



THE EXPANSION OF “LIFE”: ON MAX SCHELER’S POLITICS OF VALUES AND SUFFERING

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ABSTRACT

This article critically analyses Max Scheler’s conception of suffering and its relevance for his political texts. First, it traces the foundations of Scheler’s claim that all suffering has the meaning of sacrifice of “value-inferior” for “value-superior” in his axiological phenomenology of feelings based on *a priori* value-hierarchy. The article then analyses Scheler’s theory of intersubjectivity and situates his conception of suffering within it, paying particular attention to the role of the value-hierarchy in Scheler’s view of responsibility and solidarity. Further, the article examines the currently understudied political texts by Scheler, in which he explicitly justifies colonialism. In this regard, the article explores the relationship between Scheler’s axiological phenomenology and his colonialist politics, demonstrating that the race-based political commitments Scheler expresses in these texts are not incidental but structurally embedded in his philosophical system. Finally, the article considers Scheler’s post-WWI reflections on repentance, arguing that rather than marking a reassessment, they further reinforce the logic behind his philosophical system and its broader political implications.

Keywords: Max Scheler; Values; Phenomenology; Suffering; Colonialism.

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza críticamente la concepción del sufrimiento en Max Scheler y su relevancia para sus textos políticos. En primer lugar, reconstruye los fundamentos de la tesis scheleriana según la cual todo sufrimiento posee el sentido de un sacrificio de lo “inferior en valor” en favor de lo “superior en valor”, en el marco de su fenomenología axiológica de los sentimientos, basada en una jerarquía apriorística de valores. Luego, el artículo examina la teoría scheleriana de la intersubjetividad y sitúa en ella su concepción del sufrimiento, prestando especial atención al papel que desempeña la jerarquía de valores en su comprensión de la responsabilidad y la solidaridad. A continuación, el artículo estudia los textos políticos de Scheler - actualmente poco investigados - en los que este justifica explícitamente el colonialismo. En este sentido, el artículo explora la relación entre la fenomenología axiológica de Scheler y su política colonialista, demostrando que los compromisos políticos de base racial que Scheler expresa en estos textos no son incidentales, sino que se encuentran estructuralmente inscritos en su sistema filosófico. Finalmente, el artículo considera las reflexiones de Scheler posteriores a la Primera Guerra Mundial sobre el arrepentimiento, argumentando que, más que señalar una reevaluación, estas refuerzan la lógica que sostiene su sistema filosófico y sus implicaciones políticas más amplias.

Palabras clave: Max Scheler; Valores; Fenomenología; Sufrimiento; Colonialismo.

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INTRODUCTION

This text critically examines the thought of Max Scheler (1874–1928), a German philosopher prominent in phenomenological circles and widely known for his phenomenological axiology.² Scheler's philosophical writings drew ample inspiration from an array of philosophical literature, notably including, among others, Kant, Nietzsche, Brentano, Dilthey, and Husserl. The latter's *Logical Investigations* became a work of particular importance for Scheler, who participated in Göttingen Circle, consisting of proponents of "realist phenomenology" and "metaphysical realism" (see Salice 2025). Moreover, Scheler's interest was not limited to philosophy: his sustained readings of Darwinian and post-Darwinian biology, anthropology, and ethnography played a major role in his thinking.³

Thus, developing his phenomenological method and ethics with what he theorised as the "universal hierarchy of values" at its core, Scheler had a sustained sympathetic interest in eugenics and held a belief in the "polygenetic theory of humanity", writing on issues regarding biology, sociology, and politics. For a time between 1914 and 1918, Scheler held a post in the German office of war propaganda (Mader 1995; Davis, 2024). During and after that time, Scheler produced a number of socio-political texts in which he openly expressed his appreciations of colonialism and his race-based political commitments. Scheler's thought continues to exert influence on contemporary theories of emotions (see Drummond 2018; Cutting 2016), political theory (see Schneider, 2023; Davis & Steinbock 2018; Mann & Fenton 2017), and philosophical anthropology (see Yokoyama 2022; Weiss 1998), often cited without critical engagement with the race-based commitments embedded in his work.

The aim of this article is to analyse the structural alignment between Scheler's phenomenological axiology and his colonialist and racist allegiances expressed in his socio-political texts. In order to approach the subject, the article situates Scheler's notion of suffering within his

² In this respect, Z. Davis writes that "Max Scheler's contribution to the early development of phenomenology is second to only Edmund Husserl" (Davis 2012, 128).

³ For a biographical sketch of Scheler's career, see Davis & Steinbock (2024). For a discussion of Scheler's investigations into biology, particularly in his *Biologievorlesung* (1908/09), see Properzi (2021).

phenomenology of emotions. Tracing the foundations of Scheler's claim that all suffering has the meaning of sacrifice of "value-inferior" for "value-superior", the article examines the role of "values" in Scheler's postulation that particular emotions have "universal" meaning. The article then analyses Scheler's theory of intersubjectivity, paying particular attention to the role of the value-hierarchy in Scheler's view of responsibility and solidarity. Further, the article examines the currently understudied socio-political texts by Scheler, in which he justifies colonialism on the basis of his belief in "value-superiority" of what he calls the "bearers of European Spirit", whom he defines in strict racial terms. Exploring the relationship between Scheler's axiological phenomenology, his ethics, and his colonialist and racist politics, the article demonstrates that the race-based political allegiances expressed by Scheler are not incidental but structurally embedded in his philosophical system. Finally, the article considers Scheler's reflections on repentance and pacifism, written after the German defeat in the 1914-1918 war, arguing that rather than marking a reassessment, they further reinforce the logic behind his philosophical system and its broader political implications.

1. SUFFERING WITHIN SCHELER'S AXIOLOGICAL PHENOMENOLOGY

The most distinct account of suffering developed by Max Scheler can be found in his essay *Vom Sinn des Leidens*, the first version of which was published in *Frankfurter Zeitung* (1915),⁴ with the extended version published in *Krieg und Aufbau* (1916) and, later, in *Schriften zur Soziologie und Weltanschauungslehre* (1923). In the essay, Scheler interprets meanings attributed to suffering in previous theories and elaborates his own thesis: namely, that even if suffering can seem meaningless, all suffering has the meaning of sacrifice (Scheler 1963, 40; 42).⁵

⁴ I thank Reviewer 2 for pointing this out. The 20.06.1915 issue of *Frankfurter Zeitung* containing Scheler's text can be found here: <https://hwk1.hebis.de/hebis-ffm/periodical/pageview/1324806>.

⁵ Regarding Scheler's understanding of "historical" development of "ideas," Davis (2021) writes that "what is clear is that Scheler understands history to be a unified whole, a unity wherein the beginning remains to the end" (Davis 2021, 389). This, for Davis, means that "the past is thought historically through the present, through its continued effectiveness and meaning for the past and present" (Davis 2021, 389). However, according to Davis, while "Scheler shares with Hegel the conviction that there is an "idea" in history that develops over the life of a culture or people", "The course of history is not propelled by spirit alone, by an Idea there from the beginning" (Davis 2021, 390). This is because, Davis writes, "There are two factors responsible for the unfolding of history, the spiritual values and ideas on the one hand and the material or life forces on the other" (Davis 2021, 390).

Scheler's understanding of suffering is inalienable from his theory of axiological intentionality. Playing a disclosing role in his phenomenology of emotional life, intentionality immediately reveals, according to Scheler, a "value" borne by an object of emotional experience. Values, for him, are non-empirical, "*a priori*", and form a "universal" and invariable hierarchy. The latter is independent from objects in which values are intuited, as well as from individuals that intentionally intuit them (Scheler 1966, 44; 104-109 / Scheler 1973b, 22; 86-90). In this vein, Scheler postulates an unquestionable primacy of the invariable hierarchy of values not only in relation to individual emotions but establishes it to be regulatory in issues regarding intersubjectivity and ethics. He thus states that "the basic philosophical problem of all ethics [...] concerns the partition (*Einteilung*) and the inner ranking of values according to 'higher' and 'lower' and the evident order of preference corresponding to this ranking" (Scheler 1971, 375).

Theorising the relationship between values and emotions, Scheler differentiates between feelings (*Fühlen, Gefühle*), which are intentional and therefore "reveal" values, and "feeling-states" (*Gefühlzuständen*), which are not.⁶ Both "feelings" and "feeling-states" are experienced by an individual "Person," whom Scheler defines as a "concrete centre" of intentional emotional acts, as well as the "ultimate bearer of values (*letzter Wertträger*)" (Scheler 1966, 506; 525 / Scheler 1973b, 255-256).⁷

⁶ Scheler uses the nominalised verb "*das Fühlen*" ("*fühlen*": "to feel") and the noun "*das Gefühl*" ("the feeling"): "*das Fühlen*" is "directed" towards "*das Gefühl*" (see Scheler 1966, 261). The prefix "*Ge-*" in "*das Gefühl*" denotes that it is the "end point" of "*das Fühlen*," whereas "*der Gefühlzustand*" clearly describes a "state" of a feeling. The difference here lies in the stages of (intentional) movement or complete lack thereof (see Scheler 1966, 261-270 / Scheler 1973b, 255-264). Roger L. Funk translates "*Gefühl*" as "feeling" and "*Fühlen*" as "feeling it [the feeling]" (see Scheler 1973b, 255-256).

⁷ Scheler distinguishes "Person" and "Subject (*Subjekt*)", the two notions remaining closely interrelated. While the "Subject", for him, presupposes an "experiencing I" or an "ego" (see Scheler 1966, 74-75; 373-378), the "Person" not only experiences values but also "bears" them. In *Formalismus*, Scheler writes that "Whether the I (*Ich*) 'has' or 'experiences' (*«erfährt»*) values at all is therefore completely irrelevant to their existence. The "I" – even in its formal sense or I-ness (*formalen Sinne oder die Ichheit*) – is the object of value-consciousness (*Wertbewußtseins*), not its essential-necessary starting point (*wesensnotwendiger Ausgangspunkt*)" (Scheler 1966, 271 / 1973b). With the distinction between "Subject" and "Person", Scheler seeks to secure the "universality" of his value-hierarchy – arguing that the "theory of the subjectivity of values must be rejected (*zurückzuweisen*)" (Scheler 1966, 271). The distinction is also meant to secure Scheler's insistence that "Persons" "bear" values that can be intentionally experienced by other "Persons". R. Perrin justifies this by writing: "it is not enough to consider the values that stand as the objective correlates to the various emotional states: we must also inquire into the nature of that entity which stands as the bearer (*Träger*) of these states, namely the Person" (Perrin 1991, 86). According to Scheler's logic, the "borne" values are, as values, also independent from the "Persons" who might "subjectively" experience them.

The distinction Scheler makes between feelings and feeling-states supports his overall stratification of emotions that directly corresponds to his hierarchy of values. Scheler stratifies emotions into (1) "sensible feelings" (such as bodily pleasure or pain), (2) "vital feelings" (such as illness or well-being), (3) "psychic feelings" (such as happiness and suffering), and (4) "spiritual feelings" (such as bliss or despair).⁸ In this regard, according to Scheler, while "sensible" feelings are non-intentional feeling-states – and thus do not reveal values – "vital" and "psychic" feelings "*can* always exhibit an intentional character" and spiritual feelings "*exhibit it essentially*". Nevertheless, for him, even "sensible feeling-states" are "always mediated (*vermittelt*) by a genuine intentional feeling (*echt intentionales Fühlen*)" and thus are "an indication of something (*«Anzeichen von etwas»*)" (Scheler 1966, 269 / Scheler 1973b, 264). This "indication" for Scheler, is of a *meaning* – or sense (*Sinn*) – of certain emotional experiences which directly depends on the values revealed in them.

Thus, Scheler postulates that "Our emotional life (*Unser emotionales Leben*) is rather a magnificently differentiated system (*großartig differenziertes System*) of natural revelations (*Offenbarungen*) and signs (*Zeichen*)" (Scheler 1963, 36). What Scheler calls the "sign-function" (*Zeichenfunktion*) presupposes, according to him, that the functioning of "outer sense-modalities (*Sinnesmodalitäten*) and sense-qualities (*Sinnesqualitäten*)" entails "the essential relation (*Wesensverhältnis*) that exists between value-cognition (*Werterkennen*) and being-cognition (*Seinerkennen*) in general" (Scheler 1954, 80). "Value-cognition", in turn, for Scheler, is distinct from and is preceded by "value-apprehension (*Werterfassung*) in the form of emotional acts (feeling something, preferring, loving (*Fühlen von etwas, Vorziehen, Lieben*))" (Scheler 1954, 79-80).

This "essential relation" between sense-perception, feeling, and cognition, for him, is an "essential structure" (*Wesensaufbau*) designed to guarantee that values, if not directly revealed in intentional feelings, are at least "indicated" (i.e. "signified") in the "lower levels" of experience. He writes:

It [the essential relation] seems to me (*scheint es mir*) to be a strict law (*strenges Gesetz*) of the essential structure (*Wesensaufbau*), both of the higher "spiritual" acts and of the lower "functions" of our spirit (*unseres Geistes*) that provide their material, that in the order of possible givenness of the objective sphere as such, the value-qualities (*Wertqualitäten*) and value-unities (*Werteinheiten*)

⁸ On Scheler's stratification of emotions, see Geniusas 2015, 355-377.

belonging to this order *are given prior* (vorhergegeben sind) to anything that belongs to the value-free stratum of being (*wertfreien Schicht des Seins*): so that nothing wholly value-free in being can ever "originally become (*ursprünglich werden*)" an object of perception, memory, expectation, and, in the second line of thought, of thought and judgement, unless its value-quality or its value-relation to another (*Wertrelation zu einem anderen*) (equality, difference, etc.) had already somehow been given to us beforehand. (Scheler 1954, 80)

From this, Scheler concludes that "All value-free or value-indifferent being (*wertfreie oder wertindifferente Sein*) is therefore such being only on the ground of a more or less artificial abstraction (*künstlichen Abstraktion*), through which we disregard its values, which are not only always given *with* [any and all being] (*mitgegebenen*) but also always *pregiven* (*vorgegebenen*)" (Scheler 1954, 80).

Thus, Scheler's "essential structure" presupposes that values are necessarily inherent in everything that "is" and postulates an "essential relationship" between these values, feelings, sense-perception, judgement, and cognition. Within this structure, designed as all-encompassing, even if a feeling-state, by itself, does not *directly* reveal any values (or *seems* to not have any value), it is *always* "mediated" by a feeling that does: the feeling-state thus "indicates" a value nonetheless and, therefore, has meaning. This logic is evident in Scheler's conception of the relationship between pain and suffering.

For Scheler, pain is a sensible feeling and, hence, a feeling-state that does not directly reveal any value; however, it is always accompanied and mediated by the intentional feeling of suffering that does. Hence, Saulius Geniusas maintains that Scheler's understanding of pain can be conceived in four main ways that correspond to his stratification of emotions. Namely, in Scheler's conception, pain can be interpreted as, "(1) a stimulus that underlies a particular feeling, (2) a feeling state, (3) a feeling taken along with an emotional reaction, (4) an experience enveloped in a spiritual interpretation" (Geniusas 2016, 367).

According to Scheler's theory, given that pain, as a feeling-state, reveals no value directly, paying attention to pain only as a feeling-state – and overlooking the feeling of suffering that mediates it – is conducive to an interpretation of suffering as meaningless. Conversely, for Scheler, the meaning of both pain and suffering can become evident through "metaphysical interpretation (*metaphysischen Deutung*)", "through which

our feelings (*Gefühle*) are integrated, beyond their immediate lived-experiential meanings (*Erlebnissinn*), as a part/member (*Glied*) into the overall coherence (*Zusammenhang*) of the world" (Scheler 1963, 37).

In this regard, Scheler argues that metaphysics is the "cognition of the real (*Realerkenntnis*)", the "theory of the world-ground (*Lehre vom Weltgrund*)", as well as "a cognition of totality and universality (*Totalitäts- und Universalerkenntnis*), 'world-wisdom' («*Weltweisheit*»)" (Scheler 1979, 11-12). Accordingly, Scheler writes that metaphysics seeks "to understand how every part of the real (*jeder Teil des Wirklichen*) – the dead [lifeless] and the organically living world (*die tote und die organisch lebendige Welt*), plants, animals, humans, consciousness, souls of every level, even human reason itself, and the world of unreal, ideal objects – is rooted (*einverwurzelt*) in the absolutely real (*das absolut Wirkliche*)" (Scheler 1979, 11).⁹ In this regard, according to Scheler, the "real", the "world", "life", "emotional life", "consciousness", etc. are necessarily "real", and as "real" are "essentially" and axiologically structured: to be, therefore, "cognised" through metaphysics.

Hence, for Scheler, the "universality" and the "universal" validity of "metaphysical interpretation" of pain and suffering, as well as of any other experience whatsoever, is warranted by the structure of "reality" itself, to which metaphysics, according to him, has access. It is within this structure – based on and regulated by the "invariable hierarchy of values" – that "meaning", grounded in intentionally "grasped" value, for Scheler, is "revealed". Thus, according to him, "metaphysical interpretation" of a feeling – unlike any other interpretation of that feeling – directly refers to the structure of "reality" and, thus, corresponds to a "pregiven" value "grasped" in that feeling. Scheler's justification for this is that values and their hierarchy "follow and emerge from nature and the essence of life (*aus der Natur und dem Wesen des Lebens*)" (Scheler 1966, 282-283).¹⁰

⁹ This is written in one of the later of Scheler's texts (entitled *Erkenntnislehre und Metaphysik* (1926-1928)): a text the evident purpose of which is to secure metaphysics as the superior way of understanding any and every facet of what for Scheler is the "world" through "*Weltanschauungslehre*" ("theory of world-intuition"). Scheler's insistence on the primacy and superiority of metaphysics did not change despite what some commentators consider to be differences between his productive phases (see, for example, M. S. Frings's description of Scheler's "three periods" (Frings 1996, 6-8).

¹⁰ This apparently anachronistic presupposition is supported by Riku Yokoyama (2022), according to whom "Scheler's claim of the *a priori* hierarchy of values does not illustrate his anachronism, but is rather an *anthropological* manner of explaining values. The *a priori* character of the hierarchized spectrum of values derives, in other words, *from the natural human constitution*" (Yokoyama 2022, 127).

In this regard, the "world (*Welt*)", for Scheler, is the "organism (lived body) (*Organismus (Leib)*) of All-life (*Allebens*)" (Scheler 1979, 199).¹¹ The "All-life", according to him, "works on (*bearbeitet*) its surrounding world (*Umwelt*) through its species (*Arten*) and individuals, respective cells (*Zelle*), in varying ways" (Scheler 1979, 197). Regarding the "varying ways" in which "All-life" works on the "world", Scheler writes that

The world, as the "lived body" of all All-life, is finite and only ever "one" embodiment (*Verleiblichung*) of All-life, which infinitely many others follow and can follow, insofar as the Spirit of God permits (*soweit es der Geist Gottes zuläßt*). God is not the creator of the world; he has only permitted its coming into being (*er hat ihr Werden nur zugelassen*). (Scheler 1979, 198)

Scheler further argues that the "world" is the "lived body" of "God", writing that "The world as the 'body' of God is the 'embodiment' of the eternal 'urge' 'becoming' anew in every moment (*in jedem Augenblick neu «werdende Verleiblichung» ewigen «Dranges»*), according to (*gemäß*) the ideas and values of the godly Spirit (*göttlichen Geistes*)" (Scheler 1979, 201). Consequently, for Scheler, the "world" is "not *creatio continua*, but rather a continuous becoming-produced (*Erzeugtwerden*), 'permitted' and 'ordered' by Spirit (*vom Geist «zugelassenes» und «geordnetes»*)" (Scheler 1979, 201).

This equation of "God" and "All-life", established by postulating the "world" as the "lived body" of both, allows Scheler to construct the concepts of "life" and the "world" as axiologically and, thus, hierarchically organised structures to which values are intrinsic. In *Formalismus* (1913/16–1928), Scheler unequivocally states that "life" cannot be "value-indifferent", claiming that "There cannot even be talk of this (*Davon kann aber gar keine Rede sein*)" (Scheler 1966, 280).

Thus, according to Scheler's logic, if one's interpretation of their pain and suffering does not conform to the structure of the "All-life" – and thus of the "world" structured by the "universally invariable" value-hierarchy and organised by "the Spirit of God" – their interpretation is wrong. The possibility of such "error", for Scheler, is due to that "our attention may swing back and forth between the levels" at which emotions are experienced, while "the inner regularity (*innere Gesetzmäßigkeit*) of coherences (*Zusammenhänge*) and the sequence (*Abfolge*) of lived feeling-experiences (*Gefühlserlebnisse*) remain principally unaffected at a particular one of these levels by the order and succession (*Folge*) [of feelings] at

¹¹ This text, entitled *Manuskripte zur Lehre vom Grunde aller Dinge* (*Manuscript on the Study of Ground of All Things*), is dated 1926-1928.

another level" (Scheler 1963, 71 / Scheler 1974, 161). However, regardless of the "level" of the stratification at which a feeling is experienced, the mediation between the levels of feelings sanctions the *a priori*, "universally" valid "metaphysical interpretation" of this feeling, which, for Scheler, refers to the structural coherence of the "world" and "life", on which the meaning of the feeling depends.

In this regard, Arthur R. Luther argues that this structural coherence is conditioned by "a primordial and abiding relational unity" to which the "simultaneity of the feeling-value complex points" (Luther 1972, 84). For Scheler, the "metaphysical interpretation" of pain and suffering with a reference to this "unity" of "All-life" makes one attentive to suffering not just as pain but as suffering, and therefore as meaningful, and attentive to pain as suffering, and therefore as meaningful also. Hence, according to him, metaphysical interpretation bestows a "character of grace (*Gnadencharakter*)" upon the feeling of suffering, in which the "higher order of things (*höheren Ordnung der Dinge*)" is "blessedly intuited (*selig geschauten*)" (Scheler 1963, 68-69; 71 / Scheler 1974, 159; 162). Thus, the interpretation of the experience of pain as suffering – based on the intentionally disclosed value of the latter – leads, according to Scheler, to the revelation (*Offenbarung*) of the meaning of suffering (Scheler 1963, 36), derived from the "higher order of things": that is, from the *a priori* value-hierarchy that regulates value-relations within the "All-life".

Importantly, for Scheler, this meaning is completely independent from whether or not attention is paid to it: meaning is as invariable and as "universal" as the value in which it is grounded. Thus, someone interpreting their pain and suffering as meaningless would, according to Scheler's logic, contradict the insight into the "higher order of things" and therefore be mistaken. Attention, for him, must be guided by the "correct" and "universal" interpretation. Therefore, one must, according to Scheler, pay attention to that pain is always mediated by meaningful suffering; this way, their pain must and will have meaning also.

This meaning, Scheler argues in *Vom Sinn Des Leidens*, is "sacrifice": a concept closely intertwined with Scheler's understanding of "purification", which he sees as a "function" of suffering. This meaning and function, besides already having strong political connotations within Scheler's theory of emotions, are integral to Scheler's value-ethics and political theory.

2. SUFFERING AS "SACRIFICE" AND "PURIFICATION"

Scheler finds the "universal ontological ground (*allgemeinste ontologische Grund*)" for suffering in "the conflict/contradiction (*Widerstreit*) between the independent", yet "inherently law-regulated (*eigengesetzmäßiger*) parts and their functional position in a whole (*Ganzen*), with which they are in mutual solidarity" (Scheler 1963, 43). This contradiction, for Scheler, is conditioned by "resistance (*Widerstand*)" of a part against its "functional position" in a "whole" – that includes other parts – and results in the "battle/struggle of parts (*Kampf der Teile*)".

"Resistance", for Scheler, is also how "reality" is "given" to "consciousness". He argues that

the origin of reflection or the being of "consciousness" (*das Sein des «Bewußtseins»*) is in fact bound, by essential law (*wesensgesetzlich ... gebunden ist*), to the preceding (*vergängige*) ecstatic having and suffering (*Haben und Erleiden*) of the lived experience of resistance that gives the moment of reality (*Realitätsmoment gebenden Widerstandserlebnisse*), [...] the particular form of being (*Seinsform*) of consciousness or reflective being is, on the one hand, simultaneous (*gleichzeitig*) with the lived experience of reality (*Realitätserlebnis*), and on the other hand is its consequence, not its founded ground. (Scheler 1976, 208)

Scheler insists further, writing: "I can only recognise (*erkenne*) the Real Being (*Real-Sein*) of any thing by the fact that it asserts itself (*sich behauptet*), that it excludes (*ausschließt*) other beings from itself, that it opposes (*entgegensetzt*) any other resistance that seeks to penetrate/invoke (*einzudringen*) or displace/usurp (*zuverdrängen*) it" (Scheler 1976, 209).

While, for Scheler, "beings" manifest and assert themselves through their "resistance" against other "beings" and thus make themselves known to "consciousness" (otherwise, Scheler's "consciousness" does not recognise them), they have, according to Scheler, their "functional positions" in a "whole" to which they belong: ultimately, in the "All-life" (and, consequently, the "world"). Accordingly, their resistance *against* their determined functional position in a/the "whole", for Scheler, is the source of (their) suffering.

In this regard, the "wholes" that are parts of the "whole" of the "All-life" and the "world", for Scheler, are "life-unities (*Lebenseinheiten*)", such as "cell, organism, sociobiological whole (*sozialbiologische Ganzheit*)", as well as "collective Persons (*Gesamtpersonen*)", by which Scheler proposes to understand "nations, states, churches, cultural circles", and "of which the

individual Persons (*Einzelpersonen*) are members". According to him, there is also the "whole of nature (*Ganze der Natur*)" (Scheler 1963, 43-44).¹²

Thus, Scheler's concept of the "whole" encompasses not only "biological totalities", i.e., "life-unities" such as an "organism". His listing of "sociobiological wholes" indicates that, for him, the "biological" is inextricable from the "social" and "collective", with their structural interdependence evident in Scheler's concept of "collective Persons". Moreover, given that a "Person", for Scheler, is a value-dependent and "value-bearing" incorporated unity within the "whole" of the "All-life", and given that the "world", according to him, is dependent on and "organised" by the "Spirit of God", Scheler postulates the structural coherence and persistence of the notion of the "whole" throughout the "biological", the "social", and the "spiritual", thus presupposing their inextricable interrelation.

Consequently, for Scheler, regardless of which "whole" is in question, the mechanism underlying the meaning of pain and suffering follows exactly the same logic. According to this logic, if a "whole" is an individual organism, its internal "conflict" leads to pain. The latter is the result of a "contradiction" within "multicellular and significantly 'organised' living beings (*deutlich «organisierten» Lebewesen*)", whose "organisation", for Scheler, necessarily presupposes "*hierarchisation*" and "*specialisation*" of parts" (Scheler 1963, 44). Thus, he writes that "what we call pain"

is only the "inner becoming aware" (*«Innewerden»*)¹³ of [the] restriction and inhibition (*Beschränkung und Hemmung*) necessary for the whole, which a (partial) life-unity (*eine Lebens(teil)einheit*) (be it cell, tissue, organ, organ system) experiences by *being made member of* (*eingegliedert*) *an organised whole as a serving element* (*dienendes Element*). (Scheler 1963, 44; my emphasis)

Hence, for Scheler, pain – resulting from the necessary inhibition of resistance of a part against its functional position in the whole and always

¹² Scheler's earlier interest in biological "wholes" is documented in his text entitled *Biologievorlesung* (1908/09), published in *Gesammltewerke XIV*.

¹³ The word "*Innewerden*" here denotes a pre-reflective, internal "registering" of something. The word was also used by Dilthey and later reinterpreted by Husserl in the concept of "*Inneneinstellung*" (see Makkreel 1982, 52). As Makkreel explains, "*Innewerden*" meant, for Dilthey, "a pre-reflective reflexive process prior to any distinction between self and world", meaning that "in the process of *Innewerden* act and content are not yet distinguished"; yet it is a process "through which the will recognizes the reality of something by means of resistance to its own efforts" (Makkreel 1982, 52; 43). In Scheler's passage above, "*Innewerden*" indicates the pre-reflexive interiorization of "restriction" that the "whole", in which a "part" is included, exerts on the part.

accompanied by suffering – is “something like (a sign of (*Zeichen des*)) ‘death in miniature’ (*«Tod(es) im Kleinen»*): a sacrifice of a part (or its own life support) for the preservation/maintenance (*Erhaltung*) of the whole organism”. Accordingly, for Scheler, death is “a natural self-sacrifice of an individual” for “the preservation/maintenance or improvement (*Steigerung*) of the whole of species (*Artganzen*)” (Scheler 1963, 44). Scheler thus describes death as “the ‘sacrifice’ that (one) life itself automatically (*automatisch*) makes for more and higher life (*für mehr und für höheres Leben*)” (Scheler 1963, 44). Consequently, according to him, pain – “indicating” death and mediated by suffering – reveals its meaning: a necessary sacrifice of the “lower” for the “higher”.

The overall interlinking of pain, suffering, death, and the strictly hierarchical organisation of the “whole” that necessitates sacrifices and servitude for its “preservation” and “improvement” leads Scheler to write the following:

The most formal and most universal supreme concept (*formalste und allgemeinste Oberbegriff*), under which *all* suffering is to be subsumed (from sensations of pain to metaphysical-religious despair) appears to me (*scheint mir*) to be the concept of *sacrifice*. Just as death in the objective meaning (*Sinn*) of the word is a “sacrifice” [...] so too is all suffering and all pain, in its most formal metaphysical meaning (*metaphysischen formalsten Sinne*), a lived sacrificial experience (*Opfererlebnis*) of the *part* for the *whole* and of the (relatively) value-*inferior* for the value-*superior* (*Nieder wertigen für das Höherwertige*). [...] From this most formal concept of sacrifice, thus I now claim (*so behaupte ich nun*), all kinds of pain and suffering are in themselves – however the sufferer relates to them – only the subjective psychic reflections (*Spiegelungen*) and correlates of (objective) sacrificial events (*Opfervorgängen*), i.e. of effective/realising (*auswirkenden*) tendencies, in which a good of lower order is given up (*preisgegeben*) for a good of higher order. (Ontology of suffering). (Scheler 1963, 40; 42)

In this regard, in “goods,” for Scheler, values become “real (*wirklich*)” and “objective,” and a “good” is founded on a value that “fills” it (Scheler 1966, 43-44 / Scheler 1973b, 22). Here, “good” does not necessarily denote a material good and is related to objects as well as to events and individuals; for example: “it is good that this happened”, “this person is good/better”. Importantly, according to Scheler, the non-empirical character of values means that it is “goods”, not values, that can be “given up”. Values, on the other hand, are “preferred” through “objective value-insight” into the

hierarchy of values that offers "intuitive evidence for preference" (Scheler 1966, 105; 107; 214).

Hence, the claim to the "most universal supreme concept of suffering" based on what "*appears*" to Scheler is justified, according to him, because this appearance corresponds to the "metaphysical *interpretation*" of suffering on which the "*objective* value-insight" is based. Therefore, what Scheler calls "objective sacrificial events" of death and suffering provide, for him, insight into which values are "lower" and which are "higher" and, thus, into the "relative" "value-inferiority" and "value-superiority" of its "bearers". According to this logic, if an individual or a group experiences pain, suffering, or death, the latter, as per their meaning, are "objective sacrificial events" that provide "objective value-insight" into the values "borne" by these individuals, groups, and their "goods" and *means* that they are "value-inferior". Hence, within this logic, it also *means* that their pain, suffering, and death are a "necessary sacrifice" conducive to the "improvement" of the "whole" of the "All-life" and, thus, the "world".

Furthermore, because of the "objective value-insight" that pain and suffering purportedly provide, they lead, according to Scheler, to "the purification and separation of the *genuine* from the *ungenuine* (*Echten vom Unechten*), a gradual sloughing off (*Abfall*) of the lower from the higher in the centre of our soul" and "direct, more and more, our spiritual gaze to the *central* (spiritual) goods of life and salvation" (Scheler 1963, 69). Consequently, for Scheler, suffering experienced by an individual or a group would "purify their souls" by directing their attention away from what might seem to them to be meaningless pain and towards "the higher order of things", according to which their pain, suffering, and death have the "meaning of sacrifice" of a "value-inferior" for a "value-superior". In this vein, Scheler states that the "idea of death is a thought that brings the most suffering possible to a man as a living being insofar as he starts from the point of view of his own individual drive to live (*Lebensdrang*)" (Scheler 1963, 44 / Scheler 1974, 130). Importantly, he adds that

Pain and death are also similar in that their conditions of existence and entry in the Whole of Nature and the Tree of Life (*Lebensbaumes*) become all the more probable and inescapable as the qualitative differentiation, the hierarchisation (*Hierarchisierung*), the division of labour, the specification of the Vital Whole (*Spezifizierung des Vitalganzen*) in relation to its parts grow (*wächst*). (Scheler 1963, 44)

In other words, pain, suffering, and death, for Scheler, are necessitated by the expansion of the hierarchical organisational principle of the structure that – grounded in the “order of things” and the “essence of life” – demands sacrifices and servitude of the “value-inferior”. Scheler further builds an intricate justification for this view through his value-based theory of intersubjectivity.

3. “SHARED” SUFFERING AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Scheler’s theory of intersubjectivity is inalienable from his theory of emotions and is largely based on his distinction between “shared feeling” (*Mitgefühl*: “with-feeling”; “co-feeling”) and “unified feeling” (*Einsfühlung*: “one-feeling”). In this regard, Scheler states that while such forms of suffering as “sorrow” or “grief” can be “shared,” there is “no shared pain (*Mitschmerz*)” (Scheler 1973a, 24 / Scheler 2007, 13). The possibility of a feeling to be “shared”, for him, depends on whether or not it directly reveals values: while pain – a feeling-state – cannot be “shared”, suffering – which always accompanies and mediates pain – can.

According to Lou Agosta, Scheler’s “shared feeling” “discloses the entanglement with the other” that grants access to their feelings and is therefore “morally relevant” (Agosta 2014, 87-89). The genesis of this “entanglement” is quite ambiguous: on the one hand, Scheler pretends to safeguard individuality of “Persons” by insisting that a “Person” is “differentiated from every other” (Scheler 1966, 510 / Scheler 1973b, 520). On the other hand, he postulates a supra-individual and value-regulated “unity of life (*Einheit des Lebens*)”, in which all “Persons” are included and entangled. The latter, for him, even implies that “one’s own psychic (*Eigenpsychische*) is constituted only in differentiating it from the psychic of others (*Fremdpsychischen*)” (Scheler 1966, 510 / Scheler 1973b, 520).

Mark Michalski explains that this differentiation is preceded by the “radical immediacy of pure inner self-perception and perception of others” (Michalski 1997, 111-112)¹⁴ – that is, the “unified” experience of feelings precedes the appearance of experience that is distinctly felt to be one’s own. Thomas J. Owens similarly maintains that Scheler’s theory presupposes all “Persons” to be “ontologically linked to one another through participation in a single cosmic stream of psychic life” (Owens 1971, 107). This, for him, explains that “consciousness of others is prior to self-consciousness, and only out from the whole stream of experienced psychic life does the

¹⁴ “...Unmittelbarkeit der reinen inneren Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung in aller Radikalität”.

individual gradually come to self-consciousness" (Owens 1971, 90). Nevertheless, for Scheler, only the "vital centre" – the "Ego" of a "Person" – is immersed in the unified stream of "psychic" experience. While this immersion purportedly allows for the perception of the experiences of others on the "vital" and "psychic" levels, their "spiritual centre" – the "intimate Person" – "is eternally transcendent of all possible cognition and valuation by others (*Fremderkenntnis und Fremdwertung*)" (Scheler 1966, 556 / Scheler 1973b, 569-570). This way, while "metaphysical interpretation", for Scheler, "reveals" what is already "pregiven" in experience, namely values "borne" by "beings" – including "Persons" and "sociobiological wholes" – as well as their hierarchy, these values are independent from and exceed, as "transcendent", all possible valuations that can diverge from the "universally" valid "metaphysical interpretation".

In this regard, for Scheler, while the experience, by a "Person", of other "Persons" "apprehends" the "pregiven" values these "Persons" "bear", the "Person" can also experience the experiences of other "Persons", and thus is capable of "apprehending" the values "apprehended" and "pregiven" in those experiences. Accordingly, for Scheler, values "apprehended" in any experience of both other "Persons" and their experiences can and should be cognised through "metaphysical interpretation": the latter purportedly leads to "correct" valuations, corresponding to the values other "Persons" "bear". Importantly, these values, like any values, according to Scheler, are always "pregiven" in feeling-experience in advance, prior to any cognising and thus prior to active "valuations".¹⁵

In order to secure this mechanism, Scheler postulates that while "unified feelings" allow for the immediate "unity" with the "psychic" experience of other "Persons", their "spiritual" experience can be "shared". However, given that, for Scheler, "psychic" feelings are always mediated by "spiritual" ones, the "sharing" allows for both "psychic" and "spiritual" feelings of others to be interpreted metaphysically, in full accordance with the "objective value-insight", and thus reveal their meaning.

Yet, "valuation by others" could, for Scheler, lose its conformity to the "correct" and "universal" "metaphysical interpretation" and thereby be "misguided." Nevertheless, the "unified stream" of experience "essentially bound" to the structure of the "All-life" warrants that the "metaphysical interpretation" of experience – including the "shared" experiences of others – has to conform to the *a priori* structure of the "universal" value-hierarchy.

¹⁵ Davis (2024) writes that "All experience is, for Scheler, value laden, and the experience of value necessarily precedes any knowledge of the world" (Davis 2024, 31).

This structure, according to Scheler, must condition experience itself, guaranteeing that values – including those “borne” by “Persons” – and their relative positions within the hierarchy are independent from individual valuations. Scheler thus establishes the “universality” and the “rank” of values as invariable and independent from whatever any particular individual might think of them.

Accordingly, for him, only through the “objective value-insight” to which the “sharing” of experiences of others is conducive – and not by a potentially fallible individual valuations and interpretations – can the meaning of their experiences and the relative values “borne” by them be revealed. Consequently, for Scheler, the “shared” suffering of another “Person” or “Persons” – that purportedly reveals the meaning of their suffering to be “sacrifice” of the “value-inferior” – discloses *their* value and its rank within the “universal” hierarchy. According to Scheler’s logic, if their value were “superior” or “equal” to that for which they suffer, they would not be likely to have suffered in the first place. The contrary, for him, would be “tragedy” (see Scheler 1955, 154-156).¹⁶

Ultimately, Scheler writes that “genuine co-feeling with the suffering of another *frees* us from contagion by this suffering” (Scheler 1966, 263 / Scheler 1973b, 257; translation modified).¹⁷ According to his logic, if one acknowledges the purportedly universal validity of the “metaphysical interpretation” of suffering – as sacrifice of the “value-inferior” that leads to the improvement of a “whole” and, thus, of the “All-life” – “shared” suffering of others would reveal its meaning and free one from “contagion” by it, further leading to the “higher order of things” being “blessedly intuited”.

¹⁶ Regarding “tragedy”, Scheler states that “‘Tragic’ in the original sense” is “always the determination of an effectiveness in action and suffering” (Scheler 1955, 152). For him, “tragic is first and foremost the conflict (*Widerstreit*) that arises among the bearers of high positive values (e.g., highly moral natures in the context of marriage or family or in a state)” (Scheler 1955, 155). Ultimately, for Scheler, “tragic” is a “destruction of a positive value of a determined height of rank (*Vernichtung eines positiven Wertes einer bestimmten Ranghöhe*)” and of a “bearer” of that value by “a power (*Kraft*)” or a “Person” that must “represent” and “bear” a “positive value” as well, yet one “lower” than the value of its “bearer” being destroyed or “destroyed partially” (Scheler 1955, 154). “At least something within” the “bearer” of “higher values” “must be destroyed”, according to Scheler, for the “tragic” to occur (Scheler 1955, 154-155).

¹⁷ According to Scheler, if it was not for the spiritual participation in the “unified stream of life,” the apprehension of the suffering of the other would be conducive only to its interpretation through the bodily perception of their pain. The latter, for Scheler, leads to a “contagion by feeling” (*Gefühlsansteckung*), in which a vicarious feeling-state (*Nachgefühl: “after-feeling”*), alike sensible pain, is produced. See Scheler 1973a, 22; 105.

4. "RESPONSIBILITY" AND "SOLIDARITY"

So far, for Scheler, the "shared" suffering of others reveals its meaning through "objective sacrificial events" of pain, suffering, and death in which "value-inferior" are sacrificed for "value-superior". Secondly, it reveals, according to him, the intersubjective entanglement in the "All-life" – regulated by the *a priori* value-hierarchy and value-relations – and allows for the universally valid "metaphysical interpretation" of experiences of others.

From this, Heinz Leonardy concludes that for Scheler "morally valuable is not the isolated person, but solely and exclusively the person who originally feels united in solidarity with the whole of the spiritual world and humanity" (Leonardy 1976, 233). This "solidarity", for Scheler, is based on "shared responsibility (*mitverantwortlichkeit*)" (Scheler 1966, 531) situated on the "spiritual level" of the hierarchically organised "whole". This "responsibility", according to him, is grounded in "love" directed towards values and "Persons" as "bearers of values". In turn, "love", for Scheler, itself realises a positive "act-value of love" (*Aktwert der Liebe*), which guides "love" of other "Persons" towards this value. That is, a "counter-love (*Gegenliebe*)" is required from the "Person" towards whose value the "love" of the other "Person" is directed. Not engaging in "counter-love", for Scheler, would negate the "positive value of love" and realise a negative value (Scheler 1966, 525 / Scheler 1973b, 537), consequently leading to "contradiction" of the "love"-bound "solidarity", conflict, and suffering. The latter, however – as "sacrifice" – would reveal the relative values "borne" by "Persons" and, thus, the overall hierarchy of values, calling all "Persons" joined in the "shared feeling" of suffering to "(love-)respond" to the "higher" ones.

Thus, according to Scheler:

one cannot will the one without the other; not love and the bond (*Verband*) [of] community without death and pain; not the higher development (*Höherentwicklung*) and the growth (*Wachstum*) of Life without pain and death; not the sweetness of love without sacrifice and its pain. (Scheler 1963, 46 / Scheler 1974, 133; translation modified)

Thus, both "community", as a "whole", and the "whole" of "All-life", for Scheler, are maintained and improved by events – such as pain, suffering, and death – that realise and reveal "positive values" to which "responses" must be directed. The relationship of Scheler's "Person" to values has a call-response structure on which his conception of "responsibility" is based.

Owens concludes that Scheler's "Person is directed essentially toward moral values", because "man [...] stands in a correlative practical relation to them insofar as they 'demand' his response, and carry the note of 'oughtness'" (Owens 1971, 66).

Indeed, Scheler asserts that "any ought (*Sollen*) becomes a moral and genuine (*sittliches und echtes*) ought only when it is based on the *insight into objective values*" (Scheler 1966, 482 / Scheler 1973b, 490; translation modified). Consequently, "community (*Gemeinschaft*)", according to him, is "a moral bearer of values (*sittlicher Wertträger*)" and is therefore "ruled (*beherrscht*) by *a priori* value-relations" (Scheler 1966, 119 / Scheler 1973b, 102; translation modified). Hence, Scheler's "shared responsibility" between "Persons" depends on their bond within the "whole", the hierarchical organisation of which is preserved and improved by pain, suffering, and death of those who, according to Scheler, are "value-inferior". In this regard, he writes:

Love, death, pain, the formation of bonds (*Verbandsbildung*) and the increase in the *height* of organisation (*Steigen der Organisationshöhe*) (genuine 'development' (*echte «Entwicklung»*)) through differentiation and integration (*Differenzierung und Integrierung*) thus form a *necessary* and *inseparable* group of processes and states even in the sphere of purely vital existence. (Scheler 1963, 45 / Scheler 1974, 133)

Accordingly, for Scheler, pain, suffering, and death of the "value-inferior" are necessary for the "whole" and its growth – for a perpetual expansion and "development" of a hierarchically organised unity that is preserved and improved by sacrifices of the "inferior" for the sake of the "superior". To instantiate his theory of "shared responsibility", Scheler writes:

For example, which of these two people would be the first to pull out of the water if they both fell in? We proceed from the premise of an evident coherence (*von der Voraussetzung des evidenten Zusammenhangs*), namely, that one ought to (*solle*) sacrifice the lower value for the higher one and wants to sacrifice it with full insight into his higher being (*Einsicht in sein Höhersein*), and then check (*prüfen*) which value is higher to us by the consciousness of being able to "sacrifice something (*Opfernkönnens von etwas*)" that arises. But this procedure (*Verfahren*) never means (*hat niemals den Sinn*) that this consciousness of being able to sacrifice one for the other *would create* values (*die Werte geschaffen*) and *would*

determine their rank rank (ihrem Range bestimmt würden). (Scheler 1966, 236-237 / Scheler 1973b, 230; translation modified)

While, for Scheler, values and their hierarchy are independent from potentially fallible individual valuations, the "coherence" is "evident" to him: it is evident because values "borne" by "Persons" are intentionally "apprehended" and "revealed" through "objective value-insight" based on the "metaphysical interpretation" of their suffering. Consequently, according to Scheler, if two people cannot be rescued, "one ought to" sacrifice one of them, and must base their decision on the "objective value-insight" into the "relative inferiority and superiority" of values "borne" by each of them. This "insight" makes it possible, for Scheler, to conclude which "necessary sacrifice" is legitimate. According to this logic, a "value-superior Person" must suffer less and live longer, because everyone else must have the "objective value-insight" into their "value-superiority" by "sharing" the suffering of the sacrificed "relatively value-inferior Person". A "Person" being saved, not suffering, or suffering less *means*, according to Scheler, that they are "value-superior".

Therefore, for him, the sacrifice of the purportedly "value-inferior Person" would not cause any "contradiction" – instead, their pain and suffering would result from *their* contradiction of and resistance against the "higher order of things", in which the necessity of their sacrifice is determined by their "functional position" in the "All-life". In this regard, Scheler's value-based ethical system is aligned to a socio-political hierarchy: this alignment is most explicit in his notion of "hereditary values (*Erbwerten*)" (Scheler 1971, 401), which definitively extends his logic from individuals to entire "peoples (*Völker*)" and "races (*Rassen*)".

5. "HEREDITARY VALUES" AND THE (COLONIAL) EXPANSION OF "LIFE"

Scheler's abovementioned understanding of death as "automatic sacrifice" denotes the indisputably higher value of a collective "life" in his system: for example, "the species". Indeed, for Scheler, the value of an isolated individual is lower than that of a community.¹⁸ In this regard, Scheler's conception of "hereditary values" entails that their "relative inferiority" and "superiority" as well depends on the "universal" value-hierarchy. "Hereditary values," for him, "undoubtedly also include certain traits of will and character (*Willens-*

¹⁸ See Perrin (1991), 73-76.

und Charaktereigenschaften)"¹⁹ In a 1922 text,²⁰ Scheler claims that "hereditary values" thus explain differences in "historical fates (*historische Schicksale*)" of different "groups" – as well as how they are perceived by these "groups" (Scheler 1963, 16). These "historical fates", according to Scheler,

cannot be explained historically, psychologically or sociologically. Only a racial hereditary value theory based on psychological hereditary values (*die psychischen Erbwerte gehende Rassenerbwertlehre*) could make their initial starting points understandable, based on exact hereditary theory, tribal and family research, ethnography. (Scheler 1963, 16; my emphasis)

In the same vein, Scheler wrote, in 1921: "In my view, population theory and racial biology are the basis of all *real* sociology (*Realsoziologie*), especially the sociology of the economy" (Scheler 1963, 294).

In this regard, Scheler openly endorsed, throughout his career, the so-called "polygenetic theory of humanity" used to promote racial hierarchy and constructed as one of the main theoretical backbones for the justifications of slavery and colonial oppression. Already in *Biologievorlesung* (1908-1909), Scheler argues that "Races are not varieties of one species, but different species (*verschiedene Arten*)" and states that

"we have to accept/assume (*anzunehmen*) species-differences (*Artverschiedenheiten*), not just variety-differences (*Varietätsverschiedenheiten*), even within the "human being" (*«Menschen»*), that is, that the human being is not a new species (*neue Art (Spezies)*), but a new form (*neue Form*) that relates to its species, the races (*zu ihren Arten, den Rassen*), in the same way that the different animal species relate to the form "animal", and the plant species to the form "plant", i.e., that the fact of humanity does not have a common origin in a specified species of animal, but in different species of animals (*the polygenetic theory of humanity* for its origin [...])" (Scheler 1993, 208; my emphasis).

Later, in a text dated 1921-1924,²¹ Scheler writes that "The highest blood unit is the race as a whole (*Oberste Blutseinheit ist die Rasse als*

¹⁹ For a contemporary example of theoretical insistence on the relationship between values and "personality traits" that echoes Scheler's theory, see Sagiv & Schwartz 2022, especially 530-531.

²⁰ *Weltanschauungslehre, Soziologie und Weltanschauungssetzung* (World-intuition theory, Sociology and Formation of World-intuition), published in *Gesammeltewerke VI*.

²¹ A text consisting of various fragments, published in *Gesammeltewerke XIII*.

Ganzheit); the lowest is the family, from which marriage on the one hand and clan on the other emerge" (Scheler 1990, 136). Arguing that "History begins with the primordial races (*Urrassen*), which are assigned certain spiritual ideas and ethos", Scheler justifies his claim by recapitulating the tropes promoted by racist pseudo-sciences in a numbered list. In the list, he writes that "1. The monophyletic hypothesis is biologically improbable. Very different degrees of animal similarity (Australians) (*Tierähnlichkeit (Australier)*). 2. [...] Some are closer to primates [...] 12. It is extremely unlikely that the white, blond, blue-eyed race is a mixture of yellow and black" (Scheler 1990, 137).

Thus, according to Scheler, not only "individual Persons (*Einzelpersonen*)" but also "collective Persons (*Gesamtpersonen*)" – such as "peoples" whom Scheler distinguishes from "races" yet defines in racial terms²² – "bear" different values (Scheler 1966, 499 / Scheler 1973b, 508). In this regard, Scheler argues that "European peoples" – of which the most "noble (*edel*)", according to him, are the "minority" of the "Germanic-Celtic-Slavic peoples" – constitute "the higher civilisation" and have the value of "nobility" "deep in their soul (*tief in seiner Seele*)" (Scheler 1982, 38-39). Scheler further elaborates on what, for him, constitutes a "European" as follows:

the bearer of the European Spirit (*der Träger des europäischen Geistes*) represents a generatively coherent mixed race (*generative zusammenhängende Mischrasse*): a race predominantly composed of Celts, Romans, Slavs and Germanic peoples – and a dwindling Jewish-Semitic minority – which, from a geographical point of view, can be divided into the vague types of the light-skinned (*hellen*), Nordic blond race, the Alpine race and the Mediterranean race. (Scheler 1982, 181)

Importantly, according to Scheler, the "deeper will and feeling (*teiferes Wollen und Gefühl*)" of these "peoples" "will accept existence, life, and procreation/propagation (*Fortpflanzung*) [...] only where it can adjust

²² Scheler, in 1909, claims that "We must distinguish between the peoples (*Volk*) and "race." "Race", according to Scheler, "is a scientific (*naturwissenschaftlicher*) term, not a sociological or historical one. The 'unity' of race" – he continues – "is not based on community of life, nor initially on historically verifiable continuity of descent, but on characteristics found in the given human being – first and foremost physical build, and secondarily mental and spiritual characteristics. However, the blood community of the members of a race is always derived from the scientific systematics of the human species." Scheler adds, to make his position even clearer, that "The different predispositions and attitudes of the race are fixed facts for historical science, which can no longer derive them. History must therefore proceed from a diversity of races and racial predispositions" (Scheler 1990, 231).

(*anpassen*) nature and social environment to its vital and spiritual character" (Scheler 1982, 38). On the contrary, for Scheler

It is the servant peoples (*Dienervölker*) who continue to exist without independent political organisation and territory and are able to "adapt (*anzupassen*)" to any natural conditions and ruling relations. It is the weeds (*Unkraut*) that thrive everywhere! (Scheler 1982, 38)

Scheler's distinction between the "noble higher civilisation" and the "servant peoples" is underwritten by his concept of "hereditary values", inextricable from his insistence on the "universal value-hierarchy". However, Scheler's race-based political commitments, as well as their structural coherence with his theory of values and emotions, are consistently omitted in Scheler-inspired theory and commentary. In this regard, Manfred S. Frings – one of the most respected experts on Scheler's thought and the editor of many of Scheler's collected works (*Gesammelte Werke*) – wrote: "During my thirty years of reading Scheler's manuscripts, I never came across any racial or ethnic bias" (Frings 2003, 12). Twenty pages later, Frings wrote that "Scheler was one among a few European philosophers of the past century who devoted a great deal of research and concentration on latent and consequential interconnections *existing* between ethics and sociology" (Frings 2003, 32; my emphasis). There is not a single mention of "hereditary values" in M.S. Frings' book.²³

However, the term itself suggests that for Scheler, first, "hereditary values" are, indeed, values, and thus figure within the overall hierarchy: according to him, they can be "relatively inferior" or "superior". Consequently, for Scheler, political organisation of the "whole" of the "world", must correspond to what he conceives of as the "relative value-superiority and value-inferiority" of the different "peoples" that, in this logic, is predetermined within "All-life". Secondly, according to Scheler, this "whole" is improved by suffering and death that – as "sacrifices" of the "inferior" for the sake of the "superior" – are necessary for its "improvement", as well as for the maintenance of its "coherence". Given that the preference in what Scheler calls "responsibility" is given to the bearers of "superior" values, his ethics promotes eugenics, which he himself affirms.

²³ For further examples of the omission, by the commentary, of Scheler's persistent and unwavering racism, see Schneck (1987), Davis (2012; 2021; 2022), Venier (2021), De Monticelli (2022), Davis & Steinbock (2024), as well as any of Fring's texts, one of which is entitled "*Max Scheler A Concise Introduction into the World of a Great Thinker*" (1996).

In this regard, discussing the "good" and the "undesirable" («*Gutes*» und «*Bedenkliches*») sides of the German "youth movement (*Jugendbewegung*)" in 1923-1924, Scheler writes that the "respect for the body" that he sees in his contemporary youth

promises a lot for anyone who – like the writer of these lines (*wie der Schreiber dieser Zeilen*)²⁴ – sees the *regeneration of the race* through eugenics of conscience (not 'laws') (*der Regeneration der Rasse durch Eugenetik des Gewissens (nicht der «Gesetze»*)) and the solution of qualitative population problems (*qualitativen Bevölkerungsprobleme*) as the overriding task (*überragende Aufgabe*) of a future Europe, *above all social and economic issues*. (Scheler 1963, 393; my emphasis)

Scheler, however, ostensibly arguing against "racial purism" in a 1927 essay entitled *Der Mensch Im Weltalter des Ausgleichs* – given that, for him, "European" is already "a generatively coherent mixed race", yet limited to "Celts, Romans, Slavs", "Germanic peoples" and "a dwindling Jewish-Semitic minority" – argues that "the development of the independence of the coloured peoples" – who, according to him, were "cultivated by Europe (*von Europa kultiviert*)" – "has already made tremendous advances", "inevitably, racial equalisation (*Rassenausgleich*), the mixing of blood will progress". He nonetheless adds: "But – it can be carried out well and it can be carried out badly: in such a way that adequate (*adäquate*) blood, which according to the experience of science (*Erfahrungen der Wissenschaft*) increases in value, comes together, or also in such a way that inadequate blood, which leads to the degradation of the type (*Werterniedrigung des Typus*), mixes itself in (*sich mischt*)" (Scheler 1976, 153; 156).²⁵

In this regard, according Scheler, the "adequacy of blood" and the "increase in value" here directly depend on the "relative hereditary values" "borne" by individuals and "peoples" whom he defines in racial terms and, thus, on Scheler's "universal" value-hierarchy, in which he clearly places the "bearers of European Spirit" at the top. Thus, when Scheler again expresses his belief in "polygenesis" in the 1927 essay, writing that "The *one* humanity has not been a starting point of history either in terms of race or culture, but lies in its target destination (*Zielrichtung*)" (Scheler 1976, 153), the latter, for him, is determined by the structural and ideological centre on which the so-called "universal hierarchy of values" depends. He thus asserts that the

²⁴ That is, Scheler himself, signing his text.

²⁵ Roberta De Monticelli (2022), not citing these passages, calls this essay by Scheler an "invaluable contribution" that is "so insightful as to be in many respects prophetic" (De Monticelli 2022, 255-256).

"Europeanism (*Europäismus*)²⁶ which today is supported as much from below as from above, is just *fate* - not choice (*Schicksal - nicht Wahl*). And once again, it must be guided politically and economically into the right paths and forms (*richtigen Wege und Formen*)" (Scheler 1976, 165).

This is in strict continuity with Scheler's 1914 text on the "genius of war", where he writes that "It is the Spirit that gives the idea of Europeanness (*Europäertums*) its full dignity and greatness (*Würde und Größe*)" based on "European spiritual unity and its indivisibility", defining "Europe as a community of love and Spirit (*Liebes und Geistesgemeinschaft*)". Crucially, in the immediately following sentence, Scheler writes that "Certainly, this European spiritual unity also has its own special natural geographical milieu, as well as a *limited racial and national material of an appropriate type (begrenztes Rassen- und Nationalitätenmaterial je eigentümlicher Artung)*, as material for possible processing (*Bearbeitung*)" (Scheler 1982, 182-183; my emphasis). Consequently, Scheler argues, the "interbreeding (*Kreuzungen*)" of the "bearer of this already definitionally determined type of Spirit (*Der Träger dieser schon definitorisch bestimmter Geistesart*)²⁷ with certain races (e.g., [Scheler here uses a colonial term designed to derogatorily designate Black people]) is likely to be detrimental to the preservation (*Erhaltung*) of this spiritual structure (*Geistesstruktur*)" (Scheler 1982, 182-183).

In this vein, in 1919, Scheler writes that "all political and economic history always and constantly lies within the scope of possibilities (*Spielraum von Möglichkeiten*) defined by the type and measure of reproduction (*Art und das Maß der Fortpflanzung*). According to him "Race and blood therefore surpass (*überragen*) all other real factors (*Realfaktoren*) arising from driving forces in terms of significance (*an Bedeutung*) – in the sense of the foundation (*im Sinne des Fundaments*)" (Scheler 1990, 131). Seeing "the sexual associations/relations/bonds (*Geschlechtsverbände*) determined by" what he calls "a special form and composition of the blood community (*besondere Form und Gestaltung der Blutsgemeinschaft*)" to be the "the primary group-determining factor (*primäre gruppenbestimmende Moment*)", Scheler writes that "This corresponds to the primary nature of the instincts of the preservation of the species (*arterhaltenden Triebe*)". Given that "race", for Scheler, is "species", its "preservation", according to him, takes "precedence over the instincts of self-preservation, procreation,

²⁶ Quoting this passage, De Monticelli translates this word as "European trend." (De Monticelli 2022, 258).

²⁷ This "type" that, for Scheler, "presupposes" the "essence of the European (*das Wesen des Europäischen*)" (Scheler, 1982, 183).

and sex (*der Selbsterhaltung, des Fortpflanzungs- und Geschlechtstriebes*).” Scheler insists: “Establishing a spiritual form and organization of these relationships was therefore *the first task of the Spirit* in general (*die erste Aufgabe des Geistes überhaupt*)” (Scheler 1990, 131; my emphasis).

In this vein, Scheler, warning against “racial war (*Rassenkrieg*)” in 1915, argues for the “improvement of racial values (*Steigerungsart der Rassenwerte*)” through “love choice (*Liebeswahl*)” (Scheler 1982, 102-103) and “sexual love (*Geschlechtsliebe*)”, which, for him, must be guided by values “borne” by potential reproductive partners (Scheler 1957, 118-119; 125). Scheler’s “eugenics of conscience”, thus, would attune the “love choice” towards those who “bear”, according to him, “superior values”. Therefore, the “mixing of blood” that Scheler claims “will progress” must, for him, be limited within the strict, racially defined boundaries of what he calls “bearers of European Spirit”. Importantly, the latter must, according to him, “adjust nature and social environment to its vital and spiritual character”.

This “adjustment” thus presupposes a “love-choice” *enforced* (“adjusted”) by the “love-community” that Scheler conceives to be the community of the “bearers of European Spirit”. A “love-choice” that would thus not be a “choice”, to use Scheler’s own wording, but what he resolutely calls “fate”, enforced by a “Spirit” whose “first task”, according to him, is “establishing a spiritual form and organization” of reproductive relationships. In this regard, his position strongly resonates with the logic behind the policy of “*branqueamento*” (“whitening” of the population) based on racist pseudo-“scientific” theories and imposed by the white elite in the late nineteenth–early twentieth century Brazil.²⁸

In strict continuity with his insistence on “hereditary values”, Scheler’s political theory, inextricable from his value-ethics and phenomenology, includes explicit justifications of and appreciation for colonialism. In this regard, while, for him, the “most fundamental problem of all ethics” is the “partition (*Einteilung*) and inner ranking of values according to ‘higher’ and ‘lower’” (Scheler 1971, 375), he writes, in 1915, that endangering “not only ours [German] colonial possessions but every colonial possession of other European peoples” would “permanently inhibit any *meaningful and just partition* (*sinnvolle und gerechte Aufteilung*) of the globe *in accordance with the intrinsic value* (*inneren Wert*) of the national cultures it [the partition] represents” (Scheler 1982, 213; my emphasis).²⁹ Hence, according to

²⁸ On the policy of “*branqueamento*”, see Schwarcz (1999) and dos Santos (2002).

²⁹ The German “*Einteilung*” and “*Aufteilung*” can both be translated as “partition”. While both share the root “*teil*” (“part”), “*Einteilung*” suggests partition-as-classification

Scheler's logic, the pain, suffering, and deaths inflicted through colonial expansion and violence on those who would, for him, *thus* have "inferior hereditary value", would contribute, as "sacrifices", to the "meaningful and just partition of the globe". This partition, according to Scheler's theory, corresponds to and is "justly" motivated by the "objective insight" – provided by the "metaphysical interpretation" of "objective sacrificial events" of suffering – into the "relative value-inferiority and value-superiority" of the "sociobiological wholes" that "bear values".

Unequivocally expressing his admiration for those who enforce and preserve colonial partition and pursue colonial expansion, Scheler writes:

Statesman, general, coloniser are the *main types* of hero (*die Haupttypen des Helden*). Where statesman and general appear in personal union, as in Caesar, Alexander, Napoleon, Frederick the Great, Prince Bogen, these people represent the highest forms of active heroism in the *unity of spiritual plan and responsibility* (*der Einheit des geistigen Plans und der Verantwortung*). [...] Hero is empirically *statesman, general, coloniser, explorer*. Let us try to see what is identical here: it is *the expansion of the scope of Life – in every sense!* (*die Erweiterung des Lebensspielraums – in jedem Sinne!*) The hero is the bold one who pushes into the unknown and wins (*gewinnt*) new ground for Life. He [...] who first carried a great people into unknown and, according to his inkling (*Ahnung*), fertile lands [...]; Columbus; [...] who first seized the reins of order (*die Zügel der Ordnung*) in the midst of a howling mass: he is heroic (*heldenhaft*). (Scheler 1957, 314; 341; my emphasis)³⁰

Since, for Scheler, "the higher development and the growth of life" are impossible "without pain and death", the colonial violence, for him, is a "heroic" response to the demand for the expansion and "improvement" of "life" and its organisational structure. The "ground" that the coloniser "wins"

and "*Aufteilung*" suggests partition-as-division, often with a more spatial or material connotation.

³⁰ Scheler's praising of colonisers as "heroes" is in line with the longstanding occidental tradition (including Russian) of glorification of imperialism, colonialism, and white supremacy that, in tandem with the pseudo-scientific, racist theories, justified colonial oppression and violence by appealing to the purported "heroism" of the so-called "adventurous discoverers" in literature, including philosophical texts. On this, see Said (1994) and Sèbe (2012; 2013), among others. For example, Nietzsche, whose texts Scheler read extensively, praised colonialism and ridiculed aspirations to anti-colonial resistance (discussed in Losurdo (2020)). The array of authors, within the philosophical tradition, that promoted white supremacy and colonial expansion, of course, does not end there.

from other "peoples", for Scheler, is evidently "lifeless" prior to its colonisation.³¹

According to this logic, and especially Scheler's conception of "resistance", those who resist colonial violence would resist their so-called "functional position" in the "All-life", and thus suffer. Moreover, the "being" or "existence" of those who are "ought to be" killed ("sacrificed," in Scheler's terms) during colonisation is, according to the same logic and conceptual apparatus, a "contradiction" of their "functional position" in the "All-life": the latter being determined as to *not* "be" and to *not* live. Scheler's "consciousness" would thus not even "recognise" those whom his "heroes" kill during their colonial expansion as living. Designated as will-have-been-dead within the colonialist logic, they *therefore* "do not assert themselves" to Scheler's "consciousness". Thus, their not appearing to colonial "consciousness" as living before colonial violence begins justifies, for Scheler, what colonial "consciousness" considers as the "expansion of the scope of life".

Hence, placing the organisational centre of "life" in what he calls the "higher civilisation", and determining colonialism as "the expansion of the scope of life", Scheler's axiology presupposes the meaning of pain, suffering, and death inflicted by colonial violence to be "necessary sacrifice" and colonial expansion to be the "responsibility" of the colonisers. This is in strict structural alignment with Scheler's theory of emotions, according to which

a certain class of feelings gives something like a "sense", a "meaning" in the experience itself, through which the feeling reflects certain (objective) value differences of beings, actions or fates that happen to us, or even anticipates and pre-signifies (*vorzeichnet*) them before they occur; through which it invites and demands to do some things, warns and threatens to refrain from some things. (Scheler 1963, 36)

According to this logic, colonialism, and the "feelings of" suffering it inflicts – as well as the feeling of "ought" of the colonisers – would reflect the "objective value differences" between "beings", with colonialist "partition"

³¹ Davis (2021), omitting the colonialist and racist underpinnings of Scheler's theory, writes: "For Scheler [...] the end to which life is directed, the maximization of reality with the least amount of resistance, cannot be measured in merely quantitative terms. Life rather is directed through the power of attraction, an attraction to the production of the beautiful life" (Davis 2021, 393). What Davis calls "beautiful life" achieved through "maximization of reality" – that is, an expansion of the "essential structure" that postulates axiological hierarchization of racially-defined "peoples" – necessitates, according to Scheler, colonial violence that he calls "heroic" and, to use Davis's phrase, "the least amount of resistance" to it.

of the world "justly" necessitated by the "*a priori* value-relations". From these relations, Scheler writes, "a ranking and a consciousness of ought, obligation (*Verpflichtung*) and certain norms also emerge", based on "the values of nobility-community (*Edel-Gemein*), power (*Macht*) and prosperity (*Wohlfahrt*), etc" (Scheler 1966, 282-283). Thus, for Scheler, colonial expansion is an "ought" and "responsibility" of colonisers, while resistance against colonialism is a "contradiction", on behalf of those whom he designates as "value-inferior servant peoples", of their "functional position" in the "All-life" and the "whole of the world". Consequently, according to Scheler's theory of emotions, their resistance would lead to pain, suffering, and death that, in turn, would (a) reveal its meaning to be a "necessary sacrifice" of the "value-inferior" for the "value-superior", (b) "warn" against further anti-colonial resistance, and (c) sanction more colonial violence on behalf of the colonisers, whose "ought" ("to colonise", according to Scheler's thought, "heroically") would be revealed in the "objective sacrificial events" of the suffering they inflict and, purportedly, "share".

Yet, after Germany's defeat in the 1914-1918 war, Scheler began to write about repentance. However, far from being a sign of political reorientation,³² this concept functions within – and ultimately reaffirms – the logic behind the "universal value-hierarchy" that underpins Scheler's colonialist political theory.

6. "REPENTANCE" AND "PACIFISM"

According to Scheler, "Persons" who "sacrifice" someone else – and, notably, "heroes", who "choose the relatively best" – would not be exempt from guilt (Scheler 1971, 168): a "psychic quality" of a "Person" (Scheler 1954, 49). While Scheler's "Persons" being united on the "psychic level of experience" makes them united in guilt, their *feeling* of guilt can be "shared" on the "spiritual level". Moreover, according to his logic, while the "shared" suffering inflicted on other "Persons" reveals its value of a "sacrifice", this value is "counter-realised" in "repentance (*Reue*)": a form of moral suffering. Given that all Scheler's "Persons" can "share" this suffering, they are directed

³² Davis (2012; 2024) argues the contrary. However, without mentioning Scheler's colonialist politics and his racism, without mentioning the destruction the European war brought to the lands occupied by European colonisers and the numerous people from these lands the colonisers forced to fight in that war, Davis focuses on Scheler's attitudes towards war in Europe. He writes that "Through a collective act of repentance, Germany and Europe as a whole would be able to begin anew, to experience a type of cultural and social rebirth", adding that "It was a time of healing, of recovering a lost unity and greater European community" (Davis 2012, 137).

towards its value also: they, too, "repent". Therefore, repentance, for Scheler, is

primordially equally related to our *shared* guilt (*Mitschuld*) as to our *self-imposed* guilt (*Selbstverschuldung*), [...] to collective guilt (*Gesamtschuld*) and hereditary guilt (*Erbschuld*) of communities, families, peoples and the whole of humanity as it is to individual guilt. (Scheler 1954, 51 / Scheler 2009, 58; translation modified)

Following all this guilt, according to Scheler, repentance "painfully purifies and discards (*reinigt und verwirft*) the past" (Scheler 1963, 36 / Scheler 1974, 122) laden with guilt that has "accreted through acts and deeds as something "fulfilling (*Erfüllendes*)" the Person" and "remains latent in every act that the Person performs" (Scheler 1954, 49 / Scheler 2009, 55). Ultimately, according to him, repentance "ends with a clear consciousness (*klaren Bewußtsein*)" of the "annihilation of guilt (*Schuldvernichtung*)" (Scheler 1954, 55 / Scheler 2009, 61). Given that all Scheler's "Persons" are joined in the "unified stream" of "psychic" experience – to which guilt, a "psychic quality", pertains – repentance "annihilates" all guilt.

Furthermore, for Scheler, repentance "brings about reconciliation and reunion with the Centre of Things (*Zentrum der Dinge*)" (Scheler 1954, 59 / Scheler 2009, 65; translation modified). Given that Scheler's "order of things" necessitates sacrifices of the "value-inferior" for the sake of the "world" "justly" organised by the "higher civilisation", the "reunion with the centre of things" would realign the one who "repents" with the ultimate "ought" of the latter. Thus, Scheler writes that "repentance" reveals the "law (*Gesetz*)" that "dwells within our hearts" (Scheler 1954, 55 / Scheler 2009, 61) and, consequently, "duty (*Pflicht*)" that he describes as the "authority within us" (Scheler 1966, 201 / Scheler 1973b, 193). In other words, repentance, for Scheler, reveals the "higher order of things", organised by the "hierarchy of values", along with the "necessities" it entails.

Repentance, according to Scheler, "annihilating guilt", does not annihilate the "duty" and "responsibility". Given that the colonisers, for Scheler, "represent the highest forms of active heroism in the *unity of spiritual plan and responsibility*", their "duty" to colonise would remain intact. According to this logic, if Scheler's "hero", the coloniser – or, really, anyone else – happens to repent suffering inflicted through colonial violence, the "universal value-hierarchy", the "*a priori* value-relations" on which the "coherence of the world" is founded would be "revealed", and the "duty" of the colonisers would be (once again) "revealed" therewith. Since, for Scheler, "the expansion of the scope of life" and the "improvement" of the

"All-life" necessitates "sacrifices", this "duty" would be to continue colonial expansion and "sacrificial" violence. With their actions being now unburdened by "latent guilt", the colonisers would continue to be "justly" enforcing "the higher order of things", thereby fulfilling their "responsibility". With his notion of "repentance", Scheler does not turn away from the structure of his previously elaborated value-ethics that underpins his race-based political theory, nor does he abandon the ideological basis of this theory: "repentance" rather reinforces them.

In the 1927 essay, however, Scheler expresses his feeling that the "great historical idea" of colonisation "will have to make a significant retreat in the coming world age" and immediately concludes that "For this reason alone (*Schon darum*), we Germans have little ground to acquire new colonies" (Scheler 1976, 164).³³ In the same essay, dissatisfied with the "spiritual" condition of Europe, Scheler asks, without providing a clear answer, whether the "movement (*Bewegung*)" of "counter-colonisation" of Europe (*die «Gegenkolonisierung» Europas*)" by the "peoples once cultivated by Europe" represents "a process of recovery necessary for our present-day humanity", suggesting that these "peoples" might "return" the "European mores (*Sitte*)" to Europe (Scheler 1976, 156).

However, in his essay on "pacifism" entitled *Zur Idee des ewigen Friedens und der Pazifismus* (1926-1928), Scheler concludes that

The increasing militarisation of the coloured races (*farbigen Rassen*), which the European peoples (*europäischen Völker*) themselves have initiated in this war, and the whole powerful movement (*mächtige Bewegung*), which M. J. Bonn has very aptly described as the "counter-colonisation" of Europe, emerges as a moment that severely threatens the entire white race and its civilisation (*weiße Rasse und ihre Zivilisation*). (Scheler 1990, 96)³⁴

Accordingly, in the same essay – which Z. Davis calls "Scheler's final movement in thought" that "was an outright rejection of his earlier thought" (Davis 2012, 129) – Scheler writes that "Every age has its own, never-to-be-repeated "demand of the hour" (*«Forderung der Stunde»*). And the first demand of the hour today is to protect Europe from a new war that would mean total annihilation (*Vernichtung*), the 'twilight of the gods'

³³ De Monticelli ends her account of this essay by quoting this exact paragraph, yet omits this exact sentence, replacing it with '[...]' (De Monticelli 2022, 258).

³⁴ Scheler is referring to a 1926 book by Moritz Julius Bonn, *Das Schicksal des deutschen Kapitalismus* (*The Fate of German Capitalism*), although not explicitly mentioning it. The third chapter of the book is entitled "Die Gegenkolonisierung (The Counter-Colonisation)".

(«Götterdämmerung») of European culture and everything that our fathers, going back to Homer, loved and revered". For this purpose, Scheler claims that "we must be just as energetic in our efforts to banish from the ranks of the new youth that often downright servile pacifism that ruthlessly betrays our own people and its entire intellectual tradition" and that "We must demand from the German Spirit of a certain youth [...] that it be as realistic as possible and that it integrate the still young new army organization into the new state and its internal world-historical necessities" (Scheler 1990, 121).

Crucially, while indeed arguing against his former thesis that "war strengthens people" expressed in 1915, Scheler writes that instead of war

Good hygiene, physical exercise and sport, an energetic fight against social and racial diseases (*energischer Kampf gegen Gesellschafts- und Rassenerkrankungen*), a healthy quantitative and qualitative population policy (*Bevölkerungspolitik*), the spread of eugenic attitude/disposition (a kind of religion in America) (*eugenetischer Gesinnung (in Amerika eine Art Religion)*), energetic social policies regarding housing, settlement, working hours and conditions, and much more of the same – these things, but not war, strengthen a people. War eliminates the younger, strongest generations from reproduction and leaves behind the biologically less capable. (Scheler 1990, 86)

Given that the "ideal of eternal peace" – that Scheler sets up as his "thesis" in the essay (Scheler 1990, 83) – for him directly depends on creating a new army to "protect Europe" from "the coloured races" and on "eugenic attitudes" to protect it from "racial diseases", this "thesis" is in line with Scheler's unwavering racist beliefs and colonialist politics integral to his thinking. In this regard, given the preoccupation of Scheler's essay on "pacifism" with what he thinks is best for what he imagines to be Europe, the statements he makes in this essay follow and reinforce his longstanding commitment to the "bearers of European Spirit" whom he defines in strict racial terms: as "the entire white race and its civilisation". Obsessed with protecting the "white race" from war and "racial diseases", Scheler thus writes that "The idea of economic and (relative) political cooperation (*Zusammengehens*) among the European peoples (*europäischen Völker*) will no longer perish (*untergehen*). If it were to perish, then woe betide (*dann wehe*) the entire occidental culture (*abendländischen Kuletur*)!" (Scheler 1990, 96). In this vein, Scheler, distinguishing between "European culture" as "the entire white race and its civilisation" and those who, according to him, "threaten" it, calls for a creation of an army that would keep the

"eugenic attitudes" intact and prevent what he calls the "counter-colonisation of Europe", therefore protecting the "economic and political cooperation" between what Scheler terms "bearers of European Spirit".

Given the structural alignment between Scheler's axiological phenomenology of feelings and his socio-political writings, if there is a turning point in Scheler's politics, it is not a reassessment based on guilt for colonial violence, but a strategic recalculation, with Scheler's core socio-political concerns and race-based, colonialist allegiances remaining intact.

7. CONCLUSION

Scheler's justification of colonialism and his racism are not incidental but integral to his value-ethics, political theory, and phenomenology based on the "universal hierarchy of values" and "*a priori* value-relations". This value-hierarchy – which, for Scheler, must structure the organisational "order" of the "world" – is designed to justify racial hierarchy, as well as pain, suffering, and death of those whom this hierarchy designates as "value-inferior". This logic is in strict alignment with Scheler's conception of suffering, according to which all suffering has a meaning of "sacrifice of value-inferior for value-superior".

Given that pain, suffering, and death, as "sacrifices", according to Scheler, "improve" the organisational structure of the "world" and "All-life", the expansion of the "scope" and imposition of this organisational structure through colonisation that inflicts death and suffering is, for Scheler, "responsibility" of those who belong to the "white race and its civilisation", which, moreover, must be, according to Scheler, protected from "racial diseases".

Thus, colonial "*partition* of the globe" imposed by the "peoples" belonging to this "civilisation" Scheler describes as "just" and "corresponding to the values borne" by different "peoples". Scheler's concomitant preoccupation with what he calls "the basic philosophical problem of all ethics" – namely, the "*partition* and the inner ranking of values according to 'higher' and 'lower'" – and his persistent promotion of racist pseudo-sciences – is further indicative of that his colonialist, race-based politics did not change over time, are integral to his philosophical system, and seamlessly operate in accordance with the steps its author took to construct it.

As regards Scheler's notion of suffering, Geniusas (2019) argues that Scheler's conception of "all suffering" as "sacrifice" was in line with his

support of Germany during the 1914-1918 war. However, Geniusas adds that it underwent "progressive liberation" from its "militaristic interpretation" in Scheler's later writings, particularly the writings on pacifism. Geniusas thus contends that Scheler's conception of suffering, although not to be applied to "all suffering" – because "such concepts as pain and suffering are too multifaceted to be legitimately absorbed within any particular spiritual interpretation" – is "based on a genuine act of ideation into the essence of one particular type of suffering". He concludes that "The philosophical challenge, then, is to release this act of ideation from its diverse misinterpretations, articulate it in its pure form, and uphold it from other ideological narratives".

What Scheler's texts show, however, is that what Geniusas calls "pure form" of "ideation" is a construct based on ideological commitments to not only Germany's war effort between 1914 and 1918, but to sustaining the idea of the "world" organized around the narrative and ideology of white supremacy. This commitment did not change in Scheler's later writings, as is evident from these writings themselves, quoted above. Scheler's "pacifism" – expressed in these writings and celebrated by the commentary – that implies and concerns peace between the representatives of what he calls "the white race and its civilisation", is far from a political reorientation. Likewise, Scheler's promotion of "political cooperation" between "bearers of European Spirit" whom he defines as the "white race" does not presuppose nor indicate a renunciation of colonialist politics and rather reinforces the promotion of racial hierarchy that, in Scheler's oeuvre, is continuously justified on the basis of his "hierarchy of values".

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