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PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS OF VALUES

Every philosophical trend offers different interpretations of the nature of being and, in consequence, various visions of reality are proposed by idealists, personalists, materialists, pantheists, representatives of Kotarbiński's „reism” etc. Classical philosophy focused its attention mainly on ontology, that is, the science of being. Modern and contemporary philosophy is increasingly concentrating on axiology, apprehending man and his world as values of a certain kind¹. Regardless of the ontological interpretation of the world, every man distinguishes a rich realm of values. In particular, two types of values are recognized, objects and persons. The two types of values are not regarded as equal and, for instance, one does not greet a chair and persons are not treated instrumentally as chairs.

The philosophical science of values, that is, axiology, concerns many aspects such as ontological, epistemological, anthropological and theological. The considerations presented below will be limited to axiological ontology and will deal mainly with the problem of the inner nature and structure of values. Only at the end will the personalist dimension of the theory of values be briefly outlined.

Axiology constitutes not only an integral part of realistic metaphysics but also a plane shared by several humanistic sciences, theological, philosophical, legal-ethical and those concerning man's artistic activities². Thus, for instance, ethics cannot be treated as an arbitrary codification of norms but should be explained on the basis of hierarchy of values. Axiology cannot be irrelevant in psychology and sociology which, while analysing the world of man, cannot ignore the fundamental values of personality.

Introductory characterization of values

The category of „value” has an analogous character in both subjective and objective senses. The very term „value” (Latin *valor*) is derived from the verb „to be valuable” (*valere*). The concept of

¹ A. Forest, *L'expérience de la valeur*, Revue Néoscholastique 43 (1940) 16.

² L. Lavelle, *Traité des valeurs*, vol. 1—2, Paris 1951—1955; S. Kowalczyk, *Filozofia wartości* (The Philosophy of Values), *Zeszyty Naukowe KUL* 3 (1960), no. 4, 71—84; H. Buczyńska-Garewicz, *Uczucia i rozum w świecie wartości* (Emotions and Reason in the World of Values), Wrocław 1975.

value is used in mathematics, economy, ethics, aesthetics, sociology, religion and philosophy. In the latter domain value may mean, among others, a specific object evaluated by somebody, a formal reason of value, the idea of value or the experience of value. The first two meanings of the concept of value seem particularly relevant at the moment.

There are two main reasons of the difficulty in providing a definition of value. First of all, in its scope the category of value is as wide as the concepts of being, act etc., which makes a definition impossible in the classical understanding of the term (with a determination of the kind and generic distinction). Moreover, each value also involves an element of experience and evaluation, thus additionally complicating its description.

However, the difficulties indicated above have not discouraged scholars attempting to describe the concept of value. Some of the most characteristic results may easily be cited: Value consists in overcoming the indifference of a subject towards an object so that in consequence the significance and importance of the latter are perceived;³ value is anything we seek and love⁴. The latter statement clearly refers to a description of the good as formulated by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* where the good is defined as an object of human desire.

Describing value one should undoubtedly indicate the relation between subject and object. The descriptions of particular authors underline the role of either the subject or the object which leads, respectively, to the subjectivization or objectivization of the concept of value. The former case clearly occurs in the description of value proposed by Franz Brentano. According to him „we call the good only that thing whose love is justified and valid.”⁵ Thus, value is determined by the „valid” love of a subject. A more objective character may be found in the descriptions of value which refer to Thomist philosophy. Erich Przywara understood value as that which belongs to the essence of being and which, in consequence, is an inspiration to action⁶. Another description has a similar character: value is a being perfecting an object which is usually a cause of an action⁷. Both descriptions emphasize the role of object rather than that of subject.

Yet, most of the definitions attempt to avoid the extremes of either the reification or subjectivization of the category. Johannes B. Lotz reserves the term value for such a being which, although in-

³ L. Lavelle, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, 3.

⁴ P. Siwek, *Problem wartości* (The Problem of Values), *Przegląd Powszechny* 41 (1938) 3—4.

⁵ F. Brentano, *Vom Ursprung sittlicher Erkenntnis*, Leipzig 1889, 17.

⁶ E. Przywara, *Religionsbegründung*, Freiburg im Br. 1923, 91.

⁷ E. Gutwenger, *Wertphilosophie*, Innsbruck 1952, 70.

dependent of actual human experience, is nevertheless a cause of subject's experiences⁸. Another author employs the term value to name the good which is particularly useful for a subject⁹. Value is also described as objective perfection which is an aim of one's aspirations¹⁰. Some descriptions of value are evidently too narrow as, for example, the following statement: „Value is everything which affects the emotional and volitional faculties of man and makes them tend towards that which brings pleasure and joy, satisfies the aesthetic taste or religious and moral feelings, or, more generally, which fulfils some demands of human nature.”¹¹ It is too subjective an understanding of values since it neglects the role of intellect in the perception and experience of values. Much happier is the following description: „Value is a quality of being in so far as the latter is an object of intentional cognitive-volitional acts.”¹² The latter definition of value is almost literally taken over from the Thomist theory of the transcendental attributes of being.

Each of the quoted definitions of values leaves some dissatisfaction because it impoverishes the richness of meanings of the concept of value. Moreover, every description is fully understandable only within the context of its philosophical system. Undoubtedly, value is any kind of being perceived in relation to the cognizing and experiencing subject, that is, a personality; in some way value develops man by opening him up to the Infinite.

Characterizing value one should also explain its relation to the concept of the good. The problem acquires different interpretations in the Platonic and Aristotelian trends in philosophy. Plato regarded the good as the highest of ideas, so he consistently acknowledged the superiority of the good over being. The influence of Platonism is evident in this trend of phenomenology in which being and value are distinguished as two different realms of reality. Ontological dualism was accepted by Max Scheler and Johannes Hessen. The latter recognized the primacy of value over the good, suggesting that the good is constituted by value¹³. Such an understanding of the relation between value and the good is connected with the acknowledgement of the priority of axiology over ontology which, in turn, reveals an idealistic element in phenomenology.

⁸ J. B. Lotz, *Sein und Wert*, Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie, 57 (1933) 800—805.

⁹ J. Santeler, *Rezension*, Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie, 70 (1948) 114.

¹⁰ G. F. Klenk, *Wert — Sein — Gott*, Rom 1942, 75.

¹¹ W. Granat, *Personalizm chrześcijański. Teologia osoby ludzkiej*, (Christian Personalism. The Theology of Human Person), Poznań 1985, 380.

¹² M. A. Krąpiec, *Filozofia bytu a zagadnienie wartości* (The Philosophy of Being and the Problem of Values), *Znak* 17 (1965) 430.

¹³ J. Hessen, *Lehrbuch der Philosophie*, vol. 2: *Wertlehre*, München 1948, 47—48.

The philosophy inspired by Thomism differently interprets the relation between value and the good. Value is usually identified with the widely understood good, while at other times the good is defined as one of the values. Both statements need not be mutually exclusive because the good can be understood in two aspects, ontological and ethical. The ontological good is a being which corresponds to the desire¹⁴, particularly to the model idea of its creator. Thus understood good is interchangeable with being — *ens et bonum convertuntur*. The essence of all good contains an ability of awakening desires (*appetibilitas*) which, in turn, are differentiated according to the nature of beings. The ethical good appears only in the realm of rational beings, aware of the agreement or disagreement between their actions and a moral norm. As these considerations indicate, the ontological good does not differ in scope from value, although the two differ in meaning: the good emphasizes more strongly the element of being, that is, of object, while value clearly implies the participation of a subject. The good is a being comprehended in relation to the volitional domain while values also cover the domain of human cognition. That is why it has rightly been noted that the concept of value goes beyond the domain of the strictly understood good. After all, there are multiple values, cognitive, ethical, artistic, religious, economic etc. The difference between the concepts of value of the good becomes sharper when we speak of the moral good. Then it is merely one of several categories of values. Still, the feature shared by both is the dynamic aspect, connected with their ability to provoke desire.

The category of value has several, almost synonymous, terms such as aim, idea, perfection, significance, advantage etc. When constituting an objective and real attribute of being value usually becomes somebody's aim¹⁵. The concepts of value and aim, though close in meaning, cannot be totally identified. Aim is an actual object of one's desire while value is only a potential object of desire. Quite frequently value is identified with idea. However, this is not fully justified since the category of value implies more emphatically the fact of reality. Ideas need not be objective and real, while values are estimated precisely because of their objective and real character. Although values are not always actually real, nevertheless they have a potential reality.

Characterizing values one cannot neglect their structure. Most likely they have no substantial character, that is, they do not exist separately from being. They are objective and real because they are „embedded” in the being of an object. Value is not isolated from

¹⁴ „Convenientiam ergo entis ad appetitum exprimit hoc nomen bonum”, St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate* q. 1, a. 1, c.

¹⁵ J. B. Lotz, *op. cit.*, 602.

being but it penetrates it. In their structure values are not homogeneous and simple; inherent in an object they fascinate a subject and usually have a creator¹⁶. Especially the first two elements, object and subject, are organically connected with the category of value. The loss of an object unavoidably leads to the subjectivization or relativization of values, while the neglect of the role of a subject practically neutralizes value as such. Value separated from an object loses its sense. A thing may be of value only for somebody. This fact explains the inescapable changeability of the criteria of estimating values, which is not identical with their relativization. Value individually experienced by man is a confirmation of his personal dimension. Subjective experiencing of values does not undermine their objective character because axiological experience is based on real foundations.

A great majority of values have a qualitative rather than quantitative character. That is why values are described as „lower” or „higher” rather than „smaller” or „greater”. Values have a bipolar nature, that is, each positive value has a corresponding negative value. Thus, we perceive the opposition between truth and falsehood, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, and so on. The ontological structure of anti-value is usually explained in the context of its positive value, among others, by means of a theory about the negative nature (*privatio*) of falsehood and evil. The genesis of anti-values is a complex problem, often approaching the border of mystery¹⁷.

Subjectivist concepts of value

The ontological status of values is an object of endless controversies. Indeed, the very classification of approaches in this respect is already difficult enough. Johannes Hessen distinguished the following four attitudes: psychological approach, naturalistic objectivism, logical approach and ontological approach¹⁸. Psychological approach to the existence of values reduces human experience to a psychological fact. Aristotelian-scholastic philosophy recognized the existence of objective values but connected them too strongly with Cosmos which resulted in their naturalization. Neo-Kantianism tended to logicize values and endow them with the status of merely mental beings. Finally, N. Hartmann speaks for axiological ontologism when regarding the existence of values as ideal beings.

¹⁶ L. Lavelle, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, 185—246.

¹⁷ S. Kowalczyk, *Zło — problemem czy tajemnicą?* (in:) *Studia z filozofii Boga* (Is Evil a Problem or a Mystery? in Studies in the Philosophy of God), ed by B. Bejze, Warszawa 1977, vol. 3, 457—486.

¹⁸ J. Hessen, *Wertphilosophie*, Paderborn 1937, 19—21.

The classification of the ontological concepts of values, quoted above by way of example, is neither exhaustive nor valid in all its suggestions. Perhaps it is impossible to design one exhaustive typology of axiological ontologies. For that reason it is probably better to distinguish simply such ontological concepts of values as relativistic and absolute, realistic and idealistic, subjectivistic and objectivistic, Thomistic and phenomenological etc. These considerations will be restricted to a brief account of the representatives of subjectivistic and objectivistic trends in axiology.

Moderate axiological subjectivism, represented among others by Kant and Brentano, is opposed to skepticism and relativism. Immanuel Kant (†1804) sharply objected against hedonistic subjectivism and he recognized the absolute moral value of man's acts¹⁹. The primary value in human life is not pleasure but the fulfilment of duty. Kant was therefore far from the axiological relativism of Protagoras, the Epicureans or even the Stoics. In his case subjectivism appears as a result of a sharp opposition between being (*Sein*) and value (*Wert*), theoretical or pure reason and practical reason. According to him value is not comprehensible by means of theoretical reason, that is, by intellectual cognition. Value is only a postulate of the will, that is, an assumption. The inner relation between value and being, questioned by Kant, makes consistent axiological realism impossible. The source of values is found in the subject, his responsibilities, desires and attitudes. As a carrier of values object is pushed down into background. Personally recognizing the objectivity of values Kant has initiated the subjectivistic trend in the axiology of modern thought. He understood value primarily as an intentional correlate of human will. „The critical theories which refer to Kant recognize as a source of value the requirements posed to objects by the nature of subjects (for example, according to the Kantians the objective value of cognitive acts does not result from their agreement with an object but from subjective conditions necessary for an object to become for us an object of cognition).”²⁰

Moderate axiological subjectivism found its continuators in such thinkers as Rudolf Lotze (†1881) and Heinrich Rickert (†1936). They distinguished two spheres of reality, beings and values²¹. Beings exist, while values possess „significance” (*gelten*). They are somehow interconnected, still, it is difficult to speak of the real

¹⁹ I. Kant, *Krytyka władzy sądzienia* (The Critique of Judgement), tr. by J. Gałęcki, Warszawa 1964, 69—70; also his *Krytyka praktycznego rozumu* (The Critique of Practical Reason), tr. by J. Gałęcki, Warszawa 1972, 134—135.

²⁰ E. Bréhier, *Problemy filozoficzne XX wieku* (The Philosophical Problems of the 20th Century), Warszawa 1958, 65.

²¹ Cf. F.-J. Rintelen, *Die Bedeutung des philosophischen Wertproblems*, (in:) *Philosophia perennis. Abhandlung zu ihrer Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Hrsg. von F.-J. Rintelen, Regensburg 1930. Bd. 2, 943—945.

existence of values as such. Values enrich personality, yet, at the same time, they „have significance“ exclusively in relation to it.

Franz Brentano (†1936) is often classified as a follower of objective axiology²², but it is hard to accept this claim. He has won fame, among others, thanks to his thesis that the aspirational sphere — will and emotions — has a cognitive function in respect to values. Intellectual cognition makes it possible to distinguish truth from falsehood, while „valid“ emotions are helpful in identifying the categories of the good and evil. „We call something good when the love concerning it is valid.“²³ This description makes it possible to state that for Brentano it is not being (*Sein*) that is a source of values but emotional experience (*Erlebnis*). That is why one should speak of evaluating (*werten*) rather than of values (*Werte*). It is not the real thing that guarantees the good or evil but the psychic act and its quality. At any case values do not exist autonomously, i.e. regardless of the subject. They exist only subjectively and are evaluated by means of emotions²⁴. The hierarchy of values depends on predilections and man's love rather than on the inner richness of things. Nevertheless, man's emotions have an intentional aspect, that is, they are directed towards the external world. In spite of that, „values cannot be predicates of things, they only belong to acts of consciousness. And this is the essence of Brentano's subjectivism: one may speak of values only in the sphere of the phenomena of the consciousness.“²⁵

Brentano's axiological subjectivism had its limits and that is why he did not question the objective dimension of the world of values. His ontological subjectivism is not identical with psychological subjectivism. The latter is connected with extreme individualism and relativism in the estimation of values. Ontological subjectivism merely claims that emotions do not so much identify values as co-produce them. Love is a carrier of the good and evil. Therefore, there are no autonomous values but there is only „valid“ or „invalid“ love. Thus, Brentano's axiology raises a disturbing question: how can an axiologically neutral world (*wertfreie Welt*) be a basis for sound estimation?

The outlined concepts of value by Kant and Brentano, though dissociated from relativism, evidently explain the structure of the good in too subjective a way. The axiology of both thinkers is based on a psychological-epistemological foundation while lacking

²² L. Lavelle, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, 100 ff.

²³ F. Brentano, *Vom Ursprung sittlicher Erkenntnis*, *op. cit.*, 17.

²⁴ J. B. Lotz, *Wertphilosophie und Wertpädagogik*, *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 57 (1933) 1—43; S. Kowalczyk, *Podstawy światopoglądu chrześcijańskiego* (The Foundations of the Christian Worldview), Warszawa 1979, 195—198.

²⁵ H. Buczyńska-Garewicz, *Uczucia i rozum*, *op. cit.*, 92; cf. also 77—114.

a sufficient ontological basis. In consequence, it entails a subjectivization of the phenomenon of values and indirectly there emerges the danger of relativism. The followers of subjectivism most often quote two arguments: (1) values do not occur beyond man's psychic experiences; and (2) values do not enrich the factual description of the object examined²⁶. Neither of the arguments is entirely convincing. Naturally, similarly to the whole external world, values are accessible to subjective experience. Still, the fact does not prove that the object of these experiences is a product of a cognizing subject. Otherwise, idealistic solipsism would be unavoidable. The other argument of the followers of axiological subjectivism does not seem valid, either. Values differ from categorial notions of the type „tall” or „round”, but that does not prove their lack of content. Categorial notions differ from qualitative and transcendental concepts (understood in the spirit of classical philosophy).

Speaking of the „relativity” of values, one should bear in mind the multiple sources of different judgements in this field. Thus, for instance, Roman Ingarden distinguishes three causes of such a „relativity”, namely, epistemological, ontological and situational²⁷. The limitation of human cognition is not identical with the relativization of values, much like the fact of mistakes does not prove the falsity of all cognition. Identical values are differently estimated by man and by animal, which results of their different existential status. Finally, the fluidity of man's existential situations leads to a factual reshuffling of the hierarchy of values but does not imply their relativity. Axiological relativism is most often a consequence of a reductionistic concept of the world or man.

The controversy between the adherents of subjectivism and objectivism in the domain of the science of values often springs from semantic imprecision. The very terms „objective” and „subjective” have many meanings²⁸. Here are some of them: (1) objective — occurring in the object; subjective — real in the subject; (2) objective — existing autonomously; subjective — existing, for instance, as a correlate of an act of consciousness (an intentional being); (3) objective — existing regardless of man's experiences; subjective — constituted by such an experience. Naturally, semantic distinctions of this kind will not suffice to overcome axiological subjectivism but they indicate the vagueness of many of its claims.

²⁶ T. Czeżowski, *Czym są wartości?* (What are Values?), *Znak* 17 (1965) 408—410.

²⁷ R. Ingarden, *Przeżycie — dzieło — wartość* (Experience — Work — Value), Kraków 1966, 68—74.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 184—186.

Objectivistic concepts of values

Objectivistic axiology has many representatives but the following considerations will be limited to two trends, Thomism and phenomenology. Although initially Thomism did not use the term „value“, one may nevertheless speak of Thomistic axiology. It is based on the thesis about the mutual conversion of being and the good. St. Thomas Aquinas (†1274) wrote: „Each being, if it is a being, constitutes the good. For each being as such appears in an act, is perfect in a sense, because each act constitutes perfection. Perfection in itself contains the notion of desirability and the good ... Therefore, each being as such is the good.”²⁹ On the basis of Thomism the conversion of being and the ontological good makes it possible to infer a strict unity of being and values. Thus, there is no such being which would constitute no value (the good) or such value that would not constitute a being³⁰. Value does not exist beyond being but within being itself. It is simply its new apprehension by a subject. Axiology is not autonomous but it constitutes an integral element of metaphysics.

In modern Thomism the philosophy of values is based on the theory of the transcendental properties of being. According to this interpretation, particular transcendentals — unity, truth, the good, probably also beauty — are really identical with being, though at the same time they differ from it in meaning. Between being and transcendental attributes there occurs a difference in connotation and not in denotation. Truth, the good and beauty add nothing new to being, though they are really identical with it. They differ from it only mentally and constitute being's references to man's faculties, mind or will. In their characterization of values modern Thomists distinguish transcendental and categorial values³¹. The former are not „qualities“, that is, accidental features which really differ from substantial being. They are only new aspects of being distinguished in respect to the subject's faculties, cognitive or emotional-volitional. Among others, transcendental values include truth, the good and beauty. In modern understanding the realm of values goes beyond the scheme of transcendental properties of being as such. The Thomists are aware of that and therefore they speak of categorial values. They describe them either as a „particularization“ of transcendental values or as a „superstructure“ of content, distinct from substantial being. The former concept is questionable because, for instance, economic or life values evidently cannot be included in any of the transcendental features of being. They are really dis-

²⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *S. th.*, I, q. 5, s. 3, c.

³⁰ J. B. Lotz, *Wertphilosophie...*, *op. cit.*, 4.

³¹ M. A. Krapiec, *Filozofia bytu...*, *op. cit.*, 424—433. Comp. A. Stępień, *Głos dyskusyjny* (A Polemical Statement), Znak 17 (1965) 437.

tinct from being itself, introducing new, categorially restricted content. Thus, they are not only a particularization of the attributes of all being because they create new ontological categories. These values may be designated as a „superstructure” of being, even though the term is not precise enough, either.

Thomistic interpretation of values possesses an undoubtedly valuable element of realism. The foundation of value is unquestionably the real existence of an object, especially its essential and existential act³². The substantial form of being and an act of existence are important „carriers” of all values and therefore the separation, or even more, the opposition, of being and value would be unjustified. However, traditional ontology is not yet an axiology because it neglects the relation between being and subject. The ontological language is not identical with the axiological language which reveals the multiple interrelations between value and subject. Being becomes a value only when the subject's active attitude is manifested as cognitive, aspirational, emotional etc. In Thomistic interpretation values are not reducible to facts of behaviour or subject's attitude. That is why in this understanding of values the error of relativization does not occur³³. Values are the intentional correlate of man's cognition and choice, although they are not arbitrarily shaped by him. The essence of values does not consist in actually fulfilling man's needs but in their potential connection with his mental-aspirational life. Traditional Thomism perfectly stresses the realism of the realm of values but it does not fully reveal the multiplicity of ontological and axiological languages. In many writers in this trend there occurs a tendency to reduce the language of values to that of being.

A German thinker, Dietrich von Hildebrand, combines Thomism with elements of phenomenology. While being essentially a Thomist, he also recognizes the objective and absolute character of values, founding them on being. The influence of phenomenology becomes evident in the subjectivistic starting point in his analysis of the problem of values. Value is primarily the „Importance” of being³⁴. In human cognition „importance” is understood in three ways, as strictly subjective, objective („internal”, „in itself”), and as „good for a person.” Values are apprehended by different types of the cognitive faculties, yet especially by the „heart”³⁵. Values

³² This is emphasized by L. Lavelle, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, 29.

³³ However, this objection was raised by R. Ingarden in a discussion organized by the editors of the monthly *Znak*: *Znak* 17 (1965) 466—467.

³⁴ D. von Hildebrand, *Christian Ethics*, New York 1953, 34—59; M. H. Szymeczko, *Koncepcja wartości u Dietricha von Hildebranda* (The Concept of Value in Dietrich von Hildebrand), *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 12 (1964) vol. 2, 43—55.

³⁵ D. von Hildebrand, *Serce. Rozważania o uczuciowości ludzkiej*.

are real and concrete properties of an object, possessing a definite nature (*quidditas*).³⁶ They are the objective „importance“ of being, regardless of the fact of human cognition. One may, therefore, infer that values are autonomous in respect to man's feelings and experiences in the sense that they cannot be reduced to them. Value is the „core of being.“³⁷ It is a primordial phenomenon (*ein Urphänomen*), analogous to essence, being or truth³⁸. Value is even prior to the good because the latter may only be an already valuable being. Moreover, value is not the very experience of man or the moment of cognition.

The foundation of value is existence due to which it is realized. The ontological value of the human person results from the fact of man's reality³⁹. Yet, at the same time, value is not to be equated with existence alone. Value possesses an inner unity, content and a set of attributes, and that is why it itself constitutes the very essence (*echte Wesenheit*). Value even possesses its own existence, namely, an ideal existence (*ideale Existenz*)⁴⁰. The realization of value does not change its nature but only its mode of being. The depreciation of the role of existence, typical of Hildebrand's axiology, is clearly a consequence of the influence of phenomenology connected with the essential concept of being⁴¹.

The German axiologist by no means continues Plato's idealism and that is why he does not approach values as pure possibilities. Values simultaneously constitute protoelements of reality because they have their ultimate reality in God⁴². Without God values would be merely „a sheer kingdom of shadows.“⁴³ God is „the highest Value“ and a fusion of all values⁴⁴ He is „the Good itself“ and „the good of all the good.“⁴⁵

Dietrich von Hildebrand distinguishes such kinds of values as formal, of created being, ontological qualitative⁴⁶. Formal values are connected with being itself, when apprehended, for instance, in

i uczuciowości Boga-Człowieka (The Heart. Considerations on Human Emotionality and the Emotionality of God-Man), Poznań 1985, 159 ff.

³⁶ D. von Hildebrand, *Christian Ethics*, op. cit., 88.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 72, 78.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 95.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 137, 154; comp. also his *Die Idee der sittlichen Handlung*, Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung 3 (1916) 194 ff.

⁴⁰ D. von Hildebrand, *Der Sinn philosophischen Fragen und Erkennens*, Bonn 1950, 57.

⁴¹ M. H. Szymeczko, op. cit., 51 ff.

⁴² „But in God they (values) have ultimate substantial reality“, D. von Hildebrand, *Christian Ethics*, op. cit., 160.

⁴³ D. von Hildebrand, *Die Menschheit am Scheideweg*, Regensburg 1955, 45.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 225—226; also his *Christian Ethics*, op. cit., 162.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 160.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 146—152; also his *Serçe...*, op. cit., 170 ff.

opposition to nothingness; these are, among others, the values of essence and existence. The values of created being are the effects of God's omnipotence Who has endowed His creatures with a certain dignity and significance. The ontological values are not connected with the Thomistic theory of transcendentals but they reveal the nature of particular beings. Thus, for instance, man's ontological value is the fact that he is *imago Dei*. Finally, qualitative values are connected with human activity and that is why we speak of cognitive, moral or artistic values⁴⁷.

Thomistic axiology emphasizes the unity between value and being, while phenomenology entails a dualistic-heterogeneous conception of values. One of the founders of phenomenology, Max Scheler (†1928), accepted ontological dualism, when he distinguished things and values. They are interrelated but not identical. Values are not the relation itself or an emotional experience of a subject⁴⁸. This makes it possible to speak of an objective-absolute character of values. They are independent of the subject's evaluation because they are not his arbitrary creation.

Scheler has not offered a definition of values, characterizing them in a negative rather than positive manner. Value is not a physical attribute of things, nor is it a power or real disposition. Value is an object comprehensible by the intuitive-emotional cognition. Value is a kind of a „material quality“ (*materiale Qualität*), that is, it has an objective and real character⁴⁹. Values imply the obligation or duty of realization but they cannot be reduced to obligation alone. „The very existence of a positive value is in itself a positive value. The very existence of a negative value is in itself a negative value.“⁵⁰ This means that positive values should be realized, while negative values — rejected. The above probably does not imply that values are exclusively ideal qualities. Therefore the idealistic interpretation of values, accepted by Hanna Buczyńska-Garewicz⁵¹, seems doubtful. After all, Scheler did acknowledge the autonomy of values. He saw in them „independent phenomena“ for which things are merely „carriers“⁵². Among values the good assumes the predominant position since it contains all the other objectively existing individual values.

Scheler's ontological dualism was related to epistemological dualism. The world of things is an object of intellectual cognition,

⁴⁷ D. von Hildebrand, *Christian Ethics*, *op. cit.*, 154 ff, 158—160. *Comp. Wahrheit, Wert und Sein. Festgabe für Dietrich von Hildebrand zum 80. Geburtstag*. Hrsg. von B. Schwarz, Regensburg 1970.

⁴⁸ M. Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, Halle 1921, 248—255.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁵¹ H. Buczyńska-Garewicz, *Uczucia i rozum...*, *op. cit.*, 228.

⁵² H. Scheler, *Der Formalismus...*, *op. cit.*, 12—13.

while the world of values is comprehensible only through emotional intuition⁵³. The German philosopher has achieved a „rationalization” of emotions, that is, he endowed them with the cognitive function, and even exclusiveness, in respect to values. Emotions are an intuitive „view” of values and in this domain they remain autonomous in respect to intellect and will. The primary category of emotional experiences is love, „the most elementary act which provides a basis for all other acts.”⁵⁴ Scheler acknowledged the primacy of love over cognition when he wrote: „Love is therefore a stimulus for cognition and will, even more, it is the mother of spirit and reason itself.”⁵⁵ Man is, first of all, *ens emans*.

Max Scheler's concept of love clearly contains controversial elements which have been pointed out, among others, by Bishop Karol Wojtyła⁵⁶. For instance, the actualistic concept of person is unacceptable since it diminishes the causality of person in respect to values. Scheler also questions the norm of the „duty to one's neighbour” perceiving in it a threat to man's autonomy. Still, it would be hard to describe all love as an irrational act and deny it a cognitive function⁵⁷. Scheler clearly endows love with an ability to „discover” the world of values. As he wrote, „Values cannot be created or destroyed. They exist quite independently of any organization of certain spiritual beings.”⁵⁸ His conception of values is not idealistic but theistic, i.e. perceiving their ultimate ontological basis in God.

A well known contemporary axiologist, the Rev. Johannes Hessen, combines, in turn, elements of Augustinianism and phenomenology. He accepts a triadic structure of reality and distinguishes in it three elements, essence, existence and value⁵⁹. Values have „significance” and they constitute ideal beings. Real beings have no normative character and this indicates the difference between being and value. Values always imply an obligation, yet they un-

⁵³ Scheler distinguished usual emotions (*Gefühle*) and emotional experience of values (*Wertgefühl*). Cf. O. Kraus, *Die Werttheorien. Geschichte und Kritik*, Leipzig n.d., 393 ff.

⁵⁴ M. Scheler, *Moralia*, Leipzig 1922, 143.

⁵⁵ M. Scheler, *Ordo amoris*, (in:) *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 10: *Schriften aus dem Nachlass*, Leipzig 1923, 356.

⁵⁶ K. Wojtyła, *Ocena możliwości zbudowania etyki chrześcijańskiej przy założeniach systemu Maksa Schelera* (An Evaluation of the Possibility of Developing Christian Ethics on the Assumptions of Max Scheler's System) Lublin 1959, 91—96.

⁵⁷ H. Buczyńska-Garewicz (*op. cit.*, 277) interprets Scheler's concept of love too irrationally. Her thesis would be hard to reconcile with Scheler's own statements quoted by her in her work. The cognitive function of love is acknowledged by J. Dulieu, cf. *Aktualność Schelera* (Scheler's Actuality) Znak 27 (1975) 213 ff.

⁵⁸ M. Scheler, *Der Formalismus...*, *op. cit.*, 268.

⁵⁹ J. Hessen, *Religionsphilosophie*, München 1955, vol. 2, 160.

dergo no change even if their carriers are destroyed⁶⁰. His ontology of values Hessen describes as „reduced Platonism”⁶¹. Following Scheler he perceives the only manner of recognizing values in emotional intuition which is a kind of experience⁶². He does not speak for extreme emotionalism since he indicates mutual interrelations between three forms of intuition, namely, intellectual, volitional and emotional. Their synthesis is to be found in the so-called total intuition which makes it possible to discover the presence of God⁶³.

The philosophical thought of a Polish scholar, Roman Ingarden, is also related with the phenomenological trend. He indicated the complexity of the structure of values which have an objective character and which are not „factual” properties of things⁶⁴. They are also a relation, but not only; they imply obligation, but cannot be exclusively reduced to it. Value is „a kind of a superstructure”, though at the same time „it grows out of its foundations”⁶⁵. Ingarden separated aesthetic and ethical values: the former have an intentional character while the latter are created by man at the moment of realizing an undertaken act. Consequently, the Polish phenomenologist was of the opinion that value cannot be unequivocally classified as „an ideal being, real being or intentional being”⁶⁶. Thus, agnosticism was his last word although he also acknowledged that the „significance” of values presupposes some kind of their existence.

The latter concepts of value share a common ground, namely, they accept their objective character. Still, the nature of values is explained differently in particular trends, Thomism and phenomenology. The complex problem of the ontological status of values is most often solved in two ways, ontologically or personalistically. The first way was taken by traditional Thomism, the latter — by D. von Hildebrand and some phenomenologists (including Scheler). In principle the two approaches are not mutually exclusive and that is why they should be integrated. In our opinion, values are not merely man's subjective experiences or exclusively potential beings. Values have an objective character, while their reality has two aspects, ontological and personalist. Ontological reality is de-

⁶⁰ J. Hessen, *Im Ringen um eine zeitnahe Philosophie*, Nürnberg 1959, 84 ff.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 87. Comp. A. Nossol, *Cognitio Dei experimentalis. Nauka Jana Hessena o religijnym poznaniu Boga* (The Teaching of Jan Hessen about the Religious Cognition of God), Warszawa 1974, 23—33.

⁶² J. Hessen, *Erkenntnistheorie*, Bonn-Berlin 1926, 90.

⁶³ J. Hessen, *Lehrbuch der Philosophie*, vol. 1: *Wissenschaftslehre*, München 1947, 249.

⁶⁴ R. Ingarden, *Przeżycie...*, *op. cit.*, 83—127.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 108, 112.

pendent on the act of existence of a being as a carrier of values. At the same time, however, there is an evident fact of the connection of values with the world of persons as rational and free causes of values. One may therefore say that values are real thanks to persons — formally as a result of man's activity and, fundamentally, due to the causative power of God. The affirmation of the reality of the world of values is not identical with granting them an existence of a substantial being, that is, autonomous in respect to the „carriers". Values are anchored in being, they inhere in it, they are its immanent „quality". At the same time one may speak of a new degree of the reality of the phenomenon of values when they are seen, approved of or realized by a person. Only in this context may one speak of values as such, especially of higher cognitive, ethical or sacral-religious values. Man's death or his infidelity to values of this kind do not mean their annihilation since they are always fundamentally real — in the Primal Cause, that is, in God. The problem of the ontological status of values is very complex and still poses many questions. The attempt to solve this problem presented above could be described as „personalist ontology". On its basis it seems possible to undertake another difficult problem of the relations between value and person but it would require a separate analysis.