

Globethics Repository

The logo for Globethics, featuring the word "Globethics" in white, sans-serif font centered within a solid blue rectangular background.

Perspectives on dialogue

This page was generated automatically upon download from the Globethics Repository. More information on Globethics see <https://www.globethics.net>. Data and content policy of Globethics Repository see <https://repository.globethics.net/pages/policy>.

Item Type	Article
Authors	Marin, Lou
Publisher	Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation
Rights	With permission of the license/copyright holder
Download date	2026-06-16 05:38:44
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/175718

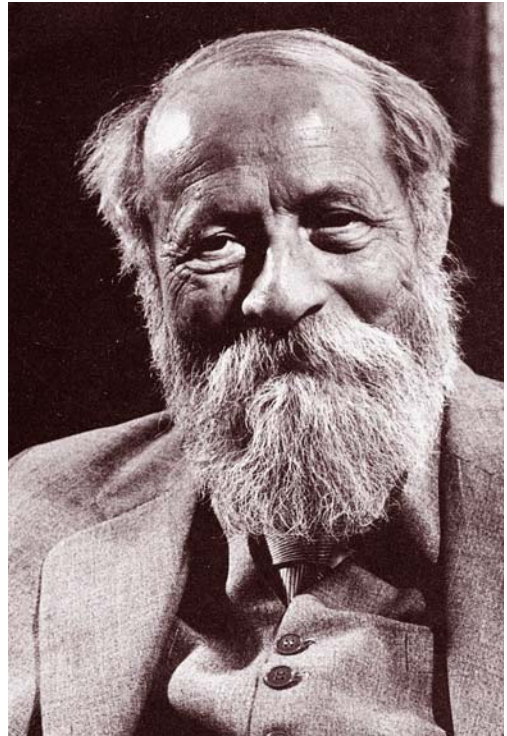
II » Perspectives on dialogue

The encounter of Dag Hammarskjöld and Martin Buber, phase 2 (1961 and after)

On 17 August 1961, after an interval of two years, Dag Hammarskjöld resumed contact with Martin Buber by writing a letter to him at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Thus, again it was Hammarskjöld who took the initiative, and again it was after his reading of a book of Buber's, *Between Man and Man* (Buber 1955):

The last few days I have been reading some studies of yours which I had not seen before. They are the five papers which have been published in English under the collective title 'Between Man and Man', and I think especially of 'Zwi-
esprache', 'Die Frage an den Einzelnen', and parts of 'Was ist der Mensch'.

After having finished reading these studies, I feel the need to send you again a greeting – after far too long a time of silence, understandable only in the light of the pressure of circumstances. In what you say about the 'signs', about the 'questions' and true response and about the Single One and his responsibility, with reference also to the political sphere, you have formulated shared experiences in ways which made your studies very much what you call a 'sign' for me. It is strange – over a gulf of time and a gulf of differences as to background and outer



Martin Buber

experience – to find a bridge built which in one move, eliminates the distance. This was all I wanted to tell you and I do not believe that any further comments would add or clarify anything.³⁶

³⁶ KBS DHS, Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Martin Buber, 17 August 1961.

In the second part of his letter, Hammar-skjöld referred to his continuing intention of trying to translate Buber, although a first attempt to translate the first part of Buber's early mystical literature, published for the first time in German already in 1907, *Die Legende des Baalschem* (Buber 1907, 1956b), had apparently not been finished.³⁷ Hammarskjöld:

I still keep in my mind the idea of translating you so as to bring you closer to my countrymen, but it comes increasingly difficult to choose and of course I can not envisage any more extensive work. Also, the more I sense the nuances in your German, the more shy I become at the thought of a translation which, at best, could render only a modest part of its overtones.³⁸

Martin Buber replied enthusiastically on 23 August 1961 from his house in the Talbiyeh suburb of Jerusalem :

I want to thank you for your letter. It is for me, even more than what you said in our first talk, a token of true integral understanding, – rather a rare gift in this world of ours.

Were I asked, which of my books a Swede should read first, I should answer: 'The most "difficult" of them all, but the most apt to introduce the reader into the realm of dialogue, I mean: "I and Thou".' As you may not know the Postscript to the new edition, I am sending you a copy, together with a paper on language I gave last year.³⁹

37 See Urquhart (1984: 40-41 and 520).

38 KBS DHS, Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Martin Buber, 17 August 1961.

39 KBS DHS, Martin Buber, Letter to Dag Hammar-skjöld, 23 August 1961. The paper on language, mentioned additionally by Buber, has not yet been found by the author and therefore cannot be considered more deeply here.

It is astonishing here to witness that Buber, who in his philosophy of dialogue gives so much importance to awareness of and sensitivity towards the other, the You part of the dialogue, completely ignores the severe constraints Hammarskjöld refers to as a result of his duties as Secretary-General of the United Nations ('I can not envisage any more extensive work'). On the other hand, Buber's insisting on a translation of *I and Thou* as his key work on dialogue shows how dear this book still was to Buber, nearly 40 years after its first publication in 1923.

In fact, *Between Man and Man*, which was the original catalyst for Hammarskjöld's resuming contact with Buber, contains, in contrast to the German compilations of all Buber's writings on the principle of dialogue (Buber 1954/1962/1984), only two basic texts – that is 'Dialogue' (originally written in 1929) and 'The Question to the Single One' (originally written in 1936), referred to by Hammarskjöld in his letter by their original German titles. Whereas 'What is Man?', a series of inaugural lectures of Buber during his first year as a Professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, 1938, and published in German only in 1948 as 'Das Problem des Menschen', has not been considered an integral part of the canon of Buber's writings on dialogue, though it is related to the subject.

Notwithstanding the texts Hammarskjöld mentions in his letter of 17 August 1961, it would be appropriate here to start with Buber's cardinal work on dialogue philosophy, that is *I and Thou*. At the same time, we should also recall that Hammarskjöld had already developed his own concept of 'quiet diplomacy' as a dialogue philosophy for the political sphere.

Hammar-skjöld's intention to refine his already existing concept of 'quiet diplomacy'

This concept of 'quiet diplomacy' had been formed by Hammar-skjöld during the US-China crisis, in relation to the imprisonment of US pilots at the end of the Korean War in 1954-55, and was one that he practised and refined throughout his period of office as Secretary-General of the United Nations. The political scientist Manuel Fröhlich called it, instead, 'vertrauliche Diplomatie' (confidential diplomacy, but not in the sense of secret; see Fröhlich 2002: 279) and went into the details of the negotiations during the US-China crisis to deduce key elements that Hammar-skjöld developed there – quite some time before Hammar-skjöld came to know or got into contact with Buber, which led Hammar-skjöld later on, in his initial letter to Buber of 16 April 1958, to refer to their proceeding in 'parallel ways'. For Hammar-skjöld, the role of the Secretary-General in pursuing quiet diplomacy started with a belief in personal talks – at the time of his voyage to Peking China was not even a member of the United Nations (it joined the organisation in 1971). He was looking for an atmosphere of privacy, to some extent protected from public debate. In diplomatic negotiations, Hammar-skjöld interpreted in a preferably objective, unemotional and detached way the opinions of his counterpart. He wanted to show personal integrity and honesty in his demands as well as empathy for the other and a desire to save the latter's face when it came to solutions (Fröhlich 2002: 253-282). Hammar-skjöld was surely lucky to find a counterpart such as Zhou Enlai, who appreciated Hammar-skjöld's humble intellectualism during their Peking talks. One should not forget, however, that Zhou Enlai's political margins

during the negotiations at the time coincided with a new emerging Chinese interest in gaining more independence from the Soviet Union after Stalin's death.

When Hammar-skjöld contacted Buber three years later, the former's concept of 'quiet diplomacy' had undergone some changes in the light of experience. The tasks had become more and more difficult and at the time of the Congo crisis, 'quiet diplomacy' had come across certain limits.

Although it was *Between Man and Man* that made Hammar-skjöld resume his correspondence with Buber, it is very likely that he had already read and come to know *I and Thou* (Buber 1970) by this time – only one month before his sudden death. As has been mentioned at the end of the section on the first phase of their encounter, Hammar-skjöld, in his memorandum to the Swedish Academy, written in June 1959, described *I and Thou* as a key work of Buber's philosophy and

the work in which Buber best succeeded in presenting a coherent and pregnant formulation of his basic concept.⁴⁰

One of the early biographers of Hammar-skjöld, Henry P. van Dusen, confirmed:

Hammar-skjöld was already familiar with *I and Thou*. He had included a fairly extended discussion of it in his commendation of Buber for the Nobel Prize (van Dusen 1967: 218).

The Australian journalist, then UN Information Director and close friend of Hammar-skjöld, George Ivan Smith (Fröhlich 2008), wrote in a letter to Buber in October 1961, a very short time after Hammar-skjöld's death:

40 Dag Hammar-skjöld quoted by Hodes (1972: 163).

I was a personal assistant to Mr. Hammarskjöld during a number of his trips to the Middle East and to Asia and, as well as being professional colleagues, we were also friends. He talked to me so often about your works and on several occasions gave me inscribed copies of them as gifts.⁴¹

As Hammarskjöld read *Between Man and Man* only a short time before his death, it is legitimate to suppose that *I and Thou* figured prominently in these talks mentioned by George Ivan Smith. Notably, in debates with the staff of the Secretariat on questions of awareness as a basic factor within the concept of ‘quiet diplomacy’, Hammarskjöld even organised sessions where they read selected parts of *I and Thou* together, as testified by Andrew Cordier (Fröhlich 2002: 279).

Thus, the immediate interest Hammarskjöld took in Buber’s philosophy of dialogue and *I and Thou* should be at first sight interpreted within the context of Hammarskjöld’s continuing efforts to develop and refine the instruments at hand for a successful conduct of dialogue within the political sphere and in diplomatic negotiations.

The mystery and romantic anti-romanticism of I and Thou

Although Hammarskjöld admired the language of *I and Thou* from a poetic point of view, as a philosophical work the book is very hard to read, let alone to translate. In a prologue to his new English translation of *I and Thou* from 1970⁴², Walter Kaufmann

– approached by Buber’s son Rafael to do a new translation – several times described the book as ‘untranslatable’ (Kaufmann 1970: 1). Many contemporary readers were appalled by the style Buber employed in this work – his political and social writings, even his later works on dialogue are much more accessible – finding it imprecise, pretentious, almost romantic, and further marred by Buber’s habit of inventing new German words. Kaufmann seemed to confirm this view:

The style of *Ich und Du* is anything but sparse and unpretentious, lean or economical. It represents a late flowering of romanticism and tends to blur all contours in the twilight of suggestive but extremely unclear language. Most of Buber’s German readers would be quite incapable of saying what any number of passages probably mean (Kaufmann 1970: 24).

Kaufmann went on to say that because of his writing style Buber had been criticised for being concerned only with ‘Schöngeisterei’ (aesthetics), an assessment that contrasts sharply with Hammarskjöld’s praise for the work’s poetry, as we shall see below. But the content of this book is anything but romantic. Drawing attention to the Jewish cultural heritage of Buber, Kaufmann in his prologue goes to the heart of what the book is:

The sacred is here and now... The only possible relationship with God is to address him and to be addressed by him, here and now – or, as Buber puts it, in the present. For him the Hebrew name of God, the tetragrammation (YHWH), means HE IS PRESENT. *Er ist da* might be translated: He is there; but in this context it would be more nearly right to say: He is here (Kaufmann 1970: 25–26).

41 KBS DHS, George Ivan Smith, Letter to Martin Buber, beginning of October 1961.

42 A first English translation by Ronald Gregor Smith appeared in the UK in 1937. The first American edition, already revised (including some remarks made by Buberhimself) appeared in 1958 – the year in which Hammarskjöld made contact with Buber.

Buber distinguished in his book between the basic word pairs I-You and I-It and elaborates on all of their further significations (Buber 1970: 53). Only within the personal I-You relationship is God present. Every I-It relation deals with objects and objectification, even of human beings, and that is why He or She is a part of I-It. Buber divides the realms of true dialogue into three: (1) a person can have a dialogue with nature (a tree, Buber puts forward as an example), or an animal (Buber's takes the example of a cat); (2) a person can have a dialogue with men – that is, with other persons (into that relation language enters); and (3) a person can have a dialogue with spiritual entities (he/she feels addressed by such entities and responds with a creative act, not necessarily with language) (Buber 1970: 56-57). Thus, for Buber true dialogue is not necessarily something that only occurs between human beings. In his afterword of 1957, so eagerly sent to Hammarskjöld in his letter of 23 August 1961, Buber demonstrates this in the example of relations with pets:

Man once 'tamed' animals, and he is still capable of bringing off this strange feat. He draws animals into his own sphere and moves them to accept him, a stranger, in an elementary manner to accede to his ways. He obtains from them an often astonishing active response to his approach, to his address – and on the whole this response is the stronger and more direct, the more his relation amounts to a genuine You-saying (Buber 1970: 172).

Thus, according to Buber, true dialogue without language or conversation between a person and an animal is possible; here the animal is part of the I-You relation; whereas Buber also talks about the 'sickness of our

age' (Buber 1970: 104), where most relations between persons, human beings, are not true dialogue, because one person is usually either ignored or only experienced or used like an object – that is, subordinated by the other. Nevertheless, for Buber, the second realm of possible dialogue, the sphere of a dialogue between man and man, remains the most important for resolving this crisis of our times. Kaufmann explains:

The centrality of human relationships in this book is so plain that critics have actually noted with surprise and protested with complete incomprehension that there should be any mention at all of a tree and of a cat. The central stress falls on You – not Thou. God is present when I confront You. But if I look away from You, I ignore him. As long as I merely experience or use you, I deny God. But when I encounter You I encounter him (Kaufmann 1970: 28).

Thus, for Buber a real encounter happens within the realm of actual daily life with all its risks. The two persons who are meeting live entirely in the present and each other's presence. There is no precondition:

The relation to the You is unmediated. Nothing conceptual intervenes between I and You, no prior knowledge and no imagination... No purpose intervenes between I and You, no greed and no anticipation... Every means is an obstacle. Only where all means have disintegrated encounters occur (Buber 1970: 62-63).

We will keep this passage in mind when it comes to the discussion of whether diplomacy, negotiations or political talks with

their hidden or explicit interests, purposes and preconditions are possible realms of true dialogue. For Buber, the ideal situation of dialogue is within a loving relationship, as he himself experienced in his marriage to Paula Winkler (1877-1958), the latter coming from a Catholic background in Munich and converting to the Jewish faith:

Marriage can never be renewed except by that which is always the source of all true marriage: that two human beings reveal the You to one another (Buber 1970: 95).

But God isn't simply the beloved one in another person; he is more the invisible, unnameable *Between*, dissolving itself into responsibility for the other:

This is no metaphor but actuality: love... is between I and You. Whoever does not know this, know this with his being, does not know love... Love is responsibility of an I for a You... Relation is reciprocity (Buber 1970: 66).

For Buber, even an atheist who lives in a true dialogical relation with reciprocity – I would rather prefer the term 'mutuality' – can find God; naming is irrelevant here (Reichert 1996). That, again, is due to the Jewish tradition of his philosophy, as Kaufmann emphasises:

The Hebrews did not visualize their God and expressly forbade attempts to make of him an object – a visual object, a concrete object, any object. Their God was not to be seen. He was to be heard and listened to. He was not an It but an I – or a You (Kaufmann 1970: 33).

But here Buber showed his Hebrew humanism, because he also cites particular persons from literary, cultural or religious history like Socrates, Jesus, Goethe and Buddha as representatives of true dialogue, whereas Napoleon, the political conqueror, embodies the negative example:

– But what if a man's mission requires him to know only his association with his cause and no real relation to any You, no present encounter with any You, so that everything around him becomes It and subservient to his cause? How about the I-saying of Napoleon? Wasn't that legitimate?...

– Indeed, this master of the age evidently did not know the dimension of the You. The matter has been put well: all being was for him *valore*⁴³... there was nobody whom he recognized as being. He was the demonic You for the millions and did not respond; to 'You' he responded by saying: It... (Buber 1970: 117).

Nonetheless, Buber was a rather optimistic philosopher: a final component of his philosophy of dialogue contains the optimistic possibility of *Umkehr* (return) for any individual, whatever sphere they live in. In Kaufmann's words:

One of the central concepts of the book is that of *Umkehr*. This is Buber's German rendering of the Hebrew *t'shuvah* and means return... The Jewish doctrine holds that a man can at any time return and be accepted by God... What the Hebrew tradition stresses is not the mere

43 A note by Kaufmann – 'Value. But the Italian word can also mean worth, courage, fitness' – in Buber (1970: 117).

state of mind, the repentance, but the act of return (Kaufmann 1970: 35–36).

Now we have all the ingredients Buber thought necessary for true dialogue. It contains an I-You relationship, where the other is not regarded as a mere object. It requires the sensitivity that allows oneself to be addressed and to address the other in a manner characterised by awareness. It involves taking the risk of meeting the other without a preconception, without egoistical interest, without tactical strategy or preconditions, in order to create something new in common. It requires a desire for true dialogue on both sides, that is reciprocity or mutuality. It means taking responsibility for the other party in the encounter. If someone treats the other as a mere value or object, he is not dealing with dialogue, but with an I-It relation. Nevertheless, in principle, *Umkehr* is possible for everyone.

Buber's example of the ideal dialogue: The Forte Circle in Potsdam, 1914

Buber originally had a plan for publishing several works on his dialogue philosophy (Kaufmann 1970: 49–50). He abandoned the plan, but his subsequent works on dialogue, after *I and Thou*, most of which are included in the book that Hammarskjöld read, *Between Man and Man* (Buber 1955), tried to exemplify in much more accessible language topics and problems that arose out of *I and Thou*. It is very interesting to see what Hammarskjöld concentrated on when he wrote to Buber: the 'signs', the 'questions' and 'true response' as well as 'the Single One and his responsibility, with reference also to the political sphere'.

In 'Dialogue' (Buber 1929), Buber gives an extended example, from his long political life, of an occasion when he felt he had experienced the ideal of true dialogue. Strangely enough, it is at the same time an early and – as it turned out – premature attempt to establish a kind of League of Nations or United Nations:

The date is Easter 1914. Some men from different European peoples had met in an undefined presentiment of the catastrophe, in order to make preparations for an attempt to establish a supra-national authority. The conversations were marked by that unreserved, whose substance and fruitfulness I have scarcely ever experienced so strongly. It had such an effect on all who took part that the fictitious fell away and every word was an actuality. Then as we discussed the composition of the larger circle from which public initiative should proceed (it was decided that it should meet in August of the same year) one of us, a man of passionate concentration and judicial power of love, raised the consideration that too many Jews had been nominated, so that several countries would be represented in unseemly proportion by their Jews... Obstinate Jew that I am, I protested against the protest. I no longer know how from that I came to speak of Jesus and to say that we Jews knew him from within, in the impulses and stirrings of his Jewish being, in a way that remains inaccessible to the peoples submissive to him. 'In a way that remains inaccessible to you' – so I directly addressed the former clergyman. He stood up, I too stood, we looked into the heart of one another's eyes. 'It is gone', he said, and before everyone we gave one another

the kiss of brotherhood. The discussion of the situation between Jews and Christians had been transformed into a bond between the Christian and the Jew. In this transformation dialogue was fulfilled. Opinions were gone, in a bodily way the factual took place (Buber 1929: 5-6).

This example has been called ‘the original experience of dialogic’⁴⁴ for Buber. It involved the so-called Forte Circle and the Easter meeting of 1914 took place in Potsdam. The Forte Circle existed from 1910-15 and was an international effort, begun by European intellectuals witnessing the danger of the coming war, to build a supranational organisation, a forerunner of the League of Nations, founded in 1920. The Easter meeting in Potsdam was an intense meeting that went on for three days. It was attended by the Dutch initiator, Frederik Van Eden (a social reformer and utopian, and a follower of Henry David Thoreau, who also kept up a vigorous interchange with writers and activists like Upton Sinclair, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore) and his fellow countryman Henri Borel (a writer); Martin Buber, Gustav Landauer (the nonviolent anarchist and close friend of Buber’s), Erich Gutkind (a German-Jewish philosopher of religion and science), Florens Christian Rang (lawyer and former protestant minister), all of them from Germany; and two Swedes, Poul Bjerre (psychoanalyst and writer) and Theodor Gustav Norlind (writer). The author and peace activist

Romain Rolland originally planned to join the meeting but could not attend. The clash of arguments Buber was describing above was with Florens Christian Rang. Thereby, Buber started a conversation on Jewry and Christianity with Rang that lasted until the latter’s death in 1926 (Friedman 1982: 180-184). The joint international effort of the Forte Circle was a failure, but represents one of the now forgotten prescient evaluations of the European situation before the war, and one which moreover had a vision of how to solve it. The Forte Circle dissolved in 1915 because some of its members – Gutkind, Rang and notably Buber himself – had suddenly taken up propaganda for the war on behalf of their country. That infuriated Gustav Landauer, who accused Buber of having turned into a ‘Kriegsbuber’ (War-monger Buber) (Friedman 1982: 193) and told him so bluntly in May 1916, according to Maurice Friedman:

[H]e denied Buber the right to speak publicly of the events of the war and ‘to incorporate these confusions into your beautiful and wise generalities’. ‘I confess that it makes my blood boil when you single out Germany without qualification as the only redeemer nation without reference to how Germany in the last decades had pursued colonization through conquest.’ ‘That is War Politics!’, Landauer exclaimed... ‘The community that we need is far from all that war means today’ (Friedman 1982: 200).

But Buber and Landauer remained in close contact, their relationship of dialogue remained intact and their friendship lasted until the reactionary murder of Landauer in 1919. Mainly because of Landauer’s criticism,

44 The quoted formula comes from Manfred Voigts (2001), ‘Martin Buber – Entscheidung und Gemeinschaft’, in Richard Faber and Christine Holste (eds), *Der Potsdamer Forte-Kreis. Eine utopische Intellektuellenassoziation zur europäischen Friedensicherung*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, p. 107.

but also for other minor reasons (such as the explicit census of Jews in the German Army in 1916, which led Buber back to his original Zionist position that the German War had nothing to do with the obligations of the Jewish community) he slowly gave up his pro-war position. That was a fundamental experience for Buber and the reason he no longer advocated a mysticism that could make one blind. Instead, Buber embraced the vision that dialogue is opposed to war and cannot go along with war propaganda. It is very likely that Hammarskjöld knew nothing about this background, this personal *Umkehr* of Buber's. For Buber, dialogue philosophy was a return to realism and a dissociation from pure mysticism, whereas for Hammarskjöld Buber remained a mystic even within the latter's books on dialogue.

It is interesting to read Buber's later version of this original and ideal dialogue experience when he described it in another philosophical work, without reference to the concrete historical background, which does not show Buber in a very favourable light. The fact, however, that Buber even repeated the account of this experience in another of his works on dialogue philosophy – which was not, unfortunately, included in *Between Man and Man* and therefore could not have been read by Hammarskjöld – shows how important this historical example was for Buber. We find this passage in 'Elements of the Interhuman', first published in German in 1953 (Buber 1954/1962/1984: 269-298)⁴⁵, under the explicit chapter title, 'Genuine Dialogue'. Here, the passage on the particular dialogue he experienced in 1914 reads as follows:

45 The first English translation was by Ronald Gregor Smith, in Buber, Martin (1965), *The Knowledge of Man*, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., pp. 72-88.

But where the dialogue is fulfilled in its being, between partners who have turned to one another in truth, who express themselves without reserve and are free of the desire for semblance, there is brought into being a memorable common fruitfulness which is to be found nowhere else...The interhuman opens out what otherwise remains unopened.

This phenomenon is indeed well known in dialogue between two persons; but I have also sometimes experienced it in a dialogue in which several have taken part. About Easter of 1914 there met a group consisting of representatives of several European nations for a three-day discussion that was intended to be preliminary to further talks. We wanted to discuss together how the catastrophe, which we all believed was imminent, could be avoided. Without our having agreed beforehand on any sort of modalities for our talk, all the presuppositions of genuine dialogue were fulfilled. From the first hour immediacy reigned between all of us, some of whom had just got to know one another; everyone spoke with an unheard-of unreserved, and clearly not a single one of the participants was in bondage to semblance. In respect of its purpose the meeting must be described as a failure (though even now in my heart it is still not a certainty that it had to be a failure); the irony of the situation was that we arranged the final discussion for the middle of August, and in the course of events the group was soon broken up. Nevertheless, in the time that followed, not one of the participants doubted that he shared in a triumph of the interhuman.

One more point must be noted. Of course it is not necessary for all who are joined in a genuine dialogue actually to speak; those who keep silent can on occasion be especially important. But each must be determined not to withdraw when the course of the conversation makes it proper for him to say what he has to say. No one, of course, can know in advance what it is that he has to say; genuine dialogue cannot be arranged beforehand. It has indeed its basic order in itself from the beginning, but nothing can be determined, the course is of the spirit, and some discover what they have to say only when they catch the call of the spirit (Buber 1953c: 79–80).

Here again Buber has told this story without admitting that he himself was soon to be among those advocating war. But again it must be emphasised that Buber was only temporarily a proponent of war and that the insight gained from his personal failure led him to oppose dialogue and war in his philosophical thinking. So with the help of Landauer's severe criticism Buber came back two years later to his cherished Jewish motto, 'Not by might but by spirit' (Friedman 1982: 193).

Now we can deduce some further elements of true dialogue from the experience of the Forte Circle. The partners should turn to each other with truthfulness and should express themselves without reserve. Even very controversial views will always be judged with respect and understanding on the basis of truth. Furthermore, it is not necessary for every participant in true dialogue to speak, or speak much. But one should be able to respond in the presence of the other when addressed. No participant knows in advance

what his words will be; genuine dialogue has to be spontaneous and cannot be prepared beforehand.

What did Hammarskjöld do with these elements of Buber's philosophy of dialogue? How did he interpret and use them for his political sphere, the terrain of diplomacy? Are diplomatic negotiations even imaginable without intense preparation and the working-out of a tactical strategy beforehand?

The 'Signs' and the Mehé experience

In his letter of 17 August 1961 Hammarskjöld wrote that he had read *Between Man and Man* 'with reference also to the political sphere'. It is quite obvious that he was instantaneously relating the philosophy of dialogue of Buber to his everyday life as Secretary-General of the United Nations, where he had to deal with diplomacy and negotiation talks with states' representatives or conflicting partners of new emerging states, as in the Congo crisis which was at its peak when Hammarskjöld resumed contact with Buber. Nevertheless, Buber made only small and occasional references to the political sphere in his works on dialogue, which were primarily written not for the political sphere but for the social sphere.

Thus, when Hammarskjöld approved what Buber wrote on 'Signs' it is very likely that he was reading it with special reference to his own situation within the political sphere. 'The Signs' is the title of a section in Buber's text 'Dialogue' (Buber 1929: 10–13), the sequel to *I and Thou* in the canon of his writings on dialogue philosophy – and the first text published in *Between Man and Man*. Here, Buber states that in contemporary

times men are not aware of the signs when they are addressed by the other for dialogue. They do not see, feel, observe these signs. They lack presence and attentiveness, because they live in an armour:

Each of us is encased in an armour whose task is to ward off signs. Signs happen to us without respite, living means being addressed, we would need only to present ourselves and to perceive. But the risk is too dangerous for us, the soundless thunderings seem to threaten us with annihilation, and from generation to generation we perfect the defence apparatus... Each of us is encased in an armour which we soon, out of familiarity, no longer notice. There are only moments which penetrate it and stir the soul to sensibility (Buber 1929: 10-11).

Signs are not something extraordinary; they address a person within the realms of daily life. But men have, in their armour, turned off their receivers most of the time. Nonetheless, signs signal what is happening in the world:

What occurs to me addresses me. In what occurs to me the world-happening addresses me. Only by sterilizing it, removing the seed of address from it, can I take what occurs to me as a part of the world-happening which does not refer to me. The interlocking sterilized system into which all this only needs to be dovetailed is man's titanic work. Mankind has pressed speech too into the service of this work (Buber 1929: 11).

Hammarskjöld undoubtedly rediscovered here within a philosophical concept the common ground he had found with Buber on the causes of the present 'Wall of Dis-

trust' within Cold-War political and diplomatic discourse. The representatives of the superpowers wear their armour and, thus, cannot read the signs of a real address, of true intention of dialogue. Buber went on already to make parallels between 'signs' and 'questions'. He explained what he meant by being addressed:

...it is said into my very life; it is no experience that can be remembered independently of the situation, it remains the address of that moment and cannot be isolated, it remains the question of a questioner and will have its answer⁴⁶. (It remains the question. For that is the other great contrast between all the busyness of interpreting signs and the speech of signs which I mean here: this speech never gives information or appeasement) (Buber 1929: 12).⁴⁷

As in *I and Thou*, Buber illustrated in 'Dialogue' this major task of recognising the signs of being addressed by a particular experience, but this time a negative experience. This example is given in the section 'A Conversation', immediately following the section 'The Signs'. It concerns an experience where Buber missed to read the signs. This experience

...was brought home to me by an everyday event, an event of judgement, judging that sentence from closed lips and an unmoved glance such as the ongoing course of things loves to pronounce.

46 The English translation is not very precise here. In the German original it is clear that the the questioner is looking for an answer, not that he will definitely get an answer (Buber 1954/1962/1984: 156).

47 The brackets are Buber's.

What happened was no more than that one forenoon, after a morning of 'religious' enthusiasm, I had a visit from an unknown young man, without being there in spirit. I certainly did not fail to let the meeting be friendly, I did not treat him any more remissly than all his contemporaries who were in the habit of seeking me out about this time of day as an oracle that is ready to listen to reason. I conversed attentively and openly with him – only I omitted to guess the questions which he did not put. Later, not long after, I learned from one of his friends – he himself was no longer alive – the essential content of these questions; I learned that he had come to me not casually, but borne by destiny, not for a chat but for a decision. He had come to me, he had come in this hour. What do we expect when we are in despair and yet go to a man? Surely a presence by means of which we are told that nevertheless there is meaning (Buber 1929: 13–14).

Again, Buber recounts the example in a very mysterious manner, with no names, no further information about the background or what actually happened to the young man, and omitting his own personal involvement. Again, it was an experience at the beginning of World War I, the period when Buber made one of the biggest mistakes of his life by advocating war on behalf of German nationalism (and by calling on Jews living in Germany to participate). Like many writers, poets and artists of expressionism, some existential mystics like Buber were also suddenly attracted by war as a means of liberating themselves from the so-called degeneration of society. Buber is not very courageous here in deleting the background. This is notwithstanding the fact that the encounter with the young man was part of Buber's *Umkehr* – turning away from his warmonger

position. The young man he mentioned had a name, Mehé, and the encounter with him happened in July 1914. Friedman tells the story as follows:

About this time...Buber was given to hours of mystic ecstasy. The illegitimacy of this division of his life into the everyday and a 'beyond' where illumination and rapture held without time or sequence was brought to Buber by 'an event of judgement' in which closed lips and an unmoved glance pronounced the sentence (Friedman 1982: 187–188).

Buber didn't read the signs of his encounter with Mehé. Later, he learned from a friend that Mehé had died; but why, under what circumstances? Mehé came to Buber not for a chat, but with a question. He had to decide whether or not to go to war if called up; that is, whether or not to love life:

The decision was one of life or death. But not in the sense that many assumed. Mehé did not commit suicide, as some commentators have asserted. Rather he died at the front in the First World War, as Buber himself wrote me, 'out of that kind of despair that may be defined partially as "no longer opposing one's own death".' Even in a psychologising age such as ours, the difference between actual suicide and such despair should be evident. The 'something monstrous that was getting ready to consume history and mankind' is the qualitatively different era that began with the First World War, continued with the Second, and outstripped imagination in the Nazi extermination camps, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the 'Gulag Archipelago'. In such situations those who do not fight wholeheartedly against their death

will certainly be killed, whereas those who do *might* remain alive... Buber experienced this event as a judgement and responded to it with a 'conversion' which changed his whole life. Buber's feeling of guilt was not based on any illusion of omnipotence, as if he *should* have been able to remove Mehé's despair no matter what... In Mehé's case what made Buber personally guilty in the exact sense in which he himself later defined existential guilt was that he withheld himself, that he did not respond as a whole person to the claim of the situation... This withholding himself did not arise through any conscious decision or wilful detachment but through a habitual way of life which removed him from the everyday to a 'spiritual' sphere which had no connection with it... he still was not 'there' for Mehé, who had come to him in that hour. It is not that he did not *say* the right thing but that he failed to make real, insofar as was up to him, the possibility of genuine dialogue that that hour offered (Friedman 1982: 188-189).

Thus, out of this negative experience, Buber learnt lessons. When he realised, some years later what he had done, this reflection contributed to his recovery from a pro-war position and led to a rejection of mysticism in an isolated, individual manner of self-denial, without connection to the other. Buber wrote thus in 'Dialogue':

Since then I have given up the 'religious' which is nothing but the exception, extraction, exaltation, ecstasy; or it has given me up. I possess nothing but the everyday out of which I am never taken. The mystery is no longer disclosed, it has escaped or it has made its dwelling here where everything happens as it happens. I know no

fullness but each mortal hour's fullness of claim and responsibility (Buber 1929: 14).

Thus, here we have an example of what Hammarskjöld wrote in his letter to Buber on reading the 'signs' when a person is addressed, as well as the 'Single One and his responsibility'. I think, Hammarskjöld could easily transfer the necessity to be present and aware in encounters within diplomacy, the necessity to read the 'signs' in the political sphere – although for Buber the Mehé experience helped an *Umkehr* where he turned away from an isolated, individual inner mysticism, which lies at the core of Hammarskjöld's own religious philosophy of mysticism as depicted in *Markings*.

'Responsibility' and 'conscience' in Buber's 'The Question to the Single One'

It is no surprise, then, that the follow-up text Buber wrote on his philosophy of dialogue, 'The Question to the Single One' (Buber 1936), was a critique of the individualist philosophies of Max Stirner (1806-1856) and Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855). In this critique, Buber challenged the modern interpretation of man as an isolated individual. Within this interpretation the individual always seeks a solitary relationship with God, as is the case with Kierkegaard's philosophy and biography. Thus, modern individualist philosophy neglects the relational character of the human being, symbolised in Kierkegaard's rejection of his possible marriage with Regine Olsen. For Buber, who embraced a personal, dialogic philosophy, a relationship with God is inseparable from the relationship with fellow human beings, thus

God can only be found through relations with human beings and not by isolating the Single One from these relations. Whether this interpretation of Kierkegaard by Buber is right or wrong is not of primary interest here.⁴⁸ We just have to consider the fact that Hammarskjöld obviously didn't reject the book because of Buber's critique of the mystical essentialism of Kierkegaard, which seemed to be close to Hammarskjöld's own concept of faith hitherto. Nonetheless, what Hammarskjöld hinted at in his letter of 17 August 1961 were passages of the book not necessarily connected with the parts where Buber criticised Kierkegaard.

When Hammarskjöld mentioned the 'Single One and his responsibility, with reference also to the political sphere', I am quite sure that he was referring to a section in Buber's 'The Question to the Single One', entitled 'The Single One in Responsibility' (Buber 1936: 65-71). Here, Buber elaborates on the relationship between community and personal responsibility. We know from the discussion of the first phase of the encounter between Buber and Hammarskjöld how important community was to Buber, whether the community of the Kibbutz or the larger community of the Jewish Nation. My view is that in the following passage he was thinking merely of the latter. Yes, Buber was a kind of Jewish nationalist, but he adopted a unique, pluralistic and very moderate nationalism without letting individual responsibility be subordinated. That is why he first describes in this text the fact that

the community to which a man belongs does not usually express in a unified and unambiguous way what it considers to be right and what not right in a given situation. It consists of more or less visible groups, which yield to a man interpretations of destiny and of his task which are utterly different yet all alike claim absolute authenticity. Each knows what benefits the community, each claims your unreserved complicity for the good of the community (Buber 1936: 67).

Now comes into play what Hammarskjöld might have called 'the reference to the political sphere':

Political decision is generally understood to-day to mean joining such a group. If this is done then everything is finally in order, the time of deciding is over. From then on one has only to share in the group's movements... The group has relieved you of your political responsibility. You feel yourself answered for in the group; you are permitted to feel it (Buber 1936: 67).

But this is exactly what Buber rejects. For him it is a negation of the I. The I within the I-You relationship is as important as the You. In other words: The You can be a person, but can also be God speaking through the individual *conscience*. For Buber, God is concerned with the entirety of all relationships; life within a group cannot be separated from life without that group or even demand that God is only valid without that group. That would render all dialogical I-You relationships within the group irrelevant and run counter to the notion of an all-embracing as well as all-in-between presence of God. Buber called that a curtailment of God's realm:

48 There are scholars who think Buber's criticism of Kierkegaard denies some reverse tendencies and that there are possible bridges that could be built from Kierkegaard to Buber, see for example Henting (2002).

The relation of faith to the one Present Being is perverted into semblance and self-deceit if it is not an all-embracing relation. 'Religion' may agree to be one department of life besides others which like it are independent and autonomous – it has thereby already perverted the relation of faith (Buber 1936: 67–68).

Thus, the Single One is in constant dialogue with persons from his group or community as well as with God. In a given situation where the Single One is addressed, and called upon to respond, he cannot follow solely the rules of the group. That, precisely, is the individual responsibility of the Single One:

Certainly the relation of faith is no book of rules which can be looked up to discover what is to be done now, in this very hour. I experience what God desires of me for this hour – so far as I do experience it – not earlier than *in* the hour... My group cannot relieve me of this responsibility, I must not let it relieve me of it; if I do I pervert my relation of faith, I cut out of God's realm of power the sphere of my group. But it is not as though the latter did not concern me in my decision – it concerns me tremendously... I may before all have to do justice to it, yet not as a thing in itself, but before the Face of God; and no programme, no tactical resolution, no command can tell me how I, as I decide, have to do justice to my group before the Face of God (Buber 1936: 68).

The first two sentences in this quotation help explain why the great social scientist of Hasidic tradition, Gershom Scholem, called Buber a 'religious anarchist' and his philos-

ophy 'religious anarchism'⁴⁹. Buber rejects here the Jewish religious law in the sense of a presupposed order or ethical norm to be blindly followed in a given situation of existential decision. Buber, however, is totally concentrated on the present moment and does not rely on norms because for him these norms have become mere rituals; they have been institutionalised and thus lack life and creativity:

That means: the presence of the encounter breaks through or undermines the rules provided by religion or social institutions for the relations to God respectively between man and man. Indeed, they challenge the codifying institutions themselves (Reichert 2002: 25).

However, the decision that demands an encounter, which has to be taken in the presence of the other and not by relying on prescribed norms, was not meant to be ethically arbitrary. There is a place, according to Buber, where decision is made, it is an inner place and it is called *conscience*:

He [who is addressed in a decisive situation] may even hold firm with all his force to the 'interest' of the group – till in the last confrontation with reality a finger, hardly to be perceived, yet never to be neglected, touches it. It is not the 'finger of God', to be sure; we are not permitted to expect that, and therefore there is not

49 Gershom Scholem, here quoted by Reichert (2002: 26). The article by Scholem that the quote comes from is 'Martin Bubers Deutung des Chassidismus', in Scholem, Gershom (1997) *Judaica 1*, Frankfurt-am-Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, sixth edition, pp. 165–206, especially p. 197.

the slightest assurance that our decision is right in any but a personal way... The finger I speak is just that of the 'conscience'... I point to the unknown conscience in the ground of being... The certainty produced by this conscience is of course only a personal certainty; it is uncertain certainty; but what is here called person is the very person who is addressed and who answers (Buber 1936: 69).

Buber's recourse to a concept of 'conscience' showed that even in the presence of a given situation, the decision to be made cannot be devoid of ethical behaviour. There are always preliminary ethical decisions that shape 'conscience'. What is simply meant by this is that the ethical decision has to be renewed in each different situation. Thomas Reichert pointed to these ethical decisions:

Apparently, by uttering the basic word I-Thou, there have nonetheless been made pre-decisions about the activity to envisage, resulting from the presence and the recognition of the other and the way of being self, for example that one cannot torture the other, or murder him, or disrespect him as a human being (Reichert 2002: 31).

Finally, Buber summarised:

I say, therefore, that the Single One, that is, the man living in responsibility, can make even his political decisions properly only from that ground of his being at which he is aware of the event as divine speech to him; and if he lets the awareness of this ground be strangled by his group he is refusing to give God an actual reply (Buber 1936: 69-70).

Buber concluded this chapter with a vision of the 'crossfront' that we know already from 'The Validity and Limitation of the Political Principle' in *Pointing the Way* (Buber 1953b):

What I am speaking of has nothing to do with 'individualism'...I consider the human person to be the irremovable central place of the struggle between the world's movement away from God and its movement towards God. This struggle takes place to-day to an uncannily large extent in the realm of public life, of course not between group and group but within each group... Only those who are bound and free in this way can still produce what can truly be called community... His responsible decision will thus at times be opposed to, say, a tactical decision of his group. At times he will be moved to carry the fight for the truth, the human, uncertain and certain truth which is brought forward by his deep conscience, into the group itself, and thereby establish or strengthen an inner front in it. This can be more important for the future of our world than all fronts that are drawn today between groups and between associations of groups; for this front, if it is everywhere upright and strong, may run as a secret unity across all groups (Buber 1936: 70).

What was Hammar skjöld referring to when he talked about the 'questions'?

There is one other notion that Hammar skjöld mentioned in his letter of 17 August 1961: 'the "questions" and the response'. It is not absolutely clear to me to what text in

Between Man and Man Hammarskjöld was referring to here. As I see it, there are two possibilities. The last and very decisive section of Buber's 'The Question to the Single One' (Buber 1936) is called 'The Question' (but in the singular, not in the plural), whereas the last text in Buber's *Between Man and Man*, 'What is Man?', a series of lectures he gave at the Hebrew University beginning in 1938 (the first book edition in Hebrew was published in 1942), deals with the four anthropological 'questions' (plural) of Kant: (1) What can I know; (2) What ought I to do?; (3) What may I hope?; (4) What is man? It is possible to add the quest for 'response' to both of them. Hammarskjöld may have been referring more to the last chapter of 'The Question to the Single One', because he mentioned the topic at the same time as mentioning the topic of the 'Single One and his responsibility'; moreover, the need for a 'responsible response' (Buber 1936: 80) was expressed at the beginning of this essay. On the other hand, 'What is Man?' has also been related to Buber's writings on dialogue, although it constitutes more of an anthropological journey through philosophical history, and despite the fact that this text was not included in the German compilation of his works on dialogue, *Die Schriften über das dialogische Prinzip* (Buber 1954/1962/1984). Buber himself said in his preface to the 1948 German edition, *Das Problem des Menschen* that he wanted the major works on dialogue to be classified historically with 'What is man?' and set aside from his contemporary theories (Buber 1948b: 5).

In the first paragraph of his letter of 17 August 1961, Hammarskjöld already mentions

having read 'parts of "Was ist der Mensch"'⁵⁰. Unfortunately, there is no hint as to which parts Hammarskjöld meant. Thus, in the following we will deal with just two chapters of 'What is man?' that very possibly chimed with Hammarskjöld's most urgent concerns.

Buber's chapter on 'The Question'

But let us start with the first possibility: the last chapter of 'The Question to the Single One', called 'The Question'. Here, Buber discussed the contemporary crisis of man in relation to the person as well as to truth by taking up the necessity of decision in a given situation with the help of a person's 'conscience', which we discussed above in relation to the topic of the responsibility of the Single One. But this freedom of decision was actually threatened, especially before and in 1936 when Buber wrote the text while still living in the Germany of the Nazis.⁵¹ It was threatened by what Buber calls collectivisation:

The question by which the person and the truth have become questionable to-day is the question to the Single One. The person has become questionable through being collectivized (Buber 1936: 80).

⁵⁰ Hammarskjöld spoke in his letter of the German title 'Was ist der Mensch?' for this text comprising lectures by Buber during the summer term of the Hebrew University in its first year of existence, 1938. But the German publication of these lectures had a slightly different title, *Das Problem des Menschen* (The Problem of Man), and was not published before 1948; see Buber (1948).

⁵¹ After coming under much pressure from Nazi Germany Buber moved to Palestine in 1938, only a short time before the November pogrom in which his house and furniture in Heppenheim were destroyed.

During the decades around the turn of the century, Buber continued, there had been a fight against the Nietzschean concept of an arbitrary, self-centred I, which had led to the recognition of being bound 'to a people, to a family, to a society, to a vocational group, to a companionship in convictions' (Buber 1936: 80). But now, in the 1930s, this had gone off in a seriously wrong direction, according to Buber:

But it came about that a tendency of a quite different origin and nature assumed power over the new insights, which exaggerated and perverted the perception of bonds into a doctrine of serfdom. Primacy is ascribed here to a collectivity⁵². The collectivity receives the right to hold the person who is bound to it bound in such a way that he ceases to have complete responsibility. The collectivity becomes what really exists, the person becomes derivatory. In every realm which joins him to the whole he is to be excused a personal response (Buber 1936: 80).

Buber drew the conclusion in relation to truth, in the sense that this dispense of the personal response corrupts truth:

The truth, on the other hand, has become questionable through being politicized (Buber 1936: 81).

Buber now elaborated in a few paragraphs on the 'sociological doctrine of the age', which was guilty of contributing to this process of dispossessing the individual from the respon-

sibility for human truth. So instead of Max Stirner's saying 'True is what is Mine' (arbitrary), the collective says today: 'True is what is Ours' (politicised). Buber concluded:

But in order that man may not be lost there is need of persons who are not collectivized, and of truth which is not politicized.

There is need of persons, not merely 'representatives' in some sense or other, chosen or appointed, who exonerate the represented of responsibility, but also 'represented' who on no account let themselves be represented with regard to responsibility... That man may not be lost there is need of the person's responsibility to truth in his historical situation. There is need of the Single One who stands over against all being which is present to him – and thus also over against the body politic – and guarantees all being which is present to him – and thus also the body politic (Buber 1936: 82).

Hammar skjöld may well have seen a connection with his 'political sphere' here, but this might also have been a misconception, in great part due to an inappropriate translation of the German expression 'öffentliches Wesen' as 'body politic'⁵³. But then again, Hammar skjöld may have read this passage as another early version of the 'crossfront' concept elaborated above in the discussion on the first part of his encounter with Buber.

⁵² When talking of 'collectivity', Buber was always thinking of big collectives like states or nation states, that is nations without an inner dialogical structure of different groups.

⁵³ As a translator of German origin, I am not quite satisfied with the use of 'body politic' for the German expression 'öffentliches Wesen' here. Buber does not mean only the political sphere when talking of 'öffentliches Wesen', but is also referring to society and the discussions within the social sphere as opposed to the political sphere.

Buber's questions in 'What is Man?'

Now let us turn to the second possibility. There is a high probability that we can identify more precisely the 'parts of "Was ist der Mensch?"' that Hammarskjöld mentioned in his letter of 17 August 1961 without giving a concrete hint of which parts he meant. As there are only two chapters where Buber did not go into more detail on the views of certain specific philosophers (Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Feuerbach, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Husserl, Heidegger, Scheler) in respect of the four anthropological questions posed by Kant (of which the fourth is 'What is man?'), I propose to concentrate on the first part of the chapter entitled 'The Crisis and its Expression' and on the last chapter of the text, 'Prospect'.

In the 'The Crisis and its Expression' we find an early philosophical version of the more concrete analysis of contemporary crisis that Hammarskjöld had read two years before in *Pointing the Way* (1957). The fact that this early version had been written as far back as 1938 shows that Buber did not regard the fascist decades as an isolated crisis but as a continuum that began with World War I and stretched far into the post-World-War-II period.

According to Buber, the first reason for the contemporary crisis was a sociological one:

It is the increasing decay of the old organic forms of the direct life of man with man. By this I mean communities which quantitatively must not be too big to allow the men who are connected by them to be brought together ever anew and set in a direct relation with one another, and

which qualitatively are of such a nature that men are ever anew born into them or grow into them, who thus understand their membership not as the result of a free agreement with others but as their destiny and as a vital tradition. Such forms are the family, union in work, the community in village and in town (Buber 1938b: 157).

Thus, Hammarskjöld found here, in short, a summary of the more detailed *Paths in Utopia*, which he apparently never read and which has been discussed above in section on the first phase of their encounter. Some anarchist interpretations of Buber (for example, that of French libertarian sociologist Michael Löwy [Löwy 2001: 37–38]) rightly connect these segments of 'What is man?' to similar, but more extended and detailed passages in *Paths in Utopia*.⁵⁴ Moreover, in his analysis of 'What is man?', Löwy pointed to the use of an old Jewish cultural image by Buber when elaborating on the reasons for the contemporary crisis. This image is a man-made artificial monster, the 'Golem', which was believed to be possessed by an evil power (Löwy 2001: 37), a coldness without soul. It was a clay figure made by a Rabbi to prevent attacks on Jews, but ends up destroying or being destroyed by the Rabbi; the Golem could only destroy or be destroyed⁵⁵:

The second factor can be described as one of history of the spirit, or better, of the soul... I should like to call this peculiarity

54 Löwy also published a study of Jewish messianism and libertarian thought; see Löwy, Michael, *Erlösung und Utopie. Jüdischer Messianismus und libertäres Denken*, Berlin: Karin Kramer Verlag.

55 This explanation comes from a note by the translator of *Between Man and Man*, Walter Kaufmann. It is note number 14 in Buber (1955: 208).

of the modern crisis man's lagging behind his works. Man is no longer able to master the world which he himself brought about: it is becoming stronger than he is, it is winning free of him, it confronts him in an almost elemental independence, and he no longer knows the word which could subdue and render harmless the golem he has created (Buber 1938: 158).

There were three realms where man was lagging behind his works, Buber said here. Firstly he made a critique of modern machinery. Although Buber was not anti-modern but advocated a future re-structuring of society, necessarily different from what has been before, nevertheless for Löwy Buber's critique was a romantic protest against modern capitalist-industrial civilisation (Löwy 2001: 38). So Buber wrote about technology that machines, originally invented in order to serve men in their work were now subordinating men to their service; they were no longer tools, extensions of men's arms, but men had become their extension. The second realm was the market economy, where the production and utilisation of goods 'spread out beyond man's reach and withdrew [themselves] from his command' (Buber 1938: 158). Thirdly, Buber pointed to the political sphere. There, World War I had exposed men to unleashed powers, the use of gas as a weapon for example, that exceeded all human purposes and brought unimaginable extermination to both sides:

Man faced the terrible fact that he was the father of demons whose master he could not become (Buber 1938: 158).

It is not too difficult to extend this analysis to the Cold War situation and the nuclear

threat Hammarskjöld was confronted with at the beginning of the 1960s in the United Nations, which eventually led to the Cuban missile crisis after his death.

The other part of 'What is man?' that Hammarskjöld might have been referring to in his letter of 17 August 1961 is the last chapter, entitled 'Prospect'. Here, at the end of his presentation of the history of anthropological philosophy, Buber juxtaposed the traditions of individualism and collectivism in the face of the actual, contemporary situation, the historical apogee of fascism and national socialism in the 1930s:

In spite of all attempts at revival the time of individualism is over. Collectivism, on the other hand, is at the height of its development, although here and there appear single signs of slackening. Here the only way that is left is the rebellion of the person for the sake of setting free the relation with others (Buber 1938: 202).

Now, after these totalitarian ideologies, a 'third alternative' was about to emerge, according to Buber; this was the time of dialogue – not a revival of arbitrary individualism but encounters between mature and present individuals who are bound to their community but are not willing to give up their responsibility for decision. Thus, the essence of human life is neither individualism nor collectivism, neither I nor Thou, but a third sphere, and that is the 'Between' (with reference to the title of the American edition, *Between Man and Man*). It had a spiritual connection to Buber's belief that God is present in every personal encounter, between I and Thou. Buber explained the 'Between' in more detail in the last pages of the book:

I call this sphere...the sphere of 'between'. Though being realized in very different degrees, it is a primal category of human reality. This is where the genuine third alternative must begin... The view which establishes the concept of 'between' is to be acquired by no longer localizing the relation between human beings, as is customary, either within individual souls or in a general world which embraces and determines them, but in actual fact *between* them... In a real conversation (that is, not one whose individual parts have been preconcerted, but one which is completely spontaneous, in which each speaks directly to his partner and calls forth his unpredictable reply)...a real lesson...a real embrace...a real duel and not a mere game – in all these what is essential does not take place in each of the participants or in a neutral world which includes the two and all other things; but it takes place between them in the most precise sense, as it were in a dimension which is accessible only to them both (Buber 1938: 203–204).

Given this new perception of the 'Between', Buber described this third sphere – which for him also constituted the sphere of the divine – as the initial point of a philosophical turning point where neither the individual nor the collective would be the focus:

In the most powerful moments of dialogic, where in truth 'deep calls unto deep', it becomes unmistakably clear that it is not the wand of the individual or of the social, but of a third which draws the circle round the happening. On the far side of the subjective, on this side of the objective, on the narrow ridge, where *I* and *Thou* meet, there is the realm of 'between' (Buber 1938: 204).

After this Buber gave an answer to Kant's fourth question, 'What is Man?', which Hammarskjöld may have been referring to in his letter of 17 August 1961 when he wrote of 'the "questions" and the response'. At the end of the essay, Buber conceived that dialogue and the sphere of the 'Between' was his own response to Kant's question:

That essence of man which is special to him can be directly known only in a living relation... We may come nearer the answer to the question what man is when we come to see him as the eternal meeting of the One with the Other (Buber 1938: 205).

Was Hammarskjöld's intending to resign in September 1961?

In looking more closely at the topics that Hammarskjöld mentioned explicitly in his letter of 17 August 1961 after reading *Between Man and Man*, we rediscover early versions of topics that had been already discussed during their three personal meetings during the first phase of their encounter within a more obvious framework of current political matters. What was different was that this time, these topics were embedded in a more philosophical approach to dialogue. Hence we suppose that, again, Hammarskjöld had been reading these texts and signalling his will to occupy himself with the tremendous task of translating *Ich und Du* from German into Swedish, in order to draw directly on what he read – 'with reference also to the political sphere' (Hammarskjöld) – with the purpose of improving his practice of silent or quiet diplomacy. But was that really his purpose? We may experience quite a surprise in the following.

When Dag Hammarskjöld resumed contact with Buber, the Congo crisis with which he was concerned was not only far advanced but was also going in a dangerous direction. Hammarskjöld's skills were, of course, still badly needed, and diplomatic negotiations with the Katanga secessionists under Tschombé were still possible. But the danger of real entanglement by UN peacekeeping troops in warlike engagements with secessionist Katanga was getting more and more imminent. That is why Hammarskjöld flew to Ndola at great personal risk on 17 September 1961, a journey from which he did not arrive alive.⁵⁶ But had Hammarskjöld already realised that the intervention of UN peacekeeping troops in the Congo was doomed to disaster? What did Hammarskjöld mean by hinting, during the last weeks of his life, at a possible resignation from his function as Secretary-General after the Congo crisis? Brian Urquhart, then a staff member of the United Nations Secretariat, a close and confidential friend of Hammarskjöld's and one of those entrusted with administering the deployment of peacekeeping forces to the Congo, wrote of Hammarskjöld's penultimate voyage to the Congo, just after his renewal of contact with Buber:

In early September, Hammarskjöld decided to make another visit to the Congo. He did this in the belief that he must personally try to resolve the Katanga secession problem, which would otherwise poison the forthcoming session of the General Assembly as it had the pre-

vious one. His intention was to bring Prime Minister Adoula⁵⁷ and Tschombe together in an act of national reconciliation. I believe that he then intended to resign from his post as Secretary-General (Urquhart 1991: 174).

Hammarskjöld repeated this intention in early September 1961 to Mongi Slim, a possible successor as Secretary-General, as well as to Adnan Pachachi, the Iraqi ambassador to the UN. To the former, Hammarskjöld said he would resign only if his mission to solve the Congo crisis failed; to the latter he said in a more general way that he would resign anyway after the Congo crisis (Urquhart 1984: 565).

Translation problems and Hammarskjöld's new view of I and Thou

We should keep this intention in mind when reading the continuation of the correspondence between Hammarskjöld and Buber. Just before leaving on this penultimate voyage to the Congo, Hammarskjöld answered Buber's letter of 23 August 1961, in which the latter had sent *Ich und Du* and made his proposal that Hammarskjöld should translate his most difficult work. Hammarskjöld responded on 26 August:

Yesterday I got your kind letter and also the last German edition of 'Ich und Du'

⁵⁶ For a full overview of the Congo crisis of 1960–62, involving the United Nations peacekeeping troops in direct warlike battles during the history of their existence, see especially the impressively detailed memoirs of Brian Urquhart (1984: 389–520 and 545–589; and 1991: 145–188).

⁵⁷ In midsummer 1961 Hammarskjöld managed to install a new prime minister after the murder of Lumumba and the Mobutu's first putsch in the Congo. The Congolese parliament was not yet completely out-manoeuvred and elected as president the moderate and sensible Cyrille Adoula, as someone who appeared prepared and willing to take up negotiations with Katanga (Urquhart 1991: 174).

with the postscript. I am certain that I am reading you correctly if I see reflected in your reply a silent 'Aufruf' that I try a translation of this keywork, as decisive in its message as supremely beautiful in its form. This decides the issue and, if I have your permission, I shall do it even if it may take some time.⁵⁸

This was the first surprise, because apparently Hammarskjöld instantly took up Buber's proposal, notwithstanding the constraints of his office which he had referred to in his letter of 17 August. Had he already made up his mind to resign after the Congo crisis? It is not quite clear how decided he was about this perspective at that time, but things had been deteriorating very fast in the Congo for quite some time already, and they had become so bad that even one of his other closest friends, Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965), had written frankly to Hammarskjöld in a letter on 7 March:

As an old African, I hold the opinion that there will be a minor death toll, if one lets the Africans fight their vendettas against each other by their own, without outer interference.⁵⁹

This letter led to a considerable cooling of the friendship between Hammarskjöld and Schweitzer. However, even if Hammarskjöld's intention of soon resigning as Secretary-General was not really serious – but then it would have made no sense to tell

it to Slim and the others – Hammarskjöld would probably have completed the translation of *Ich und Du* within his scheduled time of two months (!) for finishing a first version (Urquhart 1984: 41). It is amazing to see how Hammarskjöld could finish the most complicated translations alongside the tremendous amount of work he was engaged in as Secretary-General. In 1960, he had already completed the translation of Djuna Barnes' *The Antiphon*⁶⁰ and in summer of the same year he translated the poem *Chronique* by Saint-John Perse⁶¹, about whom Hammarskjöld himself, according to Urquhart, admitted that '[his] French was so complex as to make translation practically hopeless' (Urquhart 1984: 39).

We have already learnt that the second English translator of *Ich und Du*, Walter Kaufmann, thought, at first view, that Buber's main philosophical book would be untranslatable. Apparently, Hammarskjöld, even in the midst of the Congo crisis, saw this tremendous task rather as a personal challenge than a burden which he should refrain from taking on. Thus, Hammarskjöld continued in his letter of 26 August to Buber:

I am, in fact, today getting in touch with the main Swedish publishing firm asking them whether they would accept my of-

58 KBS DHS, Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Martin Buber, 26 August 1961.

59 Letter from Albert Schweitzer to Dag Hammarskjöld, 7 March 1961, quoted by Fröhlich (2002: 184). For more information on the relationship of Hammarskjöld and Schweitzer see Fröhlich (2002: 170-192).

60 Djuna Barnes (1892-1982) was an US-American novelist and playwright. Her last play was *The Antiphon* (1958), dealing with an incestuous relation between child and mother.

61 Saint-John Perse, a pseudonym for Alexis Saint-Léger Léger (1887-1975), was a French diplomat and poet and had been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1960. There was an extended correspondence between Dag Hammarskjöld and the poet throughout the six years before Hammarskjöld's death. See for more information Marie-Noëlle Little (ed.), (2001), *The Poet and the Diplomat. The Correspondence of Dag Hammarskjöld and Alexis Léger*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

fer. When I have their reply, I shall write to you again in order to have your final reaction and so that you might ask your agents to get in touch with the publisher for the necessary formal arrangements.⁶²

At the end of the letter, Hammarskjöld expressed his hope of resuming thereby ‘a broadened and intensified contact’ with Buber.

The main Swedish publishing firm belonged – and remains today – to the Bonnier family. Hammarskjöld conferred at various times with different members of the family on matters to do with his translations and publishing projects: Albert, Jytte, and Gerhard Bonnier as well as Georg Svensson, another director of the publishing house. In fact, on the same day that he replied to Buber, Hammarskjöld wrote a letter to Jytte Bonnier. And here we have another big surprise, with special regard to the fact that *Ich und Du* has always been regarded all over the world as a philosophical work that explains and illuminates all aspects of an encounter and a dialogical situation:

You may know that for quite some time I have played with the idea to translate some of the key parts of Martin Buber’s work. It is at least as exacting from the point of view of form as Perse or Barnes, and in a sense German is worse than English or French. However, it has been a most challenging thought. Now Buber himself has, so to say, pushed me over the brink, as I have just received a letter from him which I may regard as a ‘call’ to me to translate ‘Ich und Du’ which of course is the culminating crystallisation of his mystical thought and, from the point of

view both of form and content, not only a key work in modern philosophy, but moreover one of the few great poems of this age. To such a ‘call’ I feel that I should respond, and for some time ahead I shall therefore, in odd hours, instead of reading, try to make this translation.⁶³

What is really striking here is the fact that Hammarskjöld did not think of the validity of such a translation for true dialogue in terms of improving the approach to diplomatic negotiation. Instead, he stressed the beauty of the form, the literary style of Buber – in contrast to many readers of the time, as attested by his English translator Walter Kaufmann. Hammarskjöld even went on to underline his admiration for the style:

A book like that one is the very opposite to ‘box office’, and I guess most publishers would look at it with considerable scepticism, especially as I would not like it published as a philosophical or theological work but as a work of pure literature. However, Buber is Buber, and while Mann and Hesse are well known in Sweden, Buber, as the third in some sense the greatest one in Germany of that generation, has been left aside. That may justify the publishing venture, and perhaps the name of the translator might add a few copies to the sale.⁶⁴

Hammarskjöld even ended the letter by expressing the additional intention of translating the Danish poet Paul La Cour⁶⁵ into

62 KBS DHS, Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Martin Buber, 26 August 1961.

63 KBS DHS, Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Jytte Bonnier, 26 August 1961.

64 Ibid.

65 Paul La Cour (1902–1956) was a Danish poet whose poetry changed with the mood of the times. After living in Paris in the 1920s, he brought modern influences into Danish literature. His reflections on art after World War II influenced other writers.

English and said, furthermore, that he envisaged translating Hermann Hesse's 'Morgenslandfahrt', describing this as 'another temptation of mine'⁶⁶. Apparently, he envisaged he would have enough time for these endeavours in the near future – after resigning from his office?

We note here first and foremost Hammarskjöld's characterisation of Buber's *I and Thou* as 'pure literature'. What did that mean? Was Hammarskjöld thinking of his aborted translation of Buber's early literary work, *The legend of Baal-Schem* (Buber 1907, 1956b)? Or was he unconsciously regretting his memorandum to the Swedish Academy in which he had proposed Buber for the Nobel Prize Peace Prize rather than for the Nobel Prize for Literature? And why did he not mention the importance of Buber's key work on the philosophy of dialogue for his work of diplomacy and negotiation in the ongoing Congo crisis and after, that is for the 'political sphere', as he had always done before? Did he not believe in that any longer? Did he seriously want to resign?

A further letter, written a fortnight later, 12 September 1961, to Georg Svensson of Bonnier's, confirms this impression that the 'political sphere' was no longer of central interest to Dag Hammarskjöld:

Buber's prose is exceedingly difficult and I shall have to make a first version which makes the sense crystal clear and a second version representing a maximum approximation to his intensely beauti-

ful, intensely personal, but also intensely Old-Testament-German prosody.

I may end by saying that this is really something I am very happy to do – also for the publicly unavowable reason that this translation in a certain sense is a personal declaration.⁶⁷

Thus, at this stage, Hammarskjöld definitely showed more interest in the mysticism and literary aspects of Buber's philosophy of dialogue than in its political implementation – which had still been his central interest when resuming contact with Buber after reading *Between Man and Man* – making his translation effort henceforth more than ever a 'personal declaration'. Did this amount to a kind of testimony that he would resign from his office as true dialogue no longer seemed possible to him within the diplomatic framework of the United Nations?

Hammarskjöld's recommendation of John Steinbeck to Buber

Before we try to answer this decisive question, we turn to the fact that there was an interlude in the letter exchange between Hammarskjöld and Buber concerning the US-American writer and novelist John Steinbeck (1902–1968), a friend and neighbour of Hammarskjöld's in New York⁶⁸, and also a regular visitor to Sweden and a per-

66 KBS DHS, Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Jytte Bonnier, 26 August 1961, Post-Scriptum. 'Morgenslandfahrt' can be translated as 'Oriental Voyage'. In this Post-Scriptum, Hammarskjöld also enquires about what works of Buber had already been translated into Swedish.

67 Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Georg Svensson, 12 September 1961, quoted here in Fröhlich (2002: 206, note 437).

68 The addresses of their private apartments in New York were 125 East 73rd Street for Hammarskjöld and 206 East 72nd Street for Steinbeck. Thus, they were living only one street apart.

sonal friend of the painter Bo Beskow⁶⁹ in Hagestad, who was painting portraits at that time of both Steinbeck and Hammarskjöld. Bo Beskow had known Steinbeck personally since the winter of 1936–37. Beskow also introduced Steinbeck to Hammarskjöld in 1953 (Hovde 1997: 98–99). Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962. The extensive correspondence between Hammarskjöld and Steinbeck shows their close relationship (Hovde 1997: 103–129), which was deepened by occasional dinner invitations when the Steinbeck family spent evenings with Hammarskjöld in his own apartment and by Hammarskjöld’s visits to the Steinbecks’ more distant and isolated property at Sag Harbor, Long Island. Eventually, Hammarskjöld even went so far as to send Buber a letter of recommendation about Steinbeck when the latter was planning a trip to Israel. This letter of Hammarskjöld’s to Buber was written on 5 September 1961 and was entirely dedicated to introducing Steinbeck to Buber:

As my friend, John Steinbeck, is going to visit your country, I wish to send with him my warm personal greetings. Of course, he is in no need of an introduction. Such an introduction is provided by ‘The Grapes of Wrath’, ‘Of Mice and Men’, and most recently by ‘The Winter of our Discontent’, not to mention his other works. He is, as you will know, one of those observers of life in our generation, who feel that its survival will depend on our ability to know ourselves and to stick to basic human values with the will to pay what it may cost. I know that you may have no time to receive him, but I

also know that he would be very happy if you could – and so would I.⁷⁰

Hammarskjöld had also sent letters of introduction concerning Steinbeck’s forthcoming trip to the Middle East to Abdel Nasser and David Ben-Gurion. Steinbeck had been in search of politicians in a position of authority, who brought ‘temperament and character’ to their offices, which were very rarely seen in Steinbeck’s view. Steinbeck wanted to find thereby natural leaders, ‘the truly moral man’ who could be trusted as not being opportunistic or corrupt (Hovde 1997: 99). On the same day that he wrote to Buber in Jerusalem (5 September), Hammarskjöld sent a letter to Steinbeck enclosing *Between Man and Man* and explicitly recommending the reading of ‘the first paper “Dialogue” and the last “What is Man?”’, which showed, by the way, a shift in Hammarskjöld’s focus of interest compared with his first letter to Buber referring to the book on 17 August 1961 – a shift towards the more historical dimension of the anthropological question, as well as to the community-oriented parts and the ‘Between’-philosophy in ‘What is Man?’. However, neither the vast three-volume biography of Buber by Maurice Friedman nor the 1100-page volume by Steinbeck’s biographer Jackson J. Benson (Benson 1984) makes any mention of Steinbeck visiting Buber in Israel in late 1961. Apparently, they never met.

Hammarskjöld at work on I and Thou on his last flight

The last letter Hammarskjöld sent to Buber was written on 12 September 1961, the day that Hammarskjöld left New York for his

69 Bo Beskow (1906–1989) studied art in Stockholm, Rome, Paris and Portugal. He was a painter and writer. His paintings used Christian motifs.

70 KBS DHS, Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Martin Buber, 5 September 1961. See also Hovde (1997: 129).

last and fatal journey to the Congo. Hammarskjöld informed Buber of the positive response he had received from the Bonnier publishers, this time from Albert Bonnier:

I have now received a letter from the Swedish publisher (Albert Bonnier, Sveavägen 56, Stockholm C) whom I approached regarding the translation of 'Ich und Du'. He tells me that they will be happy to publish such a translation and wish to get in touch with you regarding such practical matters as would have to be settled. He adds that he would be grateful if I would arrange for this contact.

I believe that the most practical way to proceed, provided that you confirm your agreement to the translation and its publication in Swedish, would be for me to ask them to address you directly; this unless you could indicate to me the agent with which they should deal...⁷¹

Buber received this more formal letter of Hammarskjöld's, on the procedure for the envisaged Swedish translation of *Ich und Du*, in Jerusalem only on 18 September 1961,

an hour after he had heard over the radio about the latter's death in the plane crash in the Congo. Thus the dialogue between the two men was a present reality from both sides even after Hammarskjöld's death (Friedman 1988: 318).

In his letter of October 1961, quoted above⁷², George Ivan Smith indicated that Hammar-

skjöld was talking to his colleagues about Buber right to the very end, but no longer about implementing parts of Buber's dialogue philosophy into his strategy for political encounter, diplomacy and negotiation:

By a series of chance I was not with him on his last trip to Africa. Dr. Linner⁷³ told me that before Dag boarded the aircraft, almost the last conversation he had with Linner concerned your work. He was translating some of it into Swedish while he was at Leopoldville and almost certainly in the aircraft on the way to Ndola. Linner said that the last words he remembered him saying before the aircraft took off referred to your work and to medieval mystics. 'For them', Dag said, 'love meant a surplus of energy and an overflowing of strength which filled them when they lived in true selflessness'...

Forgive my intrusion but I did feel that Dag would have wanted me to share with you this knowledge of how closely you and your work were with him at the very end of his life.⁷⁴

In this last quotation from Linner, Hammarskjöld's language was more that of his own mysticism in *Markings* (Hammarskjöld 1964) than Buber's dialogical approach. Whereas Hammarskjöld still used 'selflessness' in the sense of a renunciation of the self, for Buber it was a mature personality – the 'Single One', with an upright opinion and 'conscience' – that could serve best for a

71 KBS DHS, Dag Hammarskjöld, Letter to Martin Buber, 12 September 1961.

72 KBS DHS, George Ivan Smith, Letter to Martin Buber, beginning of October, 1961.

73 Dr. Sture Linner, Sweden, was the 'Chief in Office' of the United Nations Operations in the Congo (ONUC) from 1960-61.

74 KBS DHS, George Ivan Smith, Letter to Martin Buber, beginning of October, 1961.

personal encounter with the other in a dialogical situation. In the Congo, Hammarskjöld even discussed with Linner details of his translation and requested Linner to go through the typewritten draft pages he had already finished (Fröhlich 2002: 205–206).

At almost the same time as receiving Smith's letter Buber received another letter – on 5 October 1961 from Dag's nephew Knut Hammarskjöld, also about the draft translation:

Now that I have brought the body of my uncle Dag Hammarskjöld back from Africa, I regard it as my duty to report to you that among the few personal effects he had with him on his last flight were two texts (in German and English) as well as twelve typewritten pages of your *I and Thou*. The latter was the beginning of the first draft of his translation of your work into Swedish that he had completed shortly before his departure from New York.⁷⁵

Knut is confusing many things here. Hammarskjöld carried a German and English book version of *I and Thou* with him on his trip to the Congo, as well as a 12-page typewritten draft in Swedish, which he left in Leopoldville, and a further, seven-page handwritten draft, also in Swedish, very likely the continuation, which he took with him on his flight to Ndola and which was found in scattered pages at the site of the plane crash. Thus, it is clear from various sources that Hammarskjöld was working on the translation during his last flight (Fröhlich 2002: 206). Urquhart wrote:

Hammarskjöld's briefcase, which survived the crash intact, gives the only known detail of what went on in the aircraft during the flight. Hammarskjöld continued his translation of *Ich und Du*, his flowing script filling the pages of the yellow legal-size pad. The writing was firm and neat, and there were very few corrections (Urquhart 1984: 588).

Martin Buber responded very emotionally on 10 October 1961 to George Ivan Smith's letter:

I want to thank you for what you tell me in your letter and particularly for the information about Hammarskjöld's translating some of my book even at Leopoldville and it seems, even after it. This is a fact most dear to my heart. I had a letter from Bonnier's about his wish to bring the book into Swedish by finding another translator. In my answer to him I suggested to put at the head of the book the words: 'At the wish of Martin Buber this translation is dedicated to the memory of Dag Hammarskjöld, who planned to do it himself and began to work at it few days before his death.'⁷⁶

The Bonnier publishers kept their promise. The new translators were Margit and Curt Norell, and the dedication Buber requested appears on the first page of the publication, and has done ever since the first edition of the book in Swedish in 1962.⁷⁷

75 Knut Hammarskjöld: 'Knut Hammarskjöld to Martin Buber; Geneva, October 5, 1961', in Glatzer and Mendes Flohr (1991: 641–642).

76 KBS DHS, Martin Buber, Letter to George Ivan Smith, beginning of October, 1961.

77 See for example the current Swedish publication of Martin Buber (1990), *Jag och du*, reprint of the 1962 Bonnier edition, Ludvika: Dualis Förlag.

At the end of September 1961, an article in the Stockholm newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* had confirmed the plan to publish the translation of *I and Thou* by another translator as an act in honour of Hammarskjöld (Friedman 1988: 318). Only a few days later, on 1 October 1961, the *New York Times* published a similar article. It read:

When he died Sept. 18, Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld left an unfinished literary project that had occupied his mind even as he prepared to depart for the Congo. The project was a translation he had planned of a work by the contemporary Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, 'Ich und Du' ('I and Thou'). The day before he took off for Africa, Mr. Hammarskjöld wrote to Dr. Georg Svensson of Stockholm's leading publishing house, Bonnier's, that he planned to work on the translation in the months ahead and would have it completed by January. He wrote that he anticipated that the project would not be easy because it would be necessary to have Buber's meanings clear and to find just the right linguistic form for what he termed 'Buber's intensely beautiful, intensely personal and Old Testament German prose'. The letter to Dr. Svensson reflected Mr. Hammarskjöld's admiration for the Vienna-born Jewish philosopher, whose essays have a marked mystical element. The Secretary-General said that he wanted to do the translation because it would mean something of a personal declaration for him. He indicated that he had found that Buber's ideas often corresponded to his own...⁷⁸

On 22 October 1961, a front page story in the *New York Herald Tribune* predicted that the Nobel Prize for Literature would be awarded to Buber, in response to a 'final recommendation' by Hammarskjöld as expressed to the Bonnier family in his letters on the translation plan (Friedman 1988: 319). But again, and for the third time, Buber did not receive the award. The 1961 Prize for Literature was given to the Bosnian writer Ivo Andric. And the Peace Prize was awarded – posthumously, for the first and only time – to Dag Hammarskjöld.

In 1962 Buber gave the speech on the Swedish Radio, 'Memories of Hammarskjöld' (Buber 1962a), already quoted at the very beginning of this text on phase I of their encounter. Again, in 1963, Buber tried to give a Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Lecture at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, entitled 'Serving Spirit in the Realm of Power'. This lecture had been planned as part of a public series of about 30 distinguished lectures dedicated to the memory of Hammarskjöld on five continents. Each lecturer could choose a university in his country as his platform. Unfortunately, Buber's health did not permit him to give the lecture (Friedman 1988: 319).

78 KBS DHS, 'Translation of Work by Buber was planned by Hammarskjöld', copy of the article with no signature or hint of authorship, in *New York Times*, 1 October 1961.