German thinkers, in the second half of the nineteenth century, modeled psychology on the positivistic paradigm of the natural sciences. Psychology became experimental in the sense of a physiological science of consciousness. In reaction against the reduction of psychology to its biological substratum, Brentano attempted to specify its subject matter by acknowledging the actual elements of psychic life, so as to highlight the distinctness of a genuine science of consciousness. In his major work, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874), he clarified what is given in psychic, lived experiences.

For Brentano, the psychic phenomena are not the same as the physical. The difference lies in the fact that in the former, something objective indwells, for example the represented in representing, the judged in judging, the willed in willing. Through its operations the mind orients itself towards something objective which comes to be present in the mind. Brentano calls this phenomenon "intentional in-existence" (existence in) and he uses the scholastic word "intention" to characterize the object-directed nature of intentionality.¹

In the lectures that have just been referred to, Heidegger concentrates on Brentano's concept of intentionality and does not speak of his concept of consciousness. But by perusing a few passages of Brentano's principal work, we can find out how he construes the relation of consciousness to intentionality.

As Heidegger notes, Brentano distinguishes "physical" and "mental" phenomena. The former are the objects of our sensations, what is sensed, what is directly given in perception, for instance what is seen (color, figure), what is heard (sound), what is felt (warmth, cold, odor), what is imagined (image). The latter are the act of presentation, the presenting of the object, for instance seeing, hearing, feeling, imagining, remembering, expecting, thinking, doubting, judging, willing, and all emotions.²

A mental phenomenon is a mental act or process by means of which we are conscious of something. In this first sense, "consciousness" overlaps with intentionality. Alluding to the grammar of the German word *Bewußtsein*, which strictly speaking means "to be conscious," Brentano writes that "it refers to an object which consciousness is conscious of" and it has "the property of the intentional in-existence of an object" (102).

For anything to exist in the knower and thus to be known, an object and a mental act are required at the same time. The first is called “the primary object” and the second, the “secondary object.” For example, the sound and the act of hearing. At this point, Brentano tells us something important concerning the mental act: “the secondary object of an act can undoubtedly be an object of consciousness in this act, but cannot be an object of observation in it” (128). In other words, whereas the primary object can be observed, the secondary object cannot (see 29). The mental act that becomes the secondary object cannot be observed (*beobachtet*), because it is not a second act, different from the one through which we observe the primary object (see 127).

One cannot be aware of the secondary object except in the mental act. Thus “the hearing itself is only apprehended concomitantly in the hearing of sounds” (129). Our mental activity is so naturally orientated towards objects (for instance, sounds) that we are but indirectly aware of it. “It is only while our attention is turned toward a different object that we are able to perceive, incidentally, the mental processes which are directed toward that object” (30). “There are undoubtedly occasions when we are conscious of a mental phenomenon while it is present in us; for example, while we have the presentation of a sound, we are conscious of having it” (126).

Here we hit upon Brentano’s second sense for consciousness. It is no longer intentionality as consciousness of an object, but rather the consciousness that traverses our entire mental activity.

The consciousness of the presentation of the sound clearly occurs together with the consciousness of this consciousness, for the consciousness which accompanies the presentation of the sound is a consciousness not so much of this presentation as of the whole mental act in which the sound is presented, and in which the consciousness itself exists concomitantly (129).

The first consciousness is the “consciousness of” or “presentation of,” while the second is the “consciousness of this consciousness,” elsewhere called “inner presentation” (127). “Consciousness *of* this consciousness,” however, is not a felicitous phrasing. As Dan Zahavi perceptively remarks about Husserl’s project, “Despite his criticism of the reflection theory, he continues to speak of consciousness taking itself as its own object, and thus of self-awareness as a (secondary) *object-awareness*.”³ This is the reason why, in my Introduction, I have named the accompanying consciousness, not a second kind of consciousness-of, but

consciousness-in, since it is detectable in our mental activity. Such consciousness permeates our mental phenomena.

Brentano subdivides this accompanying consciousness into two layers:

Just as we call the perception of a mental activity which is actually present in us “inner perception,” we here call the consciousness which is directed upon it “inner consciousness” (101, note).

The subdivision seems to be between nonreflexive and reflexive consciousness. Thanks to reflexive knowledge, our conscious acts become secondary objects. Commenting on Brentano, David Bell writes: “In addition to its possessing a primary object, a mental act may also possess a secondary object, namely, itself, which is intended along with (*nebenbei*) the primary object.”⁴

However, Brentano leaves unexplained the transition from the former to the latter. Lonergan will have more to say about this transition. He will concur with Brentano, who states that reflexive consciousness culminates in judgments: “we only have knowledge when we make judgments” (138). To unreflexive and reflexive consciousness Brentano adds a third, affective dimension: “Consciousness of this secondary object [the mental phenomenon] is threefold: it involves a presentation of it, a cognition of it and a feeling toward it” (154). As we shall note later in this chapter, Sartre more fully thematizes this affective dimension of consciousness.

Lonergan will agree with Brentano’s contention that, in contrast to external perception, which is not in itself reliable, inner perception possesses an immediate evidence and infallibility due to the directness of its presentation in our consciousness: “We are absolutely certain of the veracity of inner perception” (139). Thus, in contrast to the hypothetical character of scientific assertions, the judgments that express inner perception are invulnerable. Yet we shall see presently that Husserl helps us qualify this invulnerability.

Finally, Brentano discusses the unity of consciousness. Our mental activity is complex in that it brings together many acts (for instance, we can see and hear at the same time) and therefore many objects. He points out that the totality of our mental activities constitutes a real unity. They “all belong to one unitary reality only if they are inwardly perceived as existing together” (164; see 155–165). Interestingly, William James, to whose views on the self we shall give attention in chapter 7, writes, “Altogether this chapter of Brentano’s on the Unity of Consciousness is

as good as anything with which I am acquainted.”⁵ There is always in us a tendency to relate acts and objects, by differentiating or identifying them with one another. Further on in the current study, this remark regarding the unity of an individual’s consciousness will be the starting point of our reflections on the self.

HUSSERL

Husserl discusses three concepts of consciousness:

1. Consciousness as the entire, real (*reelle*) phenomenological being of the empirical ego, as the interweaving of psychic experiences in the unified stream of consciousness.
2. Consciousness as the inner awareness of one’s own psychic experiences.
3. Consciousness as a comprehensive designation for “mental acts”, or “intentional experiences”, of all sorts.⁶

The first sense corresponds with William James’s “stream of thought,” about which I shall have something to say in chapter 7. The second sense is also called “inner consciousness.” Using Brentano’s phrase, “inner perception,” Husserl explains: “This is that ‘inner perception’ thought to accompany actually present experiences” (Investigation V, §5, 542). He adds: “Undeniably the second concept of consciousness is the more ‘primitive’: it has an ‘intrinsic priority’” (§6, 543). The third sense is intentionality. Husserl is much more interested in this third sense, to which he dedicates his whole chapter 2, than in the first two senses, on which he briefly comments in his chapter 1.

These three senses of consciousness closely match three of Brentano’s tenets. The first of these is that human psychic life includes “*any mental process whatever of consciousness in an extraordinary broad sense.*” Husserl’s list is almost as long as Brentano’s. The stream of mental operations comprises mental acts, called *cogitationes*, such as “‘I perceive, I remember, I phantasy, I judge, I feel, I desire, I will,’ and thus all egoical mental processes which are at all similar to them, with their countless flowing particular formations.”⁷

The second tenet common to both thinkers is consciousness as the “object” of inner perception. However, Husserl disagrees with Brentano’s contention that “inner perception distinguishes itself from outer perception: 1. by its evidence and its incorrigibility, and 2. by essential differences in phenomena.” On the contrary, “not every per-

ception of the ego, nor every perception of a psychic state referred to the ego, is certainly evident.” In both cases, inner and outer perception, one can be misled in one’s judgments about them. Inner perception does not have an edge on outer perception, for they are “of an entirely similar epistemological *character*” (Appendix, 859). Yet in Investigation V itself, Husserl concedes (rightly, in my opinion) that there is something “self-evidently certain” in empirical judgments such as “I am” and other “judgments of inner (i.e., adequate) perception.”

Not only is it self-evident that I am: self-evidence also attaches to countless judgments of the form *I perceive this or that*, where I not merely think, but am also self-evidently assured, that what I perceive is given as I think of it, that I apprehend the thing itself, and for what it is—this pleasure, e.g., that fills me, this phantasm of the mind that float [sic] before me etc. All these judgements share the lot of the judgement “I am”, they elude complete conceptualization and expression, they are evident only in their living intention, which cannot be adequately imparted in words (§6, 544).

The third sense of consciousness that both Brentano and Husserl highlight is intentionality, namely, meaning (*meinen*) as the pointing at something, or intending directedness (*intendierende Gerichtetheit*) towards objects. “The essence of consciousness, in which I live as my own self, is the so-called intentionality. Consciousness is always consciousness of something.”⁸

Husserl asserts that “intentionality is a fundamental characteristic of psychic life which is given quite immediately and evidently prior to all theories.”⁹ By declaring intentionality to be “prior to all theories,” Husserl surpasses Brentano. Not that the latter has not recognized the basic character of intentionality. But what is going to be more and more underlined by Husserl is the unique status of intentionality as prior to all theories and indeed to all scientific or commonsense enterprises. According to him, “Brentano had not gone beyond an externally classificatory-descriptive consideration of intentional lived experiences or, what amounts to the same, of species of consciousness.”¹⁰

To Husserl’s mind, Brentano’s descriptive psychology still is typical of the natural attitude that his emancipated disciple wants to overcome. The mathematician Husserl contends:

Whenever something like numbers, mathematical multiplicities, propositions, theories, etc., are to become subjectively

given, become objects of consciousness in subjective lived experiences, the lived experiences which are needed for that to happen must have their essentially necessary and everywhere identical structure.¹¹

The latter part of this sentence has a Kantian ring which we do not hear in Brentano. Although Brentano had already maintained, as we saw, that mental processes (here: “the lived experiences”) are more basic than the objects, it is only with Husserl that they are seen, in a clearly transcendental fashion, as the conditions of possibility of any objectification.

Brentano’s brilliant follower becomes a philosopher in his own right as he moves from the natural to the transcendental or, more exactly, phenomenological attitude. Since it is not free from commonsense or scientific prejudices, the natural attitude entails belief in pseudo-objective entities, whereas the phenomenological attitude critically grounds the movement “to the things themselves.” For phenomenology to be the foundation of all sciences, it must go beyond the contingent life and uncover the formal structure of conscious intentionality.

One of the characteristics of this underlying structure is the unity it confers both on the succession of mental processes and on the objects that are thus related. Whereas Brentano, as we saw, contents himself with registering and describing the fact of such unification, Husserl posits a transcendental ego to account for this unifying dynamism in us: “intentional consciousness owes its specific form of unity to the ego.”¹² He is not interested in the empirical self, that is, in an individual having acquired a definite self-image and a worldview through idiosyncratic experiences. He is interested in “the general essence,”¹³ in what is grasped as the universal human structure, namely, the transcendental ego, the pure consciousness which gives organization to all the intentional processes. To attain this, a bracketing of the merely factual or concrete characteristics is required.

Husserl applies his phenomenological method, with its transcendental and eidetic reduction, to how intentionality as a whole is constituted. But since we are pursuing an account not so much of intentionality as of consciousness, we shall not enter into the details of Husserl’s intricate phenomenology, especially in its effort at providing a rigorous and secure foundation to all sciences. Let us simply focus on his procedure insofar as it touches upon consciousness.

In contrast to a descriptive psychology, Husserl proposes a transcendental phenomenology characterized by reflection. “Only in reflection do we ‘direct’ ourselves to the perceiving itself” (for example the perceiving of a house), “an experiencing experiencing of the house-

perception with all its moments.”¹⁴ In fact, as was said above, Brentano had already discovered this key to consciousness: a double awareness (*of* objects and *in* our intentional processes) in a single activity. As Sokolowski explains, “experience of acts takes place in the *same* stream of consciousness in which the acts are formed.” The fact of “experiencing experiencing” is not the result of a second mental act, which would amount to some observation or introspection. “The difficulty we must overcome is a tendency to forget the distinction between inner experience and perception, and to talk as though we did ‘perceive’ or ‘see’ our own acts.”¹⁵

Apart from those oblique allusions, Husserl offers less than Brentano on consciousness itself, probably because his interests resided in intentionality and in the founding of an apodictic science called phenomenology.¹⁶

SARTRE

Sartre began where Husserl left off.¹⁷ Still, being a Frenchman, he could not escape the influence of Henri Bergson (1859–1941). In 1889, Bergson publishes *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*.¹⁸ By “states of consciousness,” he means the “psychic states” of which we are conscious. As in Brentano and Husserl, the gamut is broad: sensations, feelings, passions, efforts (1), as well as the acts of pondering and deciding” (125). In a manner similar to theirs, he distinguishes “immediate” consciousness (128) and “reflective” consciousness (90). His main thesis runs as follows. On the one hand, in the former kind of consciousness, time is experienced as a qualitative multiplicity, since its elements are not homogeneous. On the other hand, the latter kind of consciousness projects our psychic states into space and represents them as a discrete and quantitative multiplicity, since the terms of a succession can be posited as identical while remaining outside of one another along a continuum (90, 124, 129). Although Bergson overwhelmingly prefers the former, called “pure duration” or “inner duration,” and unfairly considers the latter (reflective consciousness) to be a mere distortion of the former (91, 226–227), he has the merit of having uncovered our tendency to confuse the two and to speak of the former with images that befit only the latter (129).¹⁹ This is a problem that Sartre inherits from Bergson.

In a book entitled *The Psychology of Imagination*, originally published in 1940, Sartre mentions the fact of self-consciousness, called “an immanent and natural consciousness of itself.” He goes on to say that we must find out:

How the non-reflective consciousness posits its object. How this consciousness appears to itself in the non-thetic consciousness which accompanies the position of the object.²⁰

The best answers to these questions can be found in *The Transcendence of the Ego*, an essay first published a few years before, that is, in 1936.²¹ Sartre differentiates three levels of awareness. First, *nonpositional* consciousness, which does not posit itself as its own object. It stands in contrast to the awareness of objects, which does posit those objects. Nonetheless, such consciousness is necessarily twined to the awareness of some object: “consciousness is purely and simply consciousness of being consciousness of that object” (40). Nonpositional consciousness is “consciousness in the first degree, or *unreflected* (*irréfléchie*) consciousness” (41).

Second, *reflected* (*réfléchie*) consciousness, obtained as the result of “a reflective (*réflexive*) operation, that is to say, as an operation of the second degree.” Nonpositional consciousness is now reflected thanks to “reflecting (*réfléchissante*) consciousness” (44). “It becomes positional only by directing itself upon the reflected consciousness” (45). Reflecting consciousness is the reflective operation that takes consciousness as its object and makes it reflected consciousness. Thus reflected consciousness dawns in a reflecting-reflective act and attains its completion when it becomes objectified. Sartre must be credited with the distinction nonpositional/positional consciousness. He must also be praised for having noticed the transition from nonpositional to positional consciousness—a transition indicated by his use of the adjective *réfléchissante*, “reflecting.”

Third, the *Cogito*, or the “I” that thinks, which posits not only the reflected consciousness, but itself as reflecting consciousness. “All reflecting consciousness is, indeed, in itself unreflected, and a new act of the third degree is necessary in order to posit it” (45).

We find the same doctrine in Sartre’s mature work, *Being and Nothingness*.²² First, in the prereflective phase, he begins by emphasizing consciousness-of. “All consciousness, as Husserl has shown, is consciousness of something. This means that there is no consciousness which is not a *positing* (*position*) of a transcendent object” (liii). Consciousness (conscious intentionality would have been a better term) posits objects that transcend purely immanent mental operations. Then he introduces what I have called consciousness-in as the condition of consciousness-of:

However, the necessary and sufficient condition for a knowing consciousness to be knowledge of its object, is that it be consciousness of itself as being that knowledge. This is a necessary

condition, for if my consciousness were not consciousness of being consciousness of the table, it would then be consciousness of that table without consciousness of being so. In other words, it would be a consciousness ignorant of itself, an unconscious—which is absurd (liv).

Later in the same book, Sartre affirms that “the consciousness which we have of ourselves” is no addition to the consciousness that we simply are. He writes, “This consciousness, as we know, can be only non-positional; it is we-as-consciousness since it is not distinct from our being” (462). A few years after *Being and Nothingness* appeared, Sartre summarized it and reiterated that consciousness is “a mode of being.” The very title of his lecture announces his fine distinction between consciousness and knowledge. Of the former he says, “everyone *is* it at each instant.” There also, he insists that consciousness is not “immediately reflective” and therefore neither “a knowledge of knowledge” nor even a “knowledge” (*connaissance*).²³

In a second, reflexive phase, the person acquires “*reflection* or positional consciousness of consciousness, or better yet *knowledge of consciousness*” (liv). There is an echo here of Brentano’s distinction between inner perception (= Sartre’s nonpositional consciousness) and the knowledge posited in judgment: “the reflecting consciousness posits the consciousness reflected-on, as its object. In the act of reflecting I pass judgment on the consciousness reflected-on” (lv).

Further on in *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre indicates that since “consciousness was *there* before it was known,” “the being of self-consciousness could not be defined in terms of knowledge.” Hence his distinction between “selfness” (*ipséité*) and “the Ego” (*l’Ego*), the former being prereflective and the latter being the outcome of reflection (239). Moreover, he plays with two senses of the French word *réflexion*, which can mean either mirroring or thinking:

consciousness is a reflection (*reflet*), but *qua* reflection it is exactly the one reflecting (*réfléchissant*), and if we attempt to grasp it as reflecting, it vanishes and we fall back on the reflection. This structure of the reflection-reflecting (*reflet-reflétant*) has disconcerted philosophers (75–76).

He grammatically conveys the enigma of the self’s presence to itself by placing the “of” in parenthesis in the phrase *conscience (de) soi*—a consciousness he once more characterizes as “non-positional” (lvi). This practice of Sartre’s illustrates the problem of whether the self can suc-

cessfully objectify its consciousness. This issue will periodically recur in our enquiry.

Based on *The Transcendence of the Ego*, Phyllis Sutton Morris clearly sorts out the dual structure of nonpositional/positional consciousness:

In ordinary prereflective experience Sartre said there is (a) positional consciousness of an object and (b) nonpositional awareness (of) the act of consciousness, but no consciousness of an ego. Sartre claimed that an ego was encountered only in acts of reflection. Reflective consciousness has the same dual structure as does prereflective consciousness; there is (a) positional consciousness of an object and (b) nonpositional consciousness (of) the act of reflecting.²⁴

We can realize that the pair nonpositional/positional does not always overlap with the pair prereflective/reflective. In another article, commenting on the first pair, Morris states,

In distinguishing between the thetic (positional) and the non-thetic (non-positional) dimensions of consciousness, Sartre reminds us that each directed act of consciousness exhibits both focused and unfocused awareness.²⁵

By focusing on an object (positional consciousness), we leave other objects and our self-consciousness in the background (nonpositional).

What is the precise difference, then, between the two pairs? Morris states,

Whereas for Sartre, the distinction between positional and nonpositional consciousness is the difference in degrees of focus and clarity, the distinction between prereflective and reflective consciousness is the type of positional object toward which each is directed. . . . It is only when someone takes his own conscious activities as the object of his attention that he has begun to reflect in Sartre's sense.²⁶

For him, then, reflection means self-reflection. Accordingly, the transition from the non-reflective to the reflective amounts to a transition from the nonpositional to the positional self-consciousness.

Lest this analysis by Sartre sound overly intellectualistic, let us heed a remark he inserts in *Being and Nothingness*: "Not all consciousness is

knowledge (there are states of affective consciousness, for example)” (liv). In another study, *The Emotions*,²⁷ Sartre tries to situate emotions in regard to consciousness. He asks, “Can types of consciousness be conceived which would not include emotion among their possibilities, or must we see in it an indispensable structure of consciousness?” He opts for the latter: “An emotion is precisely a consciousness” (15). He explains, “Emotion is the human reality which assumes itself and which, ‘aroused,’ ‘directs’ itself toward the world” (14). “Emotion is a certain way of apprehending the world” (52). Conscious emotion is primarily intentionality.

At this prereflective stage, again we have the two sides of consciousness, that is, nonpositional in regard to itself and positional in regard to the world that it necessarily intends:

Emotional consciousness is, at first, unreflective, and on this plane it can be conscious of itself only on the non-positional mode. Emotional consciousness is, at first, consciousness *of* the world (51).

In this brilliant passage, Sartre makes us realize that unreflective emotion is neither “unconscious” nor “conscious *of* itself” (54). Having finely situated consciousness halfway between the unconscious and the reflexively conscious, he sums up his thesis as follows:

The thing that matters here is to show that action as spontaneous unreflective consciousness constitutes a certain existential level in the world, and that in order to act it is not necessary to be conscious of the self as acting—quite the contrary. In short, unreflective behavior is not unconscious behavior; it is conscious of itself non-thetically, and its way of being thetically conscious of itself is to transcend itself and to seize upon the world as a quality of things (56–57).

The thetical or positional consciousness is first operative as the intentionality which transcends itself towards the world. At the same time a non-thetical or nonpositional self-consciousness is also present.

Interestingly, earlier in the same book, after affirming that, in contrast to the psychologist, who attends to psychic states as accidental facts, the phenomenologist must study the *signification* of emotion (see 15-16), he states:

The emotion signifies, *in its own way*, the whole of consciousness or, if we put ourselves on the existential level, of human reality. It is not an accident because human reality is not an accumulation of facts. It expresses from a definite point of view the human synthetic totality in its entirety (17).

He suggests that at the existential level “the whole of consciousness” or “the human synthetic totality in its entirety” is at stake. This Kierkegaardian accent on the existential level of consciousness, where the future of the human self is in question, has deeply marked Lonergan’s thinking.

However, before introducing the thought of Lonergan on consciousness, let us pay attention, at least briefly, to Sartre’s views about nothingness in *Being and Nothingness*. As distinct from the “in-itself” (*en-soi*), the “for-itself” (*pour-soi*) “is already a non-thetic self-consciousness” (150). The human person is at one and the same time a thing (“in-itself”) and a subject (“for-itself”). Thus it has to both affirm and negate itself (118). In the process of reflection “the reflected-on . . . makes himself an object for—” that is, for oneself or for whatever other subject, and thus discovers that it has “an outside,” and that it has established “a distance from itself” (152). “To know is to *make oneself other*” (155). Because of consciousness, reflexivity, and self-questioning, the “for-itself” experiences a *néant* (“nothingness”), a gap, a radical difference vis-à-vis its factual, unconscious being.

Sartre seems to construe the emergence of this nothingness in the context of an inadequate philosophy of perception. For him, an individual’s own “being,” as observed from within, is an “outside,” namely, the “in-itself” (158). The human subject realizes that it is non-being, in contradiction to its “in-itself” perceived as a compact, self-contained bulk of being, opaque to itself, solid (*massif*), full positivity (*pleine positivité*), perfectly identical with itself, and absolutely unrelated to anything other than itself (lxv–lxvi). So, because it is “not coincidence with itself,”²⁸ the “for-itself” is “a nihilated in-itself” (154). Sartre misconceives of self-objectification, interpreted in terms of such physical and spatial metaphors, which cannot but strongly suggest a dualism within self-presence.²⁹ Accordingly his analysis ends up in the paradox of a self-reflection that must remain a “failure” (154). Yet it is unsuccessful only in the measure that he wants judgment to resemble perception. We shall observe that problem in Plotinus’s representation of Intellect’s self-consciousness.

Elizabeth Morelli rightly discerns “a vacillation between experience and knowledge in his discussion of reflection.” She explains:

Sartre is presupposing here, as he does in his account of conscious intentionality in general, a notion of object which is fundamentally empiricist. It is the notion of object as over against the act, as standing before the act. This notion of object presupposes what Lonergan terms an “ocular model” of knowing. The empiricist assumes that all knowing must be modeled on what takes place in the act of looking.”³⁰

This epistemological inadequacy, in Sartre’s account, is regrettable, given that his sense of the nonpositional is correct, which is no mean achievement. The end-result is that the transition from consciousness to adequate reflection is not correctly expounded.

To sum up: Sartre has made a remarkable contribution to the understanding of consciousness. However, his thoughts on reflection and nothingness suffer from two shortcomings. First, they are distorted by his empiricist epistemology, and second, they remain within the compass of an anthropological subjectivity. We shall have opportunity to mention them again, when we examine the views of Heidegger and Nishitani on nothingness.

LONERGAN

Like Brentano and Husserl, Lonergan pays a great deal of attention to human intentionality. However, he differs from them by the fact that he accentuates and analyzes consciousness more than they do. His account of consciousness owes much to Sartre’s, which he held in high esteem.³¹

Inspired by Husserl, who called his own approach “intentional analysis,”³² Lonergan’s “intentionality analysis” distinguishes the data of a twofold awareness: the contents of one’s operations, and the operations themselves. The inquiring subject is aware both of the objects that he or she intends and of the several acts that constitute the intending. Such intending is the ongoing effort to come to know and respect what is other than oneself. Elusive though it is, the intending is no less conscious than the intended, since people are at least vaguely aware of their cognitive and volitional operations.

Man’s sensitive, intellectual, rational, and moral operations have two distinct but related characteristics. They are both

intentional and conscious. Insofar as they are intentional, they make objects present to us. Insofar as they are conscious, they make us present to ourselves. However, if I have used the same word, present, twice, I also have used it in two different senses. Intentionality effects the presence of an object to the subject, of a spectacle to the spectator. Consciousness is a far subtler matter: it makes the spectator present to himself, not by putting him into the spectacle, not by making him an object, but while he is spectator and as subject.³³

Intentionality analysis brings to expression the second kind of presence, namely, the conscious intending. It does so, first by adverting to, and thus heightening the usually dim consciousness that accompanies all human activities; secondly by seeking to understand the relations between these activities; thirdly by checking the adequacy of that understanding. In addition to this three-step procedure, one can, in a fourth step, make a commitment in favor of the value of human intentionality. Such are the four basic levels of human intentionality, uncovered in Lonergan's magnum opus, *Insight*: attentiveness to the data, insights into them, judgments that insights are correct or not, and decisions to act in conformity with right understanding.³⁴

Lonergan proposes an intentionality analysis that explores the data of consciousness, namely, the several degrees of consciousness that pervade our waking activities. Such inner data belong to the entire range of our cognitional and volitional acts, and of our affective states. The common denominator is that they are conscious events in a person's life, prior to the intentional act of paying attention to them.

By the conscious act is not meant an act to which one attends; consciousness can be heightened by shifting attention from the content to the act, but consciousness is not constituted by that shift of attention, for it is a quality immanent in acts of certain kinds, and without it the acts would be as unconscious as the growth of one's beard.³⁵

In Lonergan's list, acts are as numerous as in Brentano's and Husserl's lists.

Operations in the pattern are seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, inquiring, imagining, understanding, conceiving, formulating, reflecting, marshalling and weighing the evidence, judging, deliberating, evaluating, deciding, speaking, writing.³⁶

In addition to conscious operations, feelings or states also are conscious. As contradistinguished from non-intentional feelings, intentional feelings respond to values.³⁷ Intentional feelings that are relatively permanent, and thus called states, play a leading role in the mystical life, as we shall find out, beginning with our next chapter.

Is it unwarranted pretension to stake out the bold claim that this structure is universal? Lonergan considers it an invariant pattern. And he explains why: any attempt to question it must implement the very structure it questions, by engaging in such activities as attending, understanding, verifying, and assessing the functioning of human intentionality. Thus those who reject what they are as intentional agents simply disqualify themselves. Denying the invariant pattern amounts to “the admission that one is a nonresponsible, nonreasonable, nonintelligent somnambulist.”³⁸ In a humorous vein, Lonergan states:

Not even behaviorists claim that they are unaware whether or not they see or hear, taste or touch. Not even positivists preface their lectures and their books with the frank avowal that never in their lives did they have the experience of understanding anything whatever. Not even relativists claim that never in their lives did they have the experience of making a rational judgment. Not even determinists claim that never in their lives did they have the experience of making a responsible choice.³⁹

Following Brentano and Husserl, Lonergan maintains that the inner data of consciousness, that is, our operations as consciously performed, cannot be observed. They cannot be established as a result of some inner perception or introspection: there is no inward look or peering directed to the self’s mental activities.⁴⁰ These just happen consciously; they are simply conscious. However, the consciousness of our activities can be explicated as inner data if we take notice of them and ask questions about their interworkings. Hence Lonergan’s distinction between “consciousness as given,” which is “neither formulated nor affirmed,” and “an account of consciousness.”⁴¹ Lonergan clearly delineates the transition from mere consciousness in our operations to its objectification, unlike Brentano and Husserl, who leave that transition in the dark, while Sartre tackles it but ends in a paradox, as we saw, because of his inadequate epistemology.

Furthermore, like Brentano, Lonergan contends that knowledge resides neither in sensory perception nor in consciousness, but in judgments. Hence the distinction that both of them accept between experience (which Brentano calls inner perception) and judgment of fact. While

consciousness is simply given, knowledge of consciousness is obtained at the end of a process of thematization, namely, in judgments. For both of them, such objectification is an exercise of intentionality, which consists in more than naming or attaching a label to objects.

The fact that Lonergan is not a conceptualist distinguishes him from authors who envision human knowledge as *primarily* a matter of objectification in the sense of conceptualization. For him, an adequate account of consciousness never amounts to a mere turning back of the self upon itself (a first looking at its inner life), which would be followed by a conceptualization extrinsic to the subject matter (a second looking, this time at concepts). In total contrast to this imaginary representation, his view is that the reflexive acts that formulate consciousness consist of questions, insights, and judgments. Because it is not extrinsic, such thematizing does not betray the nature of consciousness.⁴² It does not duplicate consciousness as pure consciousness (that would inevitably distort it), but rather stems from an understanding of its elements. In other words, the benefit and truth of thematization do not derive from its capacity to relive consciousness as experienced, but from the correct insights into it that it offers. At the end of this intelligent process, the correct insights (as correct, or verified, they are also called judgments) present realities (also called objects) that are defined thanks to interrelated concepts.

To bring home the difference between the two stages in self-awareness, Lonergan has recourse to the metaphor of infrastructure and suprastructure: “that consciousness [of our operations] is not knowledge but only the infrastructure in a potential knowledge that few get around to actuating by adding its appropriate suprastructure.”⁴³ Or again:

As inner experience it is consciousness as distinct from self-knowledge, consciousness as distinct from any introspective process in which one inquires about inquiring, and seeks to understand what happens when one understands, and endeavors to formulate what goes on when one is formulating, and so on for all the inner activities of which all of us are *conscious* and so few of us have any exact *knowledge*.⁴⁴

Introspection, which Lonergan had outright rejected in earlier works, is here called “introspective process” and is given a new meaning as the rise and development of self-awareness. After an initial stage, in which we simply have consciousness in all our acts and states, a second stage begins which eventually comprises the entire series of acts by which we pay attention to consciousness and reflect on it. These intentional acts are triggered by some wondering about our conscious acts and

states. How is it that besides relating to external realities, I am aware of such relating taking place in me? At this initial phase characterized by the desire to elucidate what happens in us, consciousness becomes awareness, which is advertence to one's own consciousness. Such questioning allows for the transition from mere consciousness to gaining some understanding of it.

Mark, however, that I am distinguishing consciousness (= consciousness-in) and self-awareness (= consciousness of consciousness) in a way a bit more precise than Lonergan's. In fact, he uses the two terms equivalently, although his preferred one is "consciousness." But he would entirely agree, I think, with my usage of "self-awareness" as indicating a stage beyond mere consciousness, namely, the stage wherein consciousness of mere consciousness begins to emerge.

In sum, as we undertake to philosophize about consciousness, we engage in a double-decker enterprise, so to speak: the fourfold consciousness that traverses our activities becomes adverted to, understood, judged to be true, appreciated. In other words, the thematization that parallels the fourfold consciousness is also fourfold. Whenever successful, such a duplication is neither a direct uncovering of consciousness (a first look at it) nor a distorting interpretation (a second look at it), but a sound account based on verified understanding of it.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has explored how four twentieth-century thinkers depict human consciousness, its inseparability from intentionality, its reflective thematization, which then becomes self-knowledge, and its affective side. There is little to conclude at the moment, since our inquiry will go on in the following chapter. In chapter 2 our account will be enriched by the more recent thoughts of four other scholars.