A NEW LOOK AT INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND THEOLOGY: A RETRIEVAL OF FILIPINO LOOB-KAPWA RELATIONALITY IN DIALOGUE WITH GABRIEL MARCEL AND LUDWIG BINSWANGER

Rowan Rebustillo | KU Leuven, Belgium & Diocese of Sorsogon, Philippines

Abstract:
Although Marcel and Binswanger are contemporaries both in terms of historical period and intellectual pursuit, it is curious that they are never discussed together. Hence, this essay will attempt to explore some areas of convergences and divergences between these two intersubjective thinkers who are considered to be indispensable interlocutors in the I-thou discourse. In this article, as another attempt to take the discourse on intersubjectivity a little bit further, Marcel and Binswanger are placed in dialogue with the Filipino concept of loob-kapwa, which the author believes provides a hospitable home, when seen against the background of Nicolescu’s “Included Middle”, for the intersubjective relation that they are proposing. The author asserts that loob-kapwa tandem, without turning a blind eye towards its negative tendencies, is a viable answer to the “problem of crossing-over” that remained to be a philosophical baggage for both Marcel and Binswanger courtesy of their Modern upbringing, because the chasm, at least conceptually, is absent in the Filipino estimation of the loob-kapwa intersubjective bond.

Keywords:
intersubjectivity • theology • Loob-Kapwa • relationality • trinitarian God
Introduction

Contemporary theology, like in any period of history, is in search for new models and metaphors that appeal to contemporary taste, temperament and language. With the remarkable popularity of postmodern thinking in the contemporary world, wherein the importance of alterity and difference has taken the center stage, one is challenged to formulate new theological articulations that take into serious consideration the new questions that arise from the present pluralistic society and, at the same time, recover elements that are essential to theology.

Thus, in this paper, for the very first time, I propose to bring together in a meaningful dialogue on ‘Intersubjectivity’ the following: 1) Creative Fidelity in the Philosophy of Existence of Gabriel Marcel; 2) Phenomenology of Love in the Existential Psychology of Ludwig Binswanger; 3) the “Included Middle” in Barasab Nicolescu’s Quantum Physics; and 4) the peculiar relationship between the loob and the kapwa as construed by some Filipino scholars in the fields of theology, psychology, philosophy, anthropology, sociology and management. I argue that the Filipino concepts of loob-kapwa, without disregarding the problematic tendencies entrenched in this tandem, provide a viable answer to the problem of bridging the existential chasm between the subject and the object that remained to be a philosophical baggage for both Marcel and Binswanger courtesy of their Modern upbringing marked by the radical solipsism that originated in Descartes’ discovery of the “Je suis, J’existe”.

I believe that with this, a new avenue towards meaningful way of talking about faith in the academy will unfold.

Marcel and Intersubjectivity

To explore Gabriel Marcel’s notion of Creative Fidelity is not an easy task, especially because his way of philosophizing is not so straightforward manner that one stumbles upon layers and layers of confusing but important digressions. Although he is generally categorized as an “existential philosopher”, he prefers to be identified as a “believing” Catholic, a “neo-Socratic” or a “Christian Socratic” philosopher to set him apart from other existentialist philosophers, especially Jean Paul Sartre,
who have the predilection to characterize the ‘self’ as an isolated ego, to “preach” about the death of God, and to project lived experience as having ‘no exit.’ Marcel, in contrast to Sartre, spends his philosophical energy by reflecting on themes that have to do with intersubjectivity, the ‘Absolute Thou,’ grace, humility, courage, and hope. This is precisely the reason why Kenneth Gallagher, an expert on Marcel’s philosophy, has asserted that, for Marcel, “authentic human existence is existence-in-communion; it is the thou who gives me to myself.” For Marcel, the intersubjective “area” is located in the horizon of love.

Marcel prefers to dwell in the concrete and lived world rather than in the ‘rational life,’ because the latter, for him, is a catalyst for human despair. In lieu of the ‘rational’, he proposes a ‘reflective’ and intersubjective journey of the homin viator. For Marcel, it is through relationships in the context of ‘being’ (not in the context of ‘having’) that the love of the I-thou overcomes death and meaninglessness. A conscious effort to overcome ‘death and meaninglessness’ is genuinely needed because, according to Marcel, the human person has the propensity towards materialism and self-destruction. This belief, then, leads Marcel to profess “to love a being is to say you, you in particular, will never die.”

In this logic, Marcel perceives love to be the ‘essential intellectual datum’ that is the ground of hope and immortality. Ultimately, for Marcel, this intersubjective love is anchored in the fidelity of the Absolute Thou (i.e., Marcel’s way of naming God) and neither on the I nor on the thou whose limitations are an undeniable existential fact. The foundation of all communions is the Absolute Thou. In the words of Hocking, “it is God from the beginning who shares all of our objects and so is the real medium of communication between one person and another.” Hence, Marcel asserts that the best formulation of hope in the context of creative fidelity is expressed in the appeal, “I hope in thee for us.”

Binswanger and Intersubjectivity

It is curious that, although Marcel is a contemporary of Ludwig Binswanger both in terms of time and academic interest, there is no solid proof that their paths ever crossed. Ludwig Binswanger, a psychiatrist
by profession, shied away from the reductionistic approach in psychiatry popular during his time. His “new approach” led him to dissociate himself from the tradition of Freudian psychoanalysis despite their “harmonious” professional relationship. Likewise, notwithstanding his great “admiration” of Martin Heidegger, he tried to steer away from some of the “problematic” elements found in Heidegger’s philosophy whose Dasein was still undoubtedly Cartesian in essence and obsessed with death. What he tried to develop and promote, instead, was the non-reductionistic approach that obviously bears the mark of Martin Buber’s intersubjective I and thou. For Binswanger, Heidegger’s Dasein was suffering from “schizophrenia” which had torn the Dasein between “inauthentic being with others” and the “authentic being alone.” In contrast to Heidegger’s “schizophrenic” dealing with the Dasein, Binswanger proposes Daseinsanalyse or “Existential analysis” which “is an empirical science, with its own method and particular idea of exactness, namely with method and ideal of exactness of the phenomenological empirical sciences.” Through this, the Dasein is rescued from its tragic solipsism by placing it in the context of what he considered to be a true encounter between the self and the others. Within this horizon, as explained by Roger Frie, Binswanger identifies “the human Dasein is an irreducible duality. Dasein in its original form is a ‘we-hood,’ against which the expanse of existence, selfhood and individuality appear as secondary.” Moreover, according to Frie, Binswanger provides a framework within which to understand the structure and importance of reciprocity in a love relation. Binswanger was convinced that this “loving mode of being” must be the real objective of any therapist’s relationship with the patient. Thus, it can be said that his theory of intersubjectivity, which locates meaning within the person’s relations to self and others, provided an alternative to Freudian/Lacanian psychopathology, Jasperian incomprehensibility (theoretical exclusion of psychotic patients from psychological understanding) and Heideggerian/Cartesian/Sartrian individualism via a relational dialogue between the I and the thou or the importance of interpersonal love, which Heidegger neglected or eschewed in his theory of authenticity. Self-realization, for Binswanger, can only be attained in the context of reciprocal relationship or within the dialogue between the I and thou. For this, he asserted that “Man is as much a communal as he us an individual being; he navigates
Marcel and Binswanger in Dialogue on Intersubjectivity

Based on the foregoing discussion, there is indeed a semblance between Marcel’s Christian Socratic philosophy of existence and Binswanger’s existentialist psychology despite the fact that they were unfamiliar with each other’s intellectual legacy. Both Marcel and Binswanger take into serious account the centrality of Love in concrete human life. Marcel, as already mentioned above, believes that love overcomes death\(^35\) while Binswanger, in the words of Joeri Schrijvers, “considers the experience of love to be timeless: it can even stand the test of death.”\(^36\) Moreover, Binswanger claims that “life without love is ‘blind,’ and love without life ‘empty’.”\(^37\) For Binswanger, as well as for Marcel, love overcomes death and meaninglessness. Binswanger, based on the analysis of Schrijvers, gives importance to

The fullness of being, revealed through us in love, intimates a ‘being-beyond-the-world-in-the-world’ (‘über die Welt hinaus sein’) which overpowers and empowers the existential structures of care and concern. It does so, moreover, by showing ‘being’ as fundamentally relational or intersubjective, for even if one, in a way, always dies alone, one never loves alone as well: it takes two to love — at least.\(^38\)

Both Marcel and Binswanger struggle against the Cartesian ego that inhabits the Heideggerian \textit{Dasein} by focusing on the messy concrete real life situation of the human beings.\(^39\) Marcel adopts what he calls the philosophy of existence that involves “working…up from life to thought and then down from thought to life again, so that [one] may try to throw more light upon life”\(^40\) while Binswanger’s approach is referred to as “Daseinanalysis”\(^41\) which is “neither ontology nor philosophy proper” but
a phenomenological anthropological route that asks the question “what is it, for human being, to be.” For Marcel, “a philosophy that begins with the cogito … runs the risk of never getting back to being.” Therefore, he asserts that as a philosopher, “I am not a spectator who is looking for a world of structures susceptible to being viewed clearly and distinctly, but rather I listen to voices and appeals comprising that symphony of Being—which is for me, in the final analysis, a supra-rational unity beyond images, words, and concepts.” For, indeed, Marcel contends that “existence precisely cannot be reduced to objectivity.” Binswanger, as rightly noted by van Deurzen, “considers mutuality, or being-with to be fundamental to human existence. Instead of having to choose between Heidegger’s inauthentic being with others or authentic being alone, we can redeem ourselves and others through true encounter in Buberian style. This encounter, which is a loving mode of being, is what the therapist should aim for with the patient.”

Both Marcel and Binswanger take seriously the imperfect situation of the human being. Marcel, on his part, calls it the “broken world,” while Binswanger deals with what he calls ‘misglückten’ (i.e., failed or false Dasein). Both the “broken world” and the ‘misglückten’ when seen from the perspective of or placed in the region of love reveal the space of the ‘WE’ that cannot simply be swept under the rug or denied. Marcel claims that a philosopher who dwells in the concrete reality of life cannot escape the moral consequences of personal involvement that is grounded in compassion and responsibility. The philosopher, aware of the ‘broken world’, has a moral responsibility vis-à-vis the absurdities and the captivities which menace our planet, to reject cynicism and discover those depths of our shared humanness and of reality which are the sources of faith, love, presence and hope. To fulfill such an important task, the homo viator must constantly return to the “creative tension between the I and those depths of our being in and by which we are.” Binswanger, on his part, claims that the “Dasein glimpses itself as Mitdasein.” In his critical analysis of Binswanger, Schrijvers reads this statement of Binswanger as an expression of thought that “there is no one that does not want to be loved as much as there is no love for one alone.” Furthermore, Schrijvers surmises that “Love… for Binswanger unites identity and difference, it is the unio as communio: ‘our’ love is the meeting of you and I with one
another, and, through this, a glimpse of the meeting of all with all.51 Hence, I assume that for both Marcel and Binswanger, the ‘loving we’ is an irreducible existential fact.

Another converging point between Marcel and Binswanger is their effort to escape the danger of solitude á deux. Marcel tackles this issue by claiming that to love is to experience the presence not only of the beloved but also of eternity, of God.52 Moreover, he claims that the fidelity of the I and the Thou is anchored in the virtue of Hope, wherein the I professes its dependence on the Absolute Thou. He states: “Hope… is not only a protestation inspired by love, but a sort of a call too, a desperate appeal to an ally who is Himsel also love.”53 Marcel stresses that the real bond that links the I and the Thou is based on “something which transcends”54 them and comprehends them in itself.55 To state this more clearly, Donald McCarthy declares that what develops as

intersubjective love on purely human level is but a shadow of the I-Thou relationship with the Absolute Thou, or a preliminary condition for the full establishment through faith. The ontological question, “What am I?”, can thus be answered by an Absolute Thou. An ontological need… shows the need of a change of axis…The Absolute Thou is more completely within the self than the self itself.56

This seems to me as expressing the same point that Binswanger has put forward while he endeavors to rescue the ‘lovers’ from the snare of solitude á deux. The difference between them, however, lies in the fact that Binswanger deliberately avoids having recourse to the Absolute Thou. Instead, he pursues the path which leads to the unity and difference that the Dasein experiences in the atmosphere of intersubjectivity. The course taken by Binswanger, according to Schrijvers,

prevents us from reducing the difference of love to an identity – as when one would lose track of that facticity that I could have loved someone else equally – as much as appropriating this identity of love to such an extent that different loves would no longer be possible – the danger of a solitude á deux. Binswanger argues that what reason and rationality can barely understand is the fact that in love there is “coinciding of this one particular You and You-ness in general [einen geliebten Du und ‘Duhaftigkeit überhaupt’]”….This means that here this ontic love – for you – serves as the particular passageway to the idea of love, to the love that extends to all beings. This love here, in this ontic variety, is extended to an ontology of love, as it extends the greeting to life greeting life,
universally. The one Good that you and I share, shares itself with all and everything that can be named ‘good’. This is love’s principle: it cannot remain content with you and I alone. 57

It is obvious from the aforementioned “escape routes” provided by Marcel and Binswanger, respectively, that the former pursues what can be considered as theistic existentialism while the latter argues from a non-theistic standpoint. While Marcel, on the one hand, has no qualms of being branded as a Christian Socratic philosopher (being a convert to Catholicism), Binswanger, on the other hand, generally dismisses religion. 58 Perhaps, it is safe to assume that although they come from the same context (i.e. from the rubbles of the world wars) and pursued the same path (i.e., existentialism that deals with the concrete life) they arrived at two different destinations (i.e., Marcel, the Absolute Thou; Binswanger, “ultimately, an affirmation, a ‘yes’ towards one’s throwness in being with the other and others”59).

A Retrieval of the Pre-Modern LOOB and KAPWA

Identifying the LOOB: A Challenging Journey

Suffice it to say that when we talk about loob we are not dealing with something that is mono-dimensional, hence, we are trying to dip our fingers on something that can be considered as very close to home yet understandably elusive. As a matter of fact, Filipino thinkers and scholars who have been cracking their heads to identify what is essential to loob have, despite their apparent agreement, been divided as to the modality of loob – especially in relation to the kapwa. Thus, we can say that when one attempts to investigate on the Filipino concept of loob, he/she is in for a ride. It is certain that in this journey he/she will be greeted with a cacophony of meanings representing the rich and profound dimensions of this indigenous vocabulary. True to its ‘nature’ as a conceptus, indeed, loob is undeniably pregnant with meanings,60 which is clearly demonstrated by the impressive collection of idioms rooted in and related to loob with their respective attendant significations (i.e., denotations and connotations) presented in the book written by Albert Alejo, a well-known philosopher and anthropologist in the Philippines, entitled Tao Po! Tuloy! Isang Landas ng Pag-unawa sa Loob ng Tao.61 The existence of surplus meaning as far as
the Filipino *loob* is concerned has definitely caught the interest of scholars from different disciplines and cultural orientations to dig deeper into the “mystery” of the Filipino *loob*. Despite the extensive academic work done by these pundits to identify some common threads that run across the different layers and facets of the Filipino *loob*, the quest for the real essence of *loob* has never been put to a definitive halt. There are some elements of *loob* on which they generally agree but there are also others that continue to evade any final and conclusive unanimity. It is proving to be a never-ending saga because, perhaps, it does not only bear the multiple cultural baggage harnessed from the past history but also continues to pack on new implications as new experiences and circumstances breathe new “life” to the Filipino “*homo viator*”. The concept of *loob* is, indeed, a part of the living reality of every Filipino, just like *nakem* and *buut*, which will unflaggingly escape the clutches of a single monolithic categorization that some academics who are infected by the *idea clara et distincta* bug, courtesy of Modernity, have been endeavoring to find. Thus, it is safe to say that scholars from all sides of the intellectual spectrum will continue to be fascinated by the over-abundance of the concept of *loob*.

Having said all that, I argue that the Filipino concept of *loob* does not only bear some semblance to the ‘self’ as respectively understood by Marcel and Binswanger, but also enriches the ongoing discourse on intersubjectivity because this concept, taken in its pre-modern signification, underlines or brings to the fore some relational components that may either be latent or absent in Marcel’s and Binswanger’s intellectual undertakings. Perhaps, the Filipino *loob*, as understood by some of the Filipino scholars who have tried to mine its intersubjective treasure, will ‘heal’ the ‘wound of existential division’ created in the West and in westernized society, including the Philippines, by Descartes’ *Cogito*.

The concept the Filipino *loob* can be used in either literal or personal sense. The ‘literal’ pertains to the spatial or physical meaning of the word *loob*; what is literally inside or the ‘inside’ itself. The use of the word is self-evident enough for one to catch its sense immediately. According to Leonardo Mercado, the conceptual equivalent of this in Visayan is *sulud* and in Ilocano is *uneg/loob*.

When the word is used in its ‘personal’ sense or is applied to the *loob* of the person, however, the issue becomes messier or more complicated.
Loob, as explained by Mercado, can understood as “sarili” just like the Visayan buut or Ilokano nakem which bears the notion of ‘selfhood’.\textsuperscript{65} But, loob is not just sarili because according to Mercado, loob is specifically the dimension of the self that embodies the “essence” of the Filipino ‘cosmic self’.\textsuperscript{66} Loob, as a ‘holistic’\textsuperscript{67} and ‘cosmic’ concept, cannot be conceived in a compartmentalized way of thinking of the West because the Filipino loob encompasses the aspects of feeling, thinking and willing.\textsuperscript{68} It is generally agreed, according to Mercado, that “[the] Filipino looks at, herself as a self, as one who feels, as one who wills, as one who thinks, as one who acts: as a total whole as a ‘person,’ conscious of his freedom, proud of his human dignity, and sensitive to the violation of these two.”\textsuperscript{69}

Aside from being characterized as ‘holistic’, Mercado argues that loob also pertains to a person’s ‘interiority,’ which is generally accepted by most Filipino scholars.\textsuperscript{70} “Loob,” according to Vicente Rafael, “is at the root of one of the words for – to give, ipagcaloób, and a gift itself is caloób, literally part of the inside of something. Thus inside is juxtaposed rather than dialectically opposed to outside.”\textsuperscript{71} Albert Alejo, however, underscores that “loób… cannot be encased only in a simplistic division between loób and labas.”\textsuperscript{72} Jeremiah Reyes, in contrast to the general agreement on the loob as interiority, proposes a way of avoiding the pitfall of presenting loob as an ‘inner self’”. For him, it is more proper to understand loob not just a ‘will’ but as a ‘relational will’,\textsuperscript{73} which clearly indicates the very important ‘milieu’ of relationality where the loob is ontologically situated. It is imperative, according to Reyes, “to distance loob from the modern conceptions of the will, such as the autonomous and self-legislating will found in Kant.”\textsuperscript{74} ‘Autonomy’ or being an ‘isolated monad’, Reyes contends, is something that is foreign to the Filipino concept of loob, especially in its pre-modern or pre-colonial sense. Loob does not share the notion of the Cartesian res cogitans that is imprisoned in its monadic cell of solipsism. Because of this, Reyes avers that “[the] confusion starts when people latch on to [the] literal translation of loób as ‘inside’ and use all sorts of twentieth-century Western philosophical and psychological theories to explain loób with the subjective-objective dichotomy of Descartes or Kant looming in the background.”\textsuperscript{75}

Although I am inclined to agree with Reyes in this respect, I believe that this ‘confusion’ will be a perennial problem should we insist
on using this Tagalog word which obviously shares the same exact word with the ‘loob’ that we ordinarily use to refer to spatial or physical interiority, which, as I have already discussed earlier, is not carried by the Ilocano word ‘nakem’ and the Bicolano/Visayan word ‘buot’ because these two regional linguistic families have different terminologies used to refer to physical interiority. Thus, it begs the question: Can we not just accept the notion of ‘interiority’ as indispensable aspect of the concept of Tagalog loob and never attempt at limiting loob purely or absolutely to the notion of “interior-less” ‘will’ alone? Perhaps, this is the reason why even if Leonardo Mercado strongly rejects the use of “either/or” category when referring to the Filipino notion of loob because it is located within the realm of ‘holism’ or of the ‘both/and’, Miranda and Prospero Covar do not do away also with the idea of com-penetration of the inside and the outside. Alejo’s explanation of the concept of loob can be seen as a possible support to the argument of maintaining the notion of interiority in the Filipino loob because, according to him

The loob is not only the combination of the lawak (breadth) and latim (depth) of the walls, floors, and eaves of a room but the laman (content) which are gathered in the center and that which moves from the center unto the corner and out into the front. Loob is also the surroundings that is composed of the sounds which are heard by the one who is knocking and not invading. The loob is that which is felt even in its silence which is understood when someone understands and shares that loob.

This argument of Alejo, for me, conveys the same point expressed in Marcel’s and Binswanger’s notion of the ‘self’ which cannot be reduced to a disembodied Cartesian subject. The loob is a concretely embodied self that “is and will always be directed towards something, especially towards other people.” It should never be treated in isolation like an ‘object’ plucked out from its normal habitat because it is essentially immersed in a relational milieu or, “completely embedded and integrated inside the web of connectivity.”

In this web of connectivity, Jose de Mesa retains the importance of the core of personhood which is the loob. He succinctly explains that “Loob apart from referring to the core of personhood, also states what kind of core that is in relationship. Loob, one may say, is a relational understanding of the person in the lowland Filipino context.” Miranda, on his part,
affirms that “Loob needs kapwa even to be loob: its continued responding to kapwa is the condition for its own existence and authenticity as loob.” It is meaningless, therefore to investigate the concept of loob (i.e., something about the ‘will’ of a person) like a monad which is detached or isolated from its organic relation to the kapwa and to the values and virtues that emanate from this ‘tandem’.

*What is ‘Inside’? Loob as Potentia*

Reyes suggests that a more proper way of understanding of the pre-modern Filipino loob is through the prism of Thomistic Virtue Ethics rather than simply looking at it from the lens of a Cultural Value. With this approach, according to him, one can rescue the concept of loob from the notion of shallow subjectivism or of a fleeting personal preference. Using “Aquinas’ metaphysical doctrine of potency and act”, Reyes offers a corrective lens to explain how the notion of ‘inside’ can still be applied to the Filipino concept of loob which does not imply ‘interiority’ found in the modern subject. ‘Inside’, according to Reyes, must be understood in the context of the Filipino loob as potentia (potency) like in the idea of a tree being “inside” the seed or the statue of David being “inside” the block of marble. In this logic, we can say that what has “always” been “inside” (i.e., hidden) was brought “outside” (i.e., actualized) by natural process of growth in the case of the tree and by the intervention of the sculptor in the case of the statue of David. For Reyes, the loob of the person is more deeply understood not ‘through reflection’ but “by living in relationship with others” which embodies the essence of what Karol Wojtyla had expressed in the following words: “Action reveals the person… Action gives us the best insight into the inherent essence of the person and allows us to understand the person most fully.”

To borrow the words of Miranda, “Loob comes to be through its activity; without such activity loob is not; it does not exist.” Thus, I can posit that the actualization of loob, whether it becomes a virtue like in the case of the kagandahang loob (i.e., benevolent will) or a vice like in the case of masamang loob (i.e., ill will) will certainly be influenced by the how and the where it is being nurtured and played out – whether in a hospitable or hostile environment, positive or negative, in an atmosphere of love or hate, harmony or divisiveness. Indeed, Reyes is right in saying that “the loob is known only through relationship and interaction. Even your own loob
cannot be determined by yourself in isolation, instead it is determined by how you relate and act towards your kapwa.\(^8^9\) Thus, the virtuous loob can be actualized in the healthy relational environment that includes the presence of the kapwa. This means that when the atmosphere is not conducive for cultivating virtues, the vicious loob gains the upper hand. The loob becomes a threat to the kapwa. The loob instead of fostering a loving relationship together with the kapwa becomes an instrument of division and destruction. Indeed, situations of alienation, tension and destruction creep in in the context of this intimate relationship which may water down or dissolve the bond that bring the loob and kapwa into a harmonious togetherness. One cannot simply turn a blind eye towards the “negative tendencies” that arise in this “loving” relationship. Despite being animated by the spirit of ‘intimacy and harmony’, they are still capable of harboring hatred and inflicting injury, suffering and death upon others, even to family members whom they consider as the core of their beings. The profound value they attach to relationship is certainly not a hundred percent guarantee that conflictual relationships are not sown by the loob in the field of intersubjectivity that could lead to bloody and deadly encounters.

Kapwa’s Role in the Web of Relationality: The other side of the relational coin?

An understanding of the concept of loob is gravely deficient if it is not viewed in tandem with another Filipino indigenous concept, which is the kapwa. In its literal sense, kapwa can either mean ‘fellow’ or ‘both’, which may express the notions of “sameness and relational-ness”.\(^9^0\) Beyond its literal sense, however, kapwa is understood as “the core of Filipino personhood… the notion of a ‘shared self’ [which] extends to the I to include the Other,” according to Katrin de Guia.\(^9^1\) Kapwa, as a ‘shared self’, in the words of De Guia, “bridges the deepest individual recess of a person with anyone outside him or herself, even total strangers.”\(^9^2\) Enriquez, who has held almost the same cogitation of kapwa as de Guia, explains that

When asked for the closest English equivalent of kapwa, one word that comes to mind is the English word ‘others.’ However, the Filipino word kapwa is very different from the English word ‘others.’ In Filipino, kapwa is the unity of the ‘self’ and ‘others.’ The English ‘others’ is actually used
in opposition to the ‘self,’ and implies the recognition of the self as a separate identity. In contrast, kapwa is a recognition of shared identity, an inner self shared with others.93

Furthermore, he expounds that, indeed, the notion of intimacy is incumbent to relation of the loob and kapwa because “[the] ako (ego) and the iba-sa-akin (others) are one and the same in kapwa psychology: Hindi ako iba sa aking kapwa (I am no different from others). Once ako starts thinking of himself as separate from kapwa, the Filipino ‘self’ gets to be individuated in the Western sense and, in effect, denies the status of kapwa to the other. By the same token, the status of kapwa is also denied to the self.” 94

Reyes suggests that kapwa is best translated in English as “together with the person”95 because it is meaningless to define kapwa on its own. For Reyes, there can be no other “starting point for kapwa” except in the context of ‘togetherness’.96 This brings to mind Ferriols who has beautifully captured this notion of intersubjectivity or togetherness in Tagalog: “nakikipagkapwa ang kalooban at kalooban.”97 It is so primordial that before one conceives of the unique identities of the loob and kapwa respectively, one experiences first and foremost the intimate bond shared by the self and the other.

At face value, it can be said that the Tagalog concept of kapwa bears some semblance to Levinas’ l’autre or the Du in Buber. Exploring further than this skin-deep analogy, however, reveals that there are some attendant ideas that are not shared in common by these three relational concepts, but are individually held by each one. While Levinas’ ‘Other’ is considered to be ‘infinitely different’ from the ‘self’, the Filipino kapwa, according to Reyes, is a being that is intimately tied to and profoundly known by the loob or self. 98 Thus, unlike the loob-kapwa tandem that is “defined” by the intimate link they share with one another, the ‘self’ and the ‘l’autre’ is separated by the insurmountable chasm between them. This is also true for Martin Buber’s Du, although it is seen as a “milder” version of Levinas’ l’autre. According to Guevara, “Martin Buber basically agrees with Levinas in that the other is irreducible to any categories of thought set up by the ego. Buber recognizes the other’s way of authentic existence as essentially different from the self.”99 Reyes, therefore, contends that
“for kapwa relationship is the given, it is taken for granted. It is the starting point, not something to be retrieved.”

What resembles kapwa more, Reyes opines, is the ‘communio personarum’ that both Norris Clarke and Karol Wojtyla have expressed in their respective philosophical treatises. This is so, because Norris Clarke, as per evaluation of Reyes, continues of the legacy of Thomas Aquinas philosophy that sees being or the human person as “substance-in-relation”. But Clarke, taking the discourse further, claims that “To be an authentic person, in a word, is to be a lover, to live a life of inter-personal self-giving and receiving. Person is essentially a ‘we’ term. Person exists in its fullness only in the plural.” Wojtyla, on his part, understands the ‘we’ relationship as ‘participation’. What seems to be a problem in Wojtyla’s notion of participation is the “strong emphasis” he has given to the “subjective ‘I’” which does not sit well with the Filipino notion of loob-kapwa.

Speaking of which, I find Barasab Nicolescu’s notion of the “included middle” particularly enlightening. Although this concept stems from the region of quantum physics, it can instruct us not only in the area of transdisciplinarity but also in our understanding of the peculiar relationship between the loob-kapwa. Nicolescu notes that transdisciplinary, as an approach, deals with a reality whose realm is multi-dimensional yet coherent, wherein the level of non-contradiction (i.e., T-state) can co-exist with a level of contradiction (i.e., A and non-A). With this explanation, we learn from Nicolescu that the “included middle” expresses non-contradictoriness or mutual inclusivity wherein the notions of “true” and “false” are expanded “in such a way that the rules of logical implication no longer concerning two terms (A and non-A) but three terms (A, non-A and T), co-existing at the same moment in time… The logic of the included middle is the privileged logic of complexity, privileged in the sense that it allows us to cross the different areas of knowledge in a coherent way, by enabling a new kind of simplicity.”

This does not imply, however, that the opposite (i.e., “logic of excluded middle”) is categorically denied or taken out of the picture. Instead, what happens is a narrowing down of the validity of the scope which “the logic of the excluded middle” traditionally held. This means to say that “the logic of the excluded middle” cannot be applied in all
circumstances since it is only valid, according to Nicolescu, “for relatively simple situation”. He contends that when “the logic of excluded middle” is absolutized and universalized, it becomes harmful, especially when placed in the “complex” and “transdisciplinary cases”.  

On this note, I believe that it is possible to understand the peculiar relationship of loob-kapwa from the prism of the ‘included middle’, because in this relationship, as understood by most of the Filipino scholars which we will explain in more detail later on, the loob and the kapwa are not identical but at the same time they are intimately linked to one another – they are physically seen as separate or discrete entities but on another level, the realm of relationality, they are construed or experienced as united. Thus, while it affirms the logic A is not equal to –A, because their apparent distinctness, it does not negate their complex togetherness, that is, the loob and the kapwa can contemporaneously reside or harmoniously co-exist in each person, without also denying that they are two different entities. This unique loob-kapwa relationship can also be translated to how, as far as traditional Filipino consciousness is concerned, the confluence of the spirit and the human worlds. This explains why within the Filipino worldview there is an intimate link between the sacred and the profane as well as the closeness of the human and the divine, which is unfortunately mistakenly labeled as split-level Christianity by Bulatao.

Marcel and Binswanger Finding a “Homeland” in the Filipino Loob?  

Seeing the closeness between Binswanger’s and Marcel’s notions of communion, notwithstanding their differences, I also perceive a possible converging point between them and the Filipino concept of “loob” (relational will) that is intimately linked with the “kapwa” (together with the person) as understood by Reyes. Although the “twin” concepts of loob and kapwa are a peculiar result of the fusion of Southeast Asian tribal-animalist Filipino and Spanish Catholic traditions, I believe that the united forces of Binswanger, Marcel and the Filipino loob can prove that the Cartesian solipsistic ego, carried over by Heidegger’s Dasein, is not the irreducible existential fact. In other words, the solipsistic ego is untenable. This ‘trio’ strongly affirms that the real ontological factum is the togetherness of the
I-thou and not Descartes’ “I think I am” or Heidegger’s “I am dying.” Binswanger and Marcel both locate this togetherness in the realm of love: Binswanger proposes that love is an experience of unity and infinity and Marcel posits that when one says “I love you” he/she is also saying “You shall not die.”

These western articulations of love, in my opinion, can find a hospitable home in the Filipino “loob-kapwa” tandem as I have demonstrated earlier using the philosophical proposals of Reyes, Miranda, Mercado and the like, because the very essence of these concepts (i.e., loob as a relational will and kapwa as together with the person), when actualized by the players in the field of intersubjectivity, will weather any destructive bifurcation thrown into the path of loob-kapwa by the Modern way of thinking rooted in the solipsistic Cartesian ego. The loob-kapwa is a strong affirmation of intersubjectivity and communion. That is why, according to Dionisio Miranda, “Loob needs kapwa even to be loob: its continued responding to the kapwa is the condition for its own existence and its authenticity as loob.” In other words, the absence of the kapwa renders the self or the loob inauthentic.

In the language of Binswanger, it is called ‘being-together-at-home-in-the-world.’ Marcel refers to this as the “mystery of communion” located in the “being-in-situation”. Conceptually, as I have already explained earlier, there is no dichotomy between what is within and without in the Filipino understanding of loob. Loob, which is not perceived as a disembodied self, is always directed at something or someone. According to Reyes, “Loob is only what it is in so far as it is completely embedded and integrated inside the web of connectivity.” A person seen against the background of the Filipino worldview cannot be a genuine person without his/her recognition of one’s shared identity or of what di Guia referred to as ‘people-centered orientation’. Moreover, the Filipino kapwa, as earlier indicated, is not similar to the English concept of ‘others’ which is diametrically opposed to the ‘self’. Therefore, the Filipino loob-kapwa, in its ‘ordinary’ sense, retains the primordial unity of the I and the thou. For, indeed, in kapwa, as I have already quoted earlier from Reyes, “relationship is the given. It is taken for granted. It is the starting point, not something to be retrieved.”
This is the reason why the fullness of personhood (what is considered in the West as self-realization) is found in the Filipino expression of *pagkakaisa* (oneness), which according to Enriquez is the “highest level of interpersonal interaction possible... a full realization of *pakikipagkapwa.*” Hence, the twin commandments found in the Scriptures that express love for God and love for neighbor as oneself is not significantly alien to the Filipino person. It is the very context of his/her existence, which perhaps explains the religiosity of the Filipinos.

It is interesting to note, at this point, that the Filipino *kapwa* is ambivalent in terms of number. It does not reveal immediately (unlike the words I, self and other) whether it pertains to just one or many. It can be singular or plural. It is also true even in the concept of *kapwa.* Therefore, there is an inherent openness to other others. It does not allow itself to be trapped in *solitude à deux.* Naturally, it does not require an escape route needed by Marcel and Binswanger in their respective intersubjective journeys.

Aside from this, the Filipino *loob,* unlike Marcel who starts from the ‘broken world’ and Binswanger who begins with the *mißglückten,* is situated in a primordial harmonious diversity. Thus, it is already immersed in what Binswanger considers as unity of identity and difference and in what Marcel calls as creative tension in the mystery of being.

I feel, however, that the Filipino *loob-kapwa* lies closer to Marcel than to Binswanger, because of its openness to the Transcendent, to the Divine. The *kapwa* of the *loob* is not only limited to the human entities but is also extended to the spiritual entities that ordinarily inhabit the traditional Filipino worldview. Thus, the Filipino *loob* is predisposed to an encounter with the Absolute Thou that Marcel discovers in his pilgrimage to the mystery of being. In fact, for a Filipino person, the interpenetration of the divine, human person and other/s is already a given. It is the starting point. It is also the end-point.

Beyond this comparative work that I have done concerning Marcel, Binswanger, and the Filipino *loob-kapwa* which is mostly derived from the philosophical exploration of Jeremiah Reyes, there is another philosophical or theological avenue that can be pursued. This theological trail which has already been initially blazed by Jose de Mesa and Levy Lara Lanaria endeavors to establish a conceptual link between the Filipino *loob-*
kapwa tandem and the mystery of the Christian Trinitarian God – a unity in diversity.

Jose de Mesa, has introduced into the ongoing theological discourse on inculturation the possibility of using loob as a platform for providing a glimpse of the mystery of God’s love through the native expression kagandahang-loob. This “culturally appropriate category” can be dynamically translated to English as “winsome benevolence of God” that brings together into a creative blend the notions of beauty, goodness and will. This concept of kagandahang-loob, according to de Mesa, will make the mystery of God’s love more comprehensible to ordinary Filipino faithful whose worldview conceptually grasps the meaning of loob as “the inner self... the core of one’s personhood and where the true worth of a person lies”. Coupled with the notions of “beauty and goodness”, kagandahang-loob reveals also the Christian God, whose fullness of revelation comes in the Person of Jesus Christ, the kagandahang-loob par excellence, the pure goodness which is, according to de Mesa as quoted by Bevans in Theology in Global Perspective, “not cold, but warm, a kindness which is not enslaving, but liberating.” This kagandahang-loob, for Albert Alejo, is similar to the notion of kabaitan which also means benevolence or “kalutihan walang daya” (i.e., “goodness without deceit”). Looking at it from the perspective of the Filipino loob-kapwa, it is possible to see God who is the Omnipotent Creator and the perfection of kagandahang-loob as the very well-spring of the loob of the human person who is continuously being sustained and inspired by this Absolute Source (i.e., God) so that the human person will actualize his/her kagandahang-loob that reflects God’s image and likeness. And this God who is pure kagandahang-loob never ceases to invite people to constantly remain in the loving and life-giving relationship with God as a manifestation of kagandahang-loob. Outside this relation, love definitely fades and life certainly perishes.

The idea that God indefatigably offers to the human person an invitation to enter into the mystery of communion shared by the Three Divine Persons with each other, is also the very basis for Levy Lara Lanaria’s theological proposal to reflect on how the Bible, especially in the Book of Genesis, reveals “a relational God-within” who has/have projected to or implanted in the human persons the relational bond of the loob-kapwa.
The One True God that we have, according to him, is not a lonely and isolated God but a God who is a loving community, a God whose “loob is essentially an intra-relational self” — a ‘Trinity’. By uttering the words “let us make the human person according to our image and likeness (Gen. 2:7),” God reveals God’s intention of making communion (unity in diversity) as the raison d’être of every human being. This becomes clearly demonstrated in what the Filipinos consider as the value of *pakikipagkapwa* which is practiced mostly by the members of biological families and ecclesial communities. In other words, these human relations mirror a faint but genuine image of the Trinitarian God who is ‘the’ most real *Loob-Kapwa* or the *Pakikipagkapwa par excellence*. In this framework, we understand that the dynamics of “intra-relationships” that transpires within God’s loob is, thereby, lovingly and freely shared (mapagmahal at malayang ipinagkakaloob) by God to God’s created beings (i.e., human-beings). This, I believe, is also the meaning of *Immanuel* - the God with us, the God who will not abandon us even if a mother forgets her child – because God’s Divine Loob is already embedded in the loob of the human persons. God’s Loob is perceived by Filipinos as being intimately married into our loob as human beings, that is why, generally, Filipinos do not have a problem in declaring their profound trust in the *kalooban ng Diyos* (God’s will) because the innermost depth of our being (kaloob-looban) is believed to conform to the Loob of God. Indeed, as far as Filipino religious worldview is concerned, our innermost being simply echoes what is “in the heart” of God: God’s *kalooban* (God’s will) is ultimately our *kalooban* (the human person’s will) when we listen carefully and truthfully to what the deepest core of our being is telling us. Filipinos, in general, believe that God’s *kalooban* is not capable of harming the human beings who are created in the God’s image and likeness. The human beings are, indeed, the loob who are the kapwa of God who is the perfection of Loob-Kapwa community. The challenge, therefore, is for the human beings to strive to constantly be attuned to God’s Divine Loob in order for them not to lose sight of their real purpose in life which is to be a communion of persons who respect, love and support each other as they journey together towards the common goal of communal, as well as individual, self-actualization. Speaking more specifically about the relationship between the Trinity and the community of God’s creatures, Lanaria says that
The Christian theological tradition has given names to the three-in-one God: Father, Son and Spirit. Within the innermost Triune loob is a dynamic interaction of coequal persons in perfect unity. Christians normally commune with the Triune God through Jesus Christ the one mediator between God and humankind...If God is kagandahang-loob (winsome benevolence; love), then Jesus Christ...is God’s kagandahang-loob. To be united with the Triune God is to be united with and through Jesus Christ-God who had ‘gone down’ from the Spirit world and became our kapwa-in-corporeality. The union with Jesus...’is an intrinsic one, based on an ontological reality’ wherein he “communicates his life, his being to (them) from an innermost dwelling place within (their) being” thus enabling them to be animated by his Spirit and to live in him.126

Thus, I argue that the Filipino indigenous concept of loob-kapwa does not only enrich Marcel’s and Binswanger’s respective notions of intersubjectivity because it tries to underpin the intimate relationship that binds the self and the other which was greatly afflicted by the establishment of the Cartesian ego, but at the same time, it provides a stepping stone towards an assent to the Trinitarian God who is the loob-kapwa par excellence – a unity in diversity, A Divine Being who is Three Persons in one God.

Triangulation of Marcel, Binswanger and Loob: A Possible Response to the Challenge of Contemporary Theology

To conclude, despite the divergences that we discover between Marcel, Binswanger and the Filipino loob as expressed mostly by Reyes, it can still be asserted that these three will definitely be at home with each other. The convergence that we find in them, I believe, helps one to confront the issue of theology in the context of the postmodern world. Enlightened by them, I am given some pointers on how to do theology in the midst of multiplicity and alterity – taking advantage of the richness of intersubjectivity and interreligious/ecumenical/non-denominational dialogues, because existence is co-existence and theology is better done in the encounter of multiplicity and alterity. It is a multiplicity in the context of communion. It is alterity that is rooted in relationship. Personally, the combination of Marcel, Binswanger and the Filipino loob allows me to have a glimpse of the reality of the Trinitarian God who is a unity of identity and difference, a mysterious community of creative tension, and a relational will who is at the same time together with the person.
References:


_______. Why is Theology Never Far From Home. Manila, Philippines: De La Salle University, 2003. 118


Miranda, Dionisio. Buting Pinoy: Probe Essays on Value as Filipino. Manila:


Endnotes:

1 For Gabriel Marcel, to exist existentially means to exist not simply as a body (i.e., to exist problematically) but to exist as a thinking, emotive being dependent upon human creative impulse. He asserts, “As soon as there is creation, we are in the realm of being,” and also that, “There is no sense using the word ‘being’ except where creation is in view”. Gabriel Marcel, “Les Menace de Guerre,” eds. Joël Bouessée and Anne Marcel, in Gabriel Marcel Et les injustices de ce Temps: La Responsabilite du Philosophe, Presence de Gabriel Marcel, cahier 4 (Paris: Aubier, 1983) xiii. Cf also James Fieser and Bradley Dowden, eds., “Gabriel Marcel (1889—1973),” Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, http://www.iep.utm.edu/marcel/ [accessed December 22, 2014].Cf. also Gabriel Marcel, Creative Fidelity, trans. and intro. Robert Rosthal (New York: Fordham University, 2002) 136.

2 He is a decidedly unsystematic thinker.

3 According to Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “The philosophical approach known as existentialism is commonly recognized for its view that life’s experiences and interactions are meaningless. Many existentialist thinkers are led to conclude that life is only something to be tolerated, and that close or intimate relationships
Commitment, for Sartre, is “based on the strength of the solitary decisions made by individuals who have committed themselves fully to personal independence”. Fieser and Dowden, “Gabriel Marcel”.

Nigel Warburton explains that “For Sartre ‘abandonment’ means specifically abandonment by God. This does not imply that God as a metaphysical entity actually existed at some point, and went away: Sartre is echoing Nietzsche’s famous pronouncement: ‘God is dead’. Nietzsche did not mean that God had once been alive, but rather that the belief in God was no longer a tenable position in the late nineteenth century. By using the word ‘abandonment’ in a metaphorical way Sartre emphasizes the sense of loss caused by the realization that there is no God to warrant our moral choices, no divinity to give us guidelines as to how to achieve salvation. The choice of word stresses the solitary position of human beings alone in the universe with no external source of objective value.” Nigel Warburton, “A Student’s Guide to Jean-Paul Sartre’s, Existentialism and Humanism,” Philosophy Now 15 (1996):27-31, https://philosophynow.org/issues/15/A_students_guide_to_Jean-Paul_Sartres_Existentialism_and_Humanism [accessed December 23, 2014].

Warburton explains that “Despair, like abandonment and anguish, is an emotive term. Sartre means by it simply the existentialist’s attitude to the recalcitrance or obstinacy of the aspects of the world that are beyond our control (and in particular other people: in his play No Exit one of the characters declares ‘Hell is other people’). Whatever I desire to do, other people or external events may thwart. The individuals who have committed indifference to the way things turn out: “When Descartes said ‘Conquer yourself rather than the world’, what he meant was, at bottom, the same – that we should act without hope.” Warburton, “A Student’s Guide” 39. We cannot rely on anything which is outside our control, but this does not mean we should abandon ourselves to inaction: on the contrary, Sartre argues that it should lead us to commit ourselves to a course of action since there is no reality except in action. As Sartre puts it: ’The genius of Proust is the totality of the works of Proust.’ (pp.41-2) – everyone is wholly defined by what they actually do rather than by what they might have done had circumstances been different. For Sartre there are no ‘mute inglorious Miltons.” Warburton, “A Student’s Guide.”


According to Gabriel Marcel, “Philosophy will always... be an aid to discovery rather than a matter of strict demonstration.” Gabriel Marcel, Le Mystere de l’Etre, vol. 1, Reflection et Mystere (Paris: Editions Montaigne, 1951) 2. Roque Ferriols, on his part, says in Tagalog: Kaya’t ang importante ay dumanas, nagmustad, kumilatis: isang mapaglalaman pag-aapuhap sa takwagang meron. Hindi na ngayon kagandahan ng sariling isip, kundi kabagsikan ng hindi ko ginawa ang uniral sa kalaban ko, at pumapaligid at tumatalab sa akin. Iyan ang unang yugto sa pagbigkas sa meron.” It is difficult to translate these words to English, but essentially what Ferriols would like to say is that in order for one to properly philosophize, must immerse oneself in the concrete realities of life to experience, observe and asses what being is. Gropping for what being is involves all the senses of the human being. It is not about the brilliance of one’s mind, but about the fierceness of what exists, surrounds and impinges on me that
does not originate from me. Furthermore, Ferriols claims that “sa pag-aapuhap na
yunit, ginagamit ang mga konsepto; ngunit, sapagkat ang pagbibig sa meron ang nagpapatri
sa pagdanas, pagmamait sa pangangilat, hindi konsepto ang hari, kundi meron…. Ang konsepto
ay kailangang maging angkop: angkop sa meron. At kung hindi angkop ay kailangang itaboy
at palitan ng angkop sa meron.” (In this quest one makes use of concepts; however,
because one’s “inclination’ to being is what gives dynamism to experiencing,
observing and assessing, concepts are not kings, but being…. A concept must
conform to what is being. And when it does not, it simply must be discarded and be
replaced by a new one.) Ferriols, Pambungad sa Metapisika, 112.
10 Gabriel Marcel, Awakenings, trans. Peter Rogers (Milwaukee: Marquette University,
2002) 131.
11 Marcel pictures himself as a philosopher in search of a concrete philosophy
characterized by mystery, being, love, faith incarnation, communion, transcendence,
availability and hope whose philosophical journey/pilgrimage has no end but only
a beginning. Marcel, Gabriel. Concrete Philosophy of Marcel is more of a voyage
of discovery rather than a series of logical, epistemological, and metaphysical
arguments. Gabriel Marcel, Homo Viator: Introduction to a Metaphysic of Hope,
12 Cf. Gabriel Marcel, Man Against Mass Society, trans. G.S. Fraser (Chicago: Henry
13 Marcel, Homo Viator, 140.
14 Cf. Gabriel Marcel, Problematic Man, trans. Brian Thompson (New York: Herder and
Herder, 1967).
15 Marcel claims that “all spiritual life is essentially a dialogue,” which according to him
means, “the relationship that can be said to be spiritual is that of being with being…
What really matters is spiritual commerce between beings, and that involves not
respect but love.” Gabriel Marcel, Metaphysical Journal, trans. Bernard Wall (Chicago,
IL: Regnery, 1952; London: Rockliff, 1952) 137 and 211.
16 From a letter written by Hocking in 1920. Cited in Leroy J. Rouner, Within Human
Experience: The Philosophy of William Ernest Hocking (New York: Harvard University,
1969) 41.
17 Marcel states: “It must therefore be well understood that the faithful soul is destined
to experience darkness…Fidelity is not a preliminary datum, it is revealed and
established as fidelity by this very crossing of darkness, by this trial combined with
everyday life.” Marcel, Homo Viator, 140.
18 Marcel, Homo Viator, 60.
19 My knowledge on Binswanger is considerably dependent on Schrijvers’ texts used in
a doctoral seminar at the Faculty of Theology of KU Leuven – Belgium, especially
chapters 9 and 10. Thus, the citations in this article will follow its original format
instead of the one published by SUNY in 2016. Originally, the title of what was
then a forthcoming book was From Love to Life?: Toward a Contemporary Phenomenology
of Religious Life but when it was finally published it was changed to Between Faith and
Belief: Toward a Contemporary Phenomenology of Life. Cf. Joeri Schrijvers, Between Faith
and Belief: Toward a Contemporary Phenomenology of Life (Albany, NY: State University
of New York, 2016).
20 When Gabriel Marcel wrote his “Metaphysical Journal” he did not know Martin
Buber, despite the convergence between their ideas, because Marcel came from
an intellectual tradition, at that time, far removed from the German academic atmosphere. Emmanuel Levinas, *Outside the Subject* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 1993) 20. The war deeply impacted Gabriel Marcel that it was during that tragic period that many of Marcel’s important philosophical themes would take root. In fact, the journal that he kept during the war became the framework of his first book *Metaphysical Journal* (1927). Cf. Fieser and Dowden, “Gabriel Marcel.” In contrast to Marcel, Binswanger’s phenomenology of love is heavily influenced by Martin Buber. In fact, it is also well known that Binswanger entered into a lifelong friendship with Buber who considered the issue intersubjectivity as central to his entire philosophy. In Schrijvers’ account it is mentioned that Binswanger’s monumental *Grundformen und Erkenntnis menschlichen Daseins* was written in a time of war.


24 Schrijvers explains that Binswanger did not just criticize Heidegger’s *Dasein* but he also attempted “to extend Heidegger’s insights in Dasein’s relation with the world to the domain of sick subjectivities or what he calls ‘misgliickten’, failed or false Dasein.” Schrijvers, *From Love to Life*, 318.


26 Frie, *Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity*, 89, Frie noted that “[according] to Buber, the character of a relation is determined by which of the basic words is spoken: when I-Thou is said, the I is different from the I that speaks the primary word I-It.” He adds, “Binswanger follows Buber in arguing that human relations are by their essential nature dialogical (not simply referring to a linguistic mode, rather to a basic structure of human existence - currently, this is being mapped in infant research by such theorists as Trevarthen in Scotland.” Frie, *Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity*, 89. See Colwyn Trevarthen “The Self Born in Intersubjectivity: The Psychology of an Infant Communicating” in *The Perceived Self: Ecological and Interpersonal Sources of self-Knowledge*, ed. Ulric Neisser (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993).

27 Frie, *Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity*, 106.
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30 The I and thou relationship is not similar but a contrast to the subject-object relationship. For Binswanger, the mutual relationship of love, the dual mode of love, constitutes the most original and ‘highest’ form of human existence.


32 Binswanger, “The Existential Analysis,” 193-94. Binswanger further states: “the much-discussed gap that separates our ‘world’ from the ‘world’ of the mentally ill and makes communication between the two so difficult is not only scientifically explained but also scientifically bridged by existential analysis.” Binswanger, “The Existential Analysis,” 213.


35 In Marcel’s understanding, “love does not deny death, but is it affirmation of the fact that death is not the end, because death does not close of the other and the end of one’s love to the departed one. Marcel believes that “the only dead are those whom we no longer love”. Gabriel Marcel, *Presence and Immortality*, trans. M.A. Machado (Pittsburg, PA: Duquesne University, 1967) 277.

36 Schrijvers, *From Love to Life?*, 337. According to Schrijvers, “The horror of death… differs in a remarkable way from other interruptions of love, such as infidelity, for if in such suspensions the love of lovers comes, more often than not, to a halt, the death of one of the lovers does not mean the end of the loving ‘we’.” Schrijvers, *From Love to Life?*, 374.


38 Schrijvers, *From Love to Life?*, 318. For an extended discussion on Binswanger phenomenology of love, please refer to pp. 328-338.


40 Marcel, *Le Mystre de l’Etre*, 41. This philosophy is a sort of “description bearing upon the structures which reflection elucidates starting from experience.” Marcel, *Man Against Mass Society*, 180. Marcel expressed a refreshing preference for philosophizing in ordinary language. He maintained that “we should employ current forms of ordinary language which distort our experiences far less than the elaborate expressions in which philosophical language is crystallized” Marcel, *Homo Viator*, 158. Despite the fact that he does not label his brand of philosophy as a
phenomenology, which Binswanger openly endorses, Marcel's approach traverses the same stream as Binswanger, because his preference for the concrete philosophy that speaks in ordinary language allows him to begin many of his philosophical essays with an observation about life and experience.

41 In a thesis submitted to the Faculty of Episcopal Theological School, Richard Rowe introduced Daseinsanalysis in the following words: "Daseinsanalyse is the peculiar creation of Ludwig Binswanger. Binswanger borrowed Dasein [Being (Sein) there (Da)] from the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger. To this concept he added a neo-Freudian psycho-'analysis'… Daseinsanalyse was Binswanger's attempt to complement and broaden the view of man and his experience of living which was implicit in Freudian psychoanalysis. The experience which Binswanger wanted to introduce into psychiatry (and which Freud said must not be included) is the experience of transcendence, that is, the feeling of spirit, or love.” Richard Rowe, “The Daseinsanalyse of Ludwig Binswanger and the Biblical Concept of Agape: A Treatise on the Creative Power of Love in Psychotherapy” (unpublished thesis, Faculty of Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, MA, 1966) IV-V.

42 Marcel, Le Mystere de l’Etre, 41. According to Schrijvers, “Binswanger… is much more aware of the back and forth of the ontic and the ontological, and considers the former as the only legitimate passage-way to the latter without one being able to dismiss the former completely.” Schrijvers, From Love to Life?, 339.

43 Marcel, Creative Fidelity, 65;
44 Marcel, The Existential Background, 82-83.
46 Deurzen-Smith, Everyday Mysteries, 147. Deurzen-Smith is an existential psychotherapist at Regent's College in London and someone who is responsible for the contemporary resurgence of this approach in the London school of existential analysis.
47 “I should like to start,” Marcel says, “with a sort of global and intuitive characterization of the man in whom the sense of the ontological—the sense of being, is lacking, or, to speak more correctly, the man who has lost awareness of this sense.” A world in which “ontological exigence”—if it is acknowledged at all—is silenced by an unconscious relativism or by a monism that discounts the personal, “ignores the tragic and denies the transcendent.” Gabriel Marcel, The Philosophy of Existentialism, trans. Manya Harari (New York: Carol, 1995) 9, 15.
48 Gabriel Marcel, Tragic Wisdom and Beyond (with conversations between Paul Ricoeur and Gabriel Marcel), trans. Stephen Jolin and Peter McCormick (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1973) 44.
50 Schrijvers, From Love to Life?, 341.
51 Ibid.
52 Marcel states: “Love is faith itself, an invincible assurance based on Being itself. It is here and her alone that we reach not only an unconditioned fact but a rational unconditional as well; namely that of the Absolute Thou, that which is expressed in the Fiat voluntas tua of the Lord's Prayer.” Marcel, “Les Menace de Guerre,” 136.


Schrijvers, *From Love to Life?*, 341-342. Schrijvers explains that “The meeting of lovers is the crossing between (ontic) encounter and the (ontological) *Urbegegnung*, between our together (*Wir beide*) and togetherness in general (*überhaupt*), or … it is my being drawn to you because of the universal enticement that rages through being and presences between all beings.” Schrijvers, *From Love to Life?*, 340.

According to Joeri Schrijvers, Binswanger did so because of the climate of the period. Schrijvers, *From Love to Life?*, 346.

Schrijvers, *From Love to Life?*, 346.

According to Dionisio Miranda, “Loob is a Filipino term rich in many meanings, as found in its various cognates or derivatives. Consider, for example, these terms: looban, kalabooan, paglooban, panlooban, pinakalooob, kalooob-looban, kalooob, loobin, pagbabalik-loob, kusang-loob, kapalagayang-loob, lamang-loob, kabutihang-loob, kasamaang-loob, utang na loob, buong-loob, tamang-loob, maling-loob, malakas ang loob, mahina ang loob, maruming loob, malinis na loob, malit na loob, malaking loob, sirang-loob, maayos na loob, parloob, etc. Because of this there is more than a little truth to the observation that loob is initially best described rather than defined.” Dionisio Miranda, *Loob: The Filipino Within* (Manila: Divine Word, 1989) 1. For Jeremiah Reyes, the proper way of understanding loob is not through the lens of a value which Kluckholm defines as “a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action.” Clyde Kluckhohn, “Values and Value-Orientations in the Theory of Action;” in *Towards a General Theory of Action*, eds. Talcott Parsons and Edward A. Shils (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1951) 395. “To call something a value,” Reyes contends, “is to describe a positive attitude towards it. It does not say what it is, but only that it is considered good, desirable, or important.” Jeremiah Reyes, “Loób and Kapwa: Thomas Aquinas and a Filipino Virtue Ethics” (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Hoger Instituut voor Wijsbegeerte, KU, Leuven, 2015). He states that “In the language of Aquinas, a virtue (or vice) is a habit that is specific to a rational human being. It cannot be just any object that is perceived by the mind as good. There is justification in advocating for a Filipino virtue ethics because the Filipino language contains a word which, one can say, contains an entire virtue ethics within it: the concept of loób. The loób is the “holistic and relational will” of a person. It is the proper subject of the Filipino virtues, which renders it the most often recurring term for compound virtue words.” Reyes, “Loób and Kapwa,” 73. Reyes proposes that “loób is the most obvious key term in Filipino virtue ethics... is the subject of the virtues; it is what the virtues affect and modify.” Reyes, “Loób and Kapwa.” 73...

Albert E. Alejo, *Tao po! Tuloy!: Isang Landas ng Pag-unawa sa Loob ng Tao* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Office of Research and Publications, 1990). The extensive catalogue of 287 loób’s meaning and its variants are found in the Appendix of this book entitled “Kayamanan ng Loób” (literally, Riches of Loob). Alejo’s collection come from various sources, such as dictionaries (both old and new), academic (e.g., theology, sociology, philosophy, psychology) and non-academic (e.g., sayings, narratives, casual conversations) sources.

63 Jacobo explains that “[one] must be acquainted with the word for the interior—loób.
This interior may be that of a house, *loób ng bahay*, or a community, *Loóban*. *Loób* may also refer to the self’s intricate psychological chambers. *Kaloóban* is a variation, but because of the agglutination interestingly transliterates as the – virtue of interiority. *Kaloób-loóban*, in its repetition of the rootword, depicts a labyrinthine self, implying an innermost quarter, a core space for a private thought or an intimate feeling. The architectural trope extends to the language of corporeality. *Lamang-loób* refers to one’s – inner flesh. Jayson Pilapil Jacobo, “Mood of Metaphor: Tropicality and Time in the Philippine Poetic” (unpublished dissertation, Stony Brook University, New York, 2011) 40-41.


65 Mercado, “Reflections on Buut-Loob-Nakem,” 596. In this article Mercado provided some common English meanings that are attached to these three indigenous terminologies: motive, intention, mind, reason, understanding, perception, judgment, decision, consciousness, conscience, awareness, wish, desire, will, state of mind, disposition, mood, volition, courage, valor, etc. Mercado, “Reflections on Buut-Loob-Nakem,” 582-590.


68 Mercado, “Reflections on Buut-Loob-Nakem,” 600-601. According to Mercado, “Western man compartmentalizes himself. This way of thinking is evident in expressions like ‘not letting the emotions influence reason’ or ‘the heart having reasons which the head does not know.’ Some western philosophers have been debating on whether the intellect is superior to the will or not. Likewise western philosophy also looks at knowledge as an intellectual apprehension of reality. But the Filipino, like his Oriental neighbors, has a total way of thinking which is non-compartmentalized. The varied usages of *loob* attest to this fact. Thus ‘makasakit and *loob’/ ‘nasakit ti nakem’ involves sorrow and pain on one’s whole being. Furthermore, this holistic view extends also to the Filipino’s nondualistic worldview. Life also is not compartmentalized.” Mercado, “Reflections on Buut-Loob-Nakem,” 598.

Albert E. Alejo explains the concept of *loób* by using the metaphor of the clay vessel in the following words: “Sa alingawngaw ng salitang loób ang larawang gumuguhit kaagud sa ating isip ay isang uri ng espasyo na may bahaging nakalabas at may bahaging nakalabas. Maaring unang ginamit ng ating ninuno ang ganitong kategorya sa kanilang pangangalakal. – Loób ang binigkas nila upang pangalanan ang loób ng palayok na kanilang hinuhubog, habang ang hinlalaki nila ay nasa bahaging labas ng nabubuoong sisidlang putik at ang ibang daliri naman ay katapat ng pumipisil mula sa loób. At dahan-dahan, nabubuo hang dahan ang loób at labas ng palayok.” (The word – *loób* instantly echoes an image of a kind of space that has one part concealed and another exposed. Our forebears might have first used the said category in their exchanges. They uttered – *loób* in order to name the interior of a piece of earth that their hands were molding into a jar, while the thumb was in the exposed part and the other fingers were in front of that which was pressing from the inside. And slowly, the inside and the outside of the jar were formed at the same time.) Alejo, *Tao pó! Tulóy!*, 41. Translation was provided by Jacobo in his doctoral dissertation, “Mood of Metaphor: Tropicality,” 69.


Leonardo de Castro has previously translated *loób* as ‘will. de Castro, “Debts of Good Will,”’[http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Asia/AsiaDeCa.htm](http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Asia/AsiaDeCa.htm). The older *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* also translated it as *voluntad* or will. Juan José de Noceda and Pedro de Sanlúcar, *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* (Manila: Ramirez Y Giraudier. 1860) 193. Reyes states the following as his program for the dissertation: “I will criticize the current interpretations of *loób* which treat it in terms of modern “subjectivity/interiority” (section 3.1.1). As an alternative, I will use Aquinas’ metaphysical doctrine of potency and act and his psychology of “powers of the soul” to analyze *loób* (section 3.1.2). This will result in an interpretation that is more faithful to the normal meaning of *loób* as “will,” to its non-epistemological and pre-modern character and even its sense of being “inside” a person. At the same time, the use of Aquinas’ philosophy will draw out the difference between *loób* and Aquinas’ own concept of will (voluntas). *Loób* turns out to be a more “holistic and relational” notion of will than the voluntas of Aquinas (section 3.1.4).” Reyes, *“Loób and Kapwa,”* 72.

Reyes, *“Loób and Kapwa,”* 74.


*Cf.* Mercado, *The Filipino Mind*, 37. Mercado expounds that this organic harmony of the ‘both/and’ is found in other indigenous Filipino words found in other languages in the Philippines, such as *bunó* and *nakeem*.

79 Alejo, *Tao pél! Talogy!*, 79.
80 Reyes contends that “It not only presupposes an objectively real world (based on the two traditions it can only be classified as ‘realist’), it even presupposes a world dense with spiritual entities and spiritual connections.” Reyes, “Loób and Kapwa: An Introduction,” 154.
82 Jose De Mesa, *In Solidarity with the Culture: Studies in Theological Re-rooting* (Quezon City: Maryhill School of Theology, 1987) 46.
83 Miranda, *Buting Pinoy*, 84.
84 For a more detailed discussion on this, please see F. Landa Jocano, *Filipino Value System: A Cultural Definition* (Quezon City: Punlad Research House, Inc. 1997) 9. It is true that, sometimes, when the emphasis on familial relationship is too much, the loób is sacrificed. It encounters a crisis that may sometimes result into an act of revolt or an outrage that mutually destroys the self and the other.
93 Virgilio Enriquez, *From Colonial to Liberation Psychology* (Quezon City: The University of the Philippines, 1992) 52.
94 Enriquez, *From Colonial to Liberation*, 54.
95 Reyes explains this by saying “Compare my translation with the old *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* where capona means ‘Ambos á dos igualmente’ [both two equally] and capona co tano means ‘hombre como yo’ [man like me]. de Noceda and de Sanlucar, *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala*. See also the extensive usage of the word kapwa in *Urbana at Feliza*, originally published in 1864, where the word is often combined with other words, capona tano (fellow man), capona bata (fellow child), capona babaye (fellow woman), capona esceda(classmate), etc. Modesto de Castro, *Pag Sisilatan nang Dalanang Binibini na ni Urbana at ni Feliza na Nagnturo ng Mabuting Kangsilaw* (Manila: J. Martinez, 1920). I prefer this over the definitions of Enriquez and De Guia which
mention a ‘self’. They have the right idea, but their starting point is one where the
self and other have already been opposed, it is the ‘modern’ starting point so to
speak, and they wish to retrieve kapwa from such conditions. The English word
‘self’ is loaded; it has been sculpted by a long and complex history of ideas and
upheavals in modern times as Charles Taylor has shown. Charles Taylor, *Sources of
It is closely bound to concepts such as subjectivity, autonomy and independence.”


Ferreols, *Pambungad sa Metopsisika*, 161. Reyes translated this to English with these
words: “two loob’s treat each other as kapwa”. Reyes, Loob and Kapwa, 99.

Reyes states that “An interesting trend in twentieth century was that philosophers
reverted to bring back the relational aspect to an intellectual climate which has forgotten
it. This was after the complete negation of the other experienced in the Holocaust
of World War II (Levinas and Buber were both Jews). However, for Levinas the
Other is completely different from the Self, like the concept of infinity. [Emmanuel
Levinas, *Totalité et Infini*. (La Haye: M. Nijhoff, 1961)]. And for Levinas, there is no
hope for anything like oneness in the same sense as the Filipino pagkakaisa. Jaime
Guevara has made a preliminary comparison between kapwa and the philosophy of
Guevara, “Pakikipagkapwa [Sharing/Merging oneself with Other]”, in *Filipino


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Peter Lang, 1993).

102 Clarke posits that “[t]he perfection of being-and therefore of the person-is
essentially dyadic, culminating in communion. Cf. W. Norris Clarke, “Person, Being
(Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University, 1993). See also Norris Clarke, *Explorations in

103 W. Norris Clarke, “To be is to be Substance-in-Relation,” in *Explorations in
Metaphysics: Being, God, Person*, ed. W. Norris Clarke (Notre Dame, IN: University of

104 W. Norris Clarke, *Person and being*, 218.

Norris Clarke acknowledges his debt to Wojtyla W. Norris Clarke, “The Integration
of Personalism and Thomistic Metaphysics in Twenty-First-Century Thomism,” in
*The Creative Retrieval of St. Thomas Aquinas: Essays in Thomistic Philosophy, New and Old*,

106 For Reyes, this explains why Wojtyla acknowledges his indebtedness to “the
phenomenology of Max Scheler and to the ethics of Immanuel Kant. But the end
goal for him is still the same, that is a unity and oneness between acting persons.”
107 Nicolescu, “Transdisciplinarity and Complexity.”
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
111 Certainly, I do not deny downside of this intimate relationship between the loob and kapwa because reality tells us that even in the context of loob-kapwa relation there are instances when respectful and loving relationship is undermined by conflicts between the loob (self) and kapwa (neighbor), which I have already explained in footnote number 89. Binswanger explains that “what we call mental disease [may] come about when the self is no longer able to distinguish between inside and outside, between existence and world…In delusions of persecution [for example] these dams have burst. Existential anxiety floods the world of fellowmen’ the Dasein is threatened from everywhere, prey to all.” Binswanger, Being-in-the-World, 311.
114 de Guia, Kapwa: The Self in the Other, 28.
115 Ibid., 9.
116 Enríquez, From Colonial to Liberation, 64.
117 Diversity here includes conflicts and conflicting views.
119 Cf. Jose de Mesa, Why is Theology Never Far From Home (Manila, Philippines: De La Salle University, 2003) 5-12.
120 According to De Mesa, “jit is what makes the lowland Filipino what he is and who he is as a person. Not only that, it is an appropriate term to describe a person in relationship to others because it provides an insight as to what kind of person one is.” Jose de Mesa, In Solidarity with the Culture, 45.
121 In view of this contribution of De Mesa to the ongoing discourse on theological contextualization or inculturation, Bevans notes two very important things: “First, this understanding of God’s nature that is revealed in the context of Filipino culture is in real continuity with the ideas of the Vatican II and its understanding of revelation, but it goes beyond them as well, or at least nuances them for this particular context. This kind of “thinking through” a particular theological concept, with the recognition that “theology is never far from home” is what needs to be done in every cultural context and social location, for theology is only theology when it begins to make sense to particular people at particular times and in particular places….Second, however, this reflection on revelation out of Filipino culture is one that can enrich the admitted Western understanding… In fact, genuine contextual understanding of Christian faith should be able to enrich any understanding of revelation from any context.” Stephen Bevans, An Introduction Theology in Global Perspective (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009) 25.
122 Alejo, *Tao po! Tulóy!*, 139

123 He postulates that “when God created human beings, He was first projected as a relational God-within. ‘We shall make man in our image, to our likeness’ (Genesis 1:26).” Lanaria, “Kapwa in Pamilya,” 39.


125 Ibid., 39-40.

126 Ibid.