

MAX SCHELER ON LOVE IN RELATION TO OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

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Abstract. This paper aims to elucidate the relationship of Max Scheler's phenomenology of love and the religious act, and how these relate to the human understanding of God. Scheler described three kinds of knowledge such as the control, the essential, and the salvific knowledge with an emphasis on the understanding of love. Religious act, one of the branches of Scheler's essential phenomenology, serves the core idea to grasp salvific knowledge. Since Scheler did not elaborate on salvific knowledge in detail, the last part of this paper shall explore how religious knowledge contributes to the human understanding of God. Love as one of the main prerequisite to realize the existence of God by way of 'personal demonstration'/ active participation.

Keywords: religious act, metaphysics of first and second order, control knowledge, essential knowledge, salvific knowledge.

1. Introduction

Love is a widely discussed topic among philosophers and theologians today, challenging Max Scheler's theory of love. Yet, researchers, regardless of the shortcomings of his ethics², will always consider him to be "the great philosopher of love".³ For Scheler's contemporaries, by contrast, love did not play a central role neither in philosophy nor in theology. Yet, Scheler promoted love and sought to rethink the Christian origins of love, in accordance with the Commandments. He realized that love, in the classical sense, endorses the personal values that

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² Max SCHELER, GW2. To English translation see *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values: A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (translated by Manfred S. Frings, Roger L. Funk), Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1973.

³ Manfred S. FRINGS, *Max Scheler: A Concise Introduction into the World of a Great Thinker*, Pittsburgh (PA): Duquesne UP, 1965, 77.

involve the core characteristic of a person's thinking. Whereas, benevolence or human love, by contrast, is based on fellow-feelings as pity or sympathy.⁴

So, what is it that makes this early twentieth century phenomenologist of love so notable, and does he deserve it? Manfred Frings, an accomplished scholar, considered Scheler's contribution to ethics as outstanding and tantamount to classical authors. "The scope and the depth of Scheler's philosophy of love can only be compared with that of Plato, St. Augustine, Pascal and Malebranche." claims Frings.⁵ Although Scheler appreciated these prominent philosophers, he, by contrast, developed an approach where man is primarily an affective, loving being, while his rational, cognitive and volitional nature is secondary.

This paper departs from an overview of the historical approach to one of emotions. I shall discover the historical development of emotions along with the advancement of human soul. Then, the differences between love and feelings will be investigated. From this comparison, I will introduce the nature of love in Scheler's thoughts, and dwell on the phenomenon of the religious act. This core idea is subject to Scheler's three kinds of knowledge: the control, the essential, and the salvific. Among the tree, he placed more emphasis on the latter two. Furthermore, this paper aims to reconstruct and investigate Scheler's thoughts on love and the religious act that are intertwined in the human knowledge and understanding of God.

2. Developing Feelings, Developing Human Soul?

When Scheler claims in *Sympathy* that our emotional life is merely partially dependent upon corporeal events and calls our attention to its higher, independent functions and actions, he evokes both the classical and the modern understanding of the faculties of the soul.⁶ The idea of emotional faculty was not notably documented till the mid-eighteenth century, as pointed out by Catherine Newmark.⁷ In this respect, the philosophy of "essential" emotions was namely

⁴ MAX SCHELER, GW7. To English translation see *The Nature of Sympathy* (translated by Peter Heath), New Brunswick-London: Transaction, 1954, 2009.

⁵ FRINGS, Max Scheler, 77.

⁶ SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*, xiv.

⁷ CATHERINE NEWMARK, "From Moving the Soul to Moving into the Soul: On Interiorization in the Philosophy of the Passions", in Rüdiger CAMPE and Julia WEBER (eds.), *Re-*

referred to feelings and considered as “faculty, an inner ability of each individual soul”.⁸

A brief historical overview of philosophers’ interpretation of the nature and the abilities of the soul helps us to clarify Scheler’s position.

In the *Republic* and *Phaedrus*, Plato considered the soul as having three metaphoric “parts”, (in reality forms or types) also in conformity with their powers, such as *logistikón*, *thymoeides*, and *epithymetikón*. While *logistikón* is the rational or conscious awareness, *thymoeides* refers to the spirited type having emotions (anger, shame, admiration, etc.) and desires (honour, victory, and good reputation). And finally, *epithymetikón* denotes passions or appetites covering all the bodily pleasures and satisfactions.

In *De Anima*, Aristotle put down a different, hierarchal theory of a united soul for different forms of life. He distinguished three types of souls, and altogether five abilities or powers, or in Kantian terms, faculties of these souls. Plants have exclusively a nutritive or vegetative soul (*threptikón*) to reproduce and develop the organic life, while animals and human beings having lower soul-activities of life. While animals and human beings have a higher sort of soul. Sensitive soul is a distinctive type for both animals and human beings in order to have desires or appetite (*oretikón*), to have sense perception (*aisthetikón*), and being capable of bodily movements (*kinetikón*). Whereas human disposes an exclusive and powerful soul, the ability to reason (both *logos/noûs* and *dianoetikón*). Owing to *logos/noûs*, the human soul has scientific reasoning. Also, it has the capability to deliberate, while *dianoetikón* refers to discursive reasoning.⁹

Later, scholastic thinkers basically followed the Aristotelian tradition and distinguished the vegetative, the sensitive, and the rational powers of the soul. Both Aristotle and his followers promoted a psychology of a complex body-soul composition based on the Aristotelian *hylomorphism*, an immortal, an independently existing part and the bodily form that worked together in unison. What Scheler criticized the most, was that modern psychology eliminated the fundamental difference between typical spiritual powers which reside exclusively or

thinking Emotions: Interiority and Exteriority in Premodern, Modern, and Contemporary Thought, Berlin-London: De Gruyter, 2014), 21-36.

⁸ NEWMARK, *From Moving the Soul to Moving into the Soul* 23.

⁹ Frederick COPLESTON S.J., *The History of Philosophy. Vol. I. Greece and Rome. From The Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, Doubleday: Image Books, 1962, 328-329.

partially in the soul or those which are located in the body, nonetheless are operated by the soul.¹⁰

Thomas Aquinas rejected the generally held approach of *forma corporeitatis*, and asserted the one form *compositum*, in the complex body-soul. He promoted the rational form of the soul and considered the vegetative or sensitive forms as being secondary. The table below summarizes Thomas Aquinas' psychology of the soul, based on Copleston's discussion.¹¹

Power of the Soul	Comprising Parts of the Capacity/Power	Relation to the Body	Nature and Type of the Belonging Objects	Origin of Operation
Vegetative	Power of nutrition, growth, reproduction	Exclusively interior, toward one's own body	Less comprehensive objects and bodily objects	Soul
Sensitive	Exterior senses (sight, smell, taste, hearing, touch); Interior senses (sensus communis, phantasia/imagination, vis aestimativa, vis memorativa) ; And two additional powers : locomotion and appetite	Interior and exterior, toward another bodies	Sensible bodies	Operated by both body and soul
Rational	Active and passive intellect, plus power of appetite (volition/will)	Interior and exterior, toward another bodies	The most comprehensive objects, not merely sensible bodies	General independence of the body; Dependent on the material knowledge

The table above shows Thomas Aquinas's three powers or abilities of the soul, such as vegetative, sensitive and rational as distinct from one another.

¹⁰ SCHELER, The Nature of Sympathy, 18- 36.

¹¹ Frederick COPLESTON S.J, *The History of Philosophy. Vol. II. Medieval Philosophy. From Augustine to Duns Schotus*, Doubleday: Image Books, 1962), 375-378.

His psychology is one of the most palpable examples that describe the nature of appetite to be complex in nature, since it belongs to both the lower sensitive and the higher rational “faculty”. Scheler seemingly recalls this traditional view. Nevertheless, his theory of emotions is essentially different from the Dominican Saint Thomas. Yet, Scheler was explicitly committed to the Franciscan tradition¹² by promoting the primacy of love (or will) over intellect, while Dominican Masters gave particular attention and priority to describe the intellect.¹³

Nonetheless, it would be misleading to claim that Scheler denied *a priori* thinking. On the contrary, he claimed that an independent pre-cognitive area of *a priori*, the loving *a priori*, was needed to have a meaningful emotive life. As Manfred Frings pointed out “the *whole* of spiritual life, not only cognition and thinking, possesses pure acts, independent of the psycho-physical organization of man.”¹⁴ Scheler’s position is best summarized, by his own words, “Man, before he is an *ens cogitans* or an *ens volens*, is an *ens amans*.”¹⁵

The aforementioned Catherine Newmark argues that there are roughly three types of passion theories. Each type symbolizes a significant step in the internalization process of emotions from antiquity to the eighteenth century. By internalization process, Newmark means the development of emotions. She discusses how emotions and their conceptualization changed in the human mind/soul. The first type, called appetitive model, represents Aristotle’s *oretikón*, (appetite), the direction of the soul toward good or evil. In antiquity and medieval ages, some theorists argue, that human being was not yet considered as unique being. Likewise, the person as an individual or the internal emotions of the soul was

¹² Scheler’s religious phenomenology shows close relationship with Franciscan ethos. Scheler devoted significant passages to Saint Francis in *The Nature of Sympathy*. Nevertheless, as John R. White pointed out, Scheler was not a Franciscan philosopher in the narrower sense and he did not belong to any of the Franciscan Orders. Rather, “Scheler philosophized out of the same intellectual ethos as Bonaventura and Scotus”, says White. John R. WHITE, “Exemplary Persons and Ethics: The Significance of St. Francis for the Philosophy of Max Scheler”, in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 79 (1) (2005): 57-90.

¹³ Gergely Tibor BAKOS, *On Faith, Rationality and the Other in the Late Middle Ages: A Study of Nicolas of Cusa’s Manuductive Approach to Islam*, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 141, Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011, 12.

¹⁴ FRINGS, Max Scheler, 49. The cursive is Frings’ own.

¹⁵ MAX SCHELER, “Ordo Amoris”, in MAX SCHELER, *Selected Philosophical Essays* (transl. Lachterman D.R.), Evanston: Northwestern UP. 1973, 110. The cursive is Scheler’s own.

not yet examined. In other words, emotions stayed exterior to the soul. Newmark adds that passions were “reaction to the senses”, and they were considered as sensitive appetite. In her discussion, the second type, the impressive model refers to Descartes, and to some extent to earlier scholars, such as classical Stoic philosophers. Passions here referred to perceptions of the senses, leaving a “particular feeling or impression on the soul”, however, still being sporadic in the soul. Later, in the 1850’s, a new model appeared. This third model is especially present in Immanuel Kant’s philosophy: the idea that feelings are a faculty of the soul.¹⁶ This latter is called essential model because emotions are considered here not only the most interior among the three models but also the one which considers human as being able to feel these emotions, claims Newmark.¹⁷

How can we evaluate Scheler’s position in light of Newmark’s classification? Scheler’s theory of emotion corresponded to Kant’s. This is considering their similar essential approach and internalized type of feeling theory. Nevertheless, the meaning of *a priori* or Kant’s formal and rationalist’s point of view showed significant differences to Scheler’s understanding.¹⁸ Most importantly, in Scheler’s discussion, Kant’s *a priori* is a formal and subjective knowledge harmonized with merely intelligible forms “produced by thought”. Scheler’s material and objective *a priori*, in contrast, is “given in intuition”.¹⁹ Notwithstanding, Scheler never denied that Kant made relevant efforts to eliminate all the material ethical

¹⁶ Kant’s critical philosophy distinguished three fundamental faculties of the soul, such as sensibility, understanding, and reason. These three powers or capabilities of the soul are related to the types of knowledge he discussed. Consequently, sensibility refers to the faculty of receptivity and feelings based on sensual experience, while understanding produces concepts. In contrast of both, reason refers to pure notions or ideas independent of experience.

¹⁷ NEWMARK, *From Moving the Soul to Moving into the Soul*, 32.

¹⁸ Frings calls our attention to the fact that the German adjective ‘material’ does not conform to the English phrase ‘material’, rather to ‘non-formal’. In this sense Scheler’s material ethics is the opposite of Kant’s formal ethics. Material ethics, when the metaphysical implications of the word are considered, opts for the contents of the phenomenological investigations. See, FRINGS, *Max Scheler*, 106.

¹⁹ Philip BLOSSER, *Scheler’s Alternative to Kant’s Ethics*, Michigan, MI: University Microfilms International, 1987, 33-84; 302-309. Blosser has extensively discussed the nature of *a priori* in Scheler’s and Kant’s philosophy and the correctness of Scheler’s critique of Kant’s alleged formalism.

approaches. However, Kant failed to overcome formalism, or to establish an objective, autonomous, and absolute axiology.²⁰

Apparently, Scheler's theory of emotion, points to an even more internalized point of view than Kant's. To approach their differences and the nature of progression from the aspect of apriority, rationality, and emotions, the following may also contribute to our discussion.

Kant distinguished three forms of knowledge in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, such as the analytic *a priori*, the synthetic *a priori*, and the *a posteriori*. While the latter refers to the knowledge gained from sense perception, analytic *a priori* is not derived from any experience. Synthetic *a priori*, for Kant, in contrast of the former two, is a specific sort of mathematical proposition/arithmetic truth, e.g. $5+7=12$. In this same example, synthetic *a priori* is the knowledge referring to the sum total of 12, however, does not imply the summation of $5+7$ aforementioned. The Kantian way to gain synthetic *a priori* knowledge is the intuition and the abstraction of empirical experience.

Husserl, in contrast, discovered a more internalised category of the analytic *a priori*, i.e. the *synthetic analytical a priori*.²¹ The term analytic, in its first sense, refers to the formal-logical meaning. Husserl, however, presented a stricter sense of analytical, which he called *analytic of apophantic logic* or simply *apophantic logic (s is P)*.²² In other words, Husserl's synthetic analytic *a priori* is a synthesis

²⁰ Several researchers observed that Scheler's estimation of Kant was unbalanced. They argued that he did not take Kant's words seriously and that most of his criticisms toward Kant were unjustified when considered in relation to the text. Nevertheless, Blosser's evaluation seems to be more sophisticated on Scheler's estimation, especially when he claims that "Scheler's apparent oversight or departures from the Kantian doctrine are due, not to ignorance of the texts, but rather to his desire to get at the underlying unity and thrust of Kant's position." See BLOSSER, *Scheler's Alternative*, 299-300.

²¹ The very last, fourteenth paragraph of Husserl's Fourth Investigation in the *Logical Investigations (Logische Untersuchungen)* attempts to revive and fulfil the idea of an *a priori universal grammar*. In order to do this he outlined a new logic, a *purely logical grammar*.

²² Edmund HUSSERL, *Logical Investigations*, Vol. II. (transl. J.N. Findlay), London, New York: Routledge, 2001, 71-74. *Logical Investigations* was the very first writing wherein the idea of *apophantic logic* appeared. Later Husserl developed this theory further. Apophantic logic goes back to Aristotelian 'apophansis', equal to judgment or assertion. Cf. 'Apophantics', In *The Husserl Dictionary* (eds. Dermot Moran, Joseph Cohen), Continuum: London, New York, 2012: 36.

of two types of knowledge, the empirical and the *a priori*. Historically, while the original meaning of *a priori* excluded empirical experience, in Husserl's view, the *synthetic analytical a priori* denotes material, that is synthetic knowledge.

Based on Husserl's material (synthetic) *a priori*, Scheler developed a sort of emotional *a priori* thinking involving the empirical experience, phenomenological facts, and phenomenological essence intuition. The Kantian formal, and "subjective laws of acts" *a priori*, being also intelligible, had been replaced by the material and "objectively given essential relations of phenomena".²³ On the other hand, as we shall see later, Scheler's material *a priori* also exceeded Husserl's rationalistic *apophantic a priori* as far as he invented the emotional counterpart of Husserl's rational material *a priori*.

Now, to approach the development of apriority in ethics, let us consider the following: Is the ancient question on ethics grounded on feelings/emotions or rather on reason? Kant's viewpoint, in general, is divided between a rationalistic and an emotional foundation of ethics. The late Kant's position, as Zhang pointed out is grounded on reason.²⁴ After the year 1770, Kant held an "ethics of pure reason" or an ethics of a rational *a priori* by excluding empirical factors. Yet, moral feelings still played a role in his ethics, as they "can be attributed only to the principle of execution" – claims Zhang.²⁵ Husserl, in contrast of Kant, expostulated the German idealist's ethics of a rational *a priori* in two main aspects. First of all, the idea of "*a priori* essential law in the fields of feeling and disposition" is ignored. Secondly, he also discredited the role of feelings and emotions in ethics, with special concern to its foundation and moral judgments. Also, Husserl missed the empirical aspects of Kant's ethics. Thirdly, Kant did not understand "the concept of intentional feeling" correctly. Intentional feelings, in Husserl's view, are kind of objectifying acts by "directing toward", or "containing objects", while non-intentional feelings are merely feeling-sensations.²⁶ In light of Husserl's criticism one may think that his ethical standpoint shows similarities with Scheler's emotional ethics. On the contrary, Husserl's intentional feelings belong

²³ BLOSSER, Scheler's Alternative, 304.

²⁴ Zang WEI, "Rational a Priori or Emotional a Priori? Husserl and Scheler's Criticism of Kant Regarding the Foundation of Ethics", in *International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology* 8, 2 (2011), 143-158.

²⁵ WEI, Rational a Priori or Emotional a Priori?, 144.

²⁶ WEI, Rational a Priori or Emotional a Priori?, 132.

to reason, they are “rational feelings”. Therefore, Zhang concludes, “Husserl still held on to a rational ethics”.²⁷ Rationality, in Husserl’s view, is a universal ability “belonging to all transcendental subjectivity”.²⁸

In contrast of Husserl’s quasi emotional and Kant’s rational ethics, Scheler held a truly emotional ethics, based on an emotional *a priori*, where feelings and representation are intentional, having essential forms.-

However not only Kant’s and Husserl’s *a priori* and its connotation of rationality and thinking produced opposition to Scheler’s assertion. He also pioneered the golden mean between the reduction of affective life into both the Platonic innate idea of love and the emotive ethical tradition of David Hume and Adam Smith. Moreover, he had been challenged to show how “ethics must be both absolute and emotional”. Although he recognized and followed the merit of Pascal’s “*le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas*” his devotion was critical. From this, Scheler “claims that no one has been able to elaborate an opposite viewpoint” in what were formerly ethical understandings of the necessarily rational, absolutistic, *a priori*, and the empirical, relative and emotional.²⁹

To conclude this section, Scheler’s theory of emotions undoubtedly fits into Newman’s classification of emotion-theories considering the internalized and essential point of view to the emotions. However, differences between the two philosophers are significant, most importantly their attitude to the nature of *a priori*.

3. The Nature of Love

The theme of love is a recurrent topic in Scheler’s value ethics, anthropology, metaphysics and sociology of knowledge. The first point of discussion in this section is to show how these seemingly different areas of love are connected to one another within Scheler’s philosophy.

While the axiological (value-ethical) foundation of his ethical personalism can be found in *Formalism*,³⁰ sympathy, and love are the subject matter of *Ordo*

²⁷ WEI, Rational a Priori or Emotional a Priori?, 152.

²⁸ WEI, Rational a Priori or Emotional a Priori?, 152.

²⁹ Peter H. SPADER, *Scheler’s Ethical Personalism: Its Logic, Development and Promise*, New York: Fordham UP, 2002, 82.

³⁰ SCHELER, GW2.

Amoris,³¹ and sympathy, love, and hatred are discussed in *Sympathy*. Moreover, the religious foundation of Scheler's phenomenology is set down in *On the Eternal in Man*.³² One of the most basic assertions in *Sympathy* is that "sympathy is a phenomenon fundamentally different from love, and that is incapable of supporting a satisfactory social ethics."³³ Scheler argues that love and hate are the two "highest levels of our emotional life". Although sympathy has a moral value, it does not possess a qualitative value.³⁴ Any attempt to access the objective sphere of values, as a prerequisite in Scheler's ethics, must presume a fundamental distinction between the feeling of states and the intentional feeling of values. This distinction implies their independence from each other, as "Feeling states refer to content, and feelings to the function of the reception of this content."³⁵ While a feeling state is simply a sensible feeling state, the intentional feeling (acts of feeling) makes any admittance to values possible.³⁶ To guarantee the order and the selection of values through the feeling of values, Scheler also discerns between preferring (*Vorziehen*) and placing it after (*Nachsetzen*). By *Nachsetzen*, Scheler establishes the possibility of an advanced sphere of intentionality through a lower and a higher nature of values through comprehension or intuition. This distinction between the two "is of the greatest significance for his entire project" – claimed Spader.³⁷

To clarify some terminological matter, 'sympathy' generally harmonizes with the German *Mitgefühl*. Nevertheless, Scheler argued that *Mitgefühl* must be distinguished from *Nachfühlen* in order to gain a qualitative value of sympathy.³⁸

³¹ SCHELER, GW10, 347-376.; SCHELER, *Ordo Amoris*, 98-135.

³² Max SCHELER, GW5. To English translation see *On the Eternal in Man* (transl. B. Noble), Hamden, CT: Shoe String, 1972.

³³ Herbert SPIEGELBERG, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1995, 295.

³⁴ SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*; Francis DUNLOP, *Thinkers of our Time: Scheler*, London: Claridge, 1991, 45.

³⁵ FRINGS, Max Scheler, 51.

³⁶ SCHELER, GW2, 259-265; SPADER, Scheler's Ethical Personalism, 84-86.

³⁷ SPADER, Scheler's Ethical Personalism, 87.

³⁸ Frings, one of the main commentators of Scheler, pointed to the fact that Scheler's terminology differs in *Formalism* and *The Nature of Sympathy*. While in the former he used *Nachfühlen* and *Mitfühlen*, the latter applies *Mitgefühl*. FRINGS, Max Scheler, 56.

As Dunlop summarized, the latter means “feeling the *quality* of another’s feeling «after» him”.³⁹

Scheler discerned four types of sympathetic feelings or inter-emotional feelings in *Sympathy*.⁴⁰ 1. *Miteinanderfühlen*/community of feeling; 2. *Mitgefühl/Mitfühlen*/fellow-feeling; 3. *Psychische Ansteckung*/psychic contagion or emotional infection; 4. *Einsföhlung*/emotional identification.⁴¹ The main difference among these four types is that the first two are considered by Scheler as “true-fellow feeling”, while the latter two are forms of a lower level of sympathetic feeling: “reproduction of feeling” or “projective empathy”.⁴² Community of feeling, fellow feeling, and love embody the real discussion of *Sympathy*.

One particular issue which concerns me in this section is that by reading Scheler’s discussion on love and sympathy he does not seem to be consistent to separate love, sympathy, and fellow-feeling from one another’s distinction in his writings. A plausible explanation is, in brief, that he used the notion of love both in a broader and in a wider sense. The broader sense of sympathy/fellow-feeling and of love is interchangeable, while the narrow one refers exclusively to love, or more precisely to a specific level of love: the cosmic self-love (*Selbstliebe*). Scheler does fundamentally differentiate self-love and love of the self (*Eigenliebe*) from one another. While the former has a religious connotation and a transworldly reference which is directly connected to salvation, the latter is a worldly one, restricted to the self.⁴³

To understand the manner how Scheler gives essential importance to the topic of love, and how he connects it with personalism, this section attempts to discover the nature of love with respect to Scheler’s analyses. First, I want to consider the significant dimensions of love in relation to fellow-feeling. This section also seeks to understand the fundamental differences between sympathy and love. The next point is to introduce the religious act, the core of Scheler’s religious phenomenology. Later, in the fifth part of the paper I shall return to discuss religious act, specifically as an active contribution to salvific knowledge.

³⁹ DUNLOP, Scheler, 45.

⁴⁰ The English translation of Scheler’s terminology is varied. I use Peter Heath’s terms from his translation of *Wesen und Formen der Sympathy*.

⁴¹ FRINGS, Max Scheler, 59-66.

⁴² SCHELER, The Nature of Sympathy, 8-9.

⁴³ SCHELER, *Ordo Amoris*, 106-107.

A. *The Nature of Love in Relation to Fellow-feeling*

What is love as per Scheler's thoughts? Love is, first and foremost, a Christian idea, as far as he assigns a distinctive, spiritual character to love. Also, he notes love as the highest spiritual value and devotes a profound study of the matter. Contemporaries of Scheler, in contrast, did not support a thorough analysis of love. On the contrary, they rather accept the reductive sensual/empirical explanation, a typical approach of British moralist; the thinkers of Enlightenment. Scheler struggled against the Platonic idea of 'innate love', the theory that "we have innate ideas of the objects of love".⁴⁴

Another point is to discover is the manner how Scheler gave essential importance to the topic of love, and how he connected it with personalism. Also, as it was mentioned earlier, Scheler intends to distinguish fellow-feeling from love. However, he sometimes used these terms interchangeably. Yet, to distinguish them, Scheler claimed that 'true fellow feeling' requires to have a real insight into the other's experience. In addition, his concept of person restricts the scope of the percipient's comprehension. Scheler's personalism, developed in *Formalism*, clearly claims that a person cannot be objectified by others. Therefore, there will be always a mysterious part of the individual's self that is held back. As Scheler formulates, "Thus the absolute privacy of a man's personality remains, like its absolute privacy, essentially impenetrable to understanding" (though not therefore merely a-rational or ineffable).⁴⁵

Such phenomenological insight, however, should not be confused with seemingly similar acts in order to apprehend, reproduce, or understand others' feeling. By imitation, reproduction, or having empathetic feelings, for example, the experiencer neither transmits nor shares his experiences to the percipient.⁴⁶ While a true-fellow feeling, by contrast, requires participation in other's experiences. In other words, by the aid of phenomenological intuition the experiencer intuitively grasps others' suffering or joy. Therefore, he or she has a direct and primary perception.

To refer back to the main love-related works of Scheler, the following four inseparable aspects of love are distinguishable. First, love is understood as a crea-

⁴⁴ SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 132.

⁴⁵ SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 67.

⁴⁶ SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 8-9.

tive, spiritual and religious act.⁴⁷ Secondly, love is an emotion in contrast of sympathy or fellow-feeling.⁴⁸ Thirdly, love is the highest value.⁴⁹ Fourthly, love is, in contrast to fellow-feeling, a dynamic movement.⁵⁰ In brief, love is not sympathy or fellow-feeling, but an *emotion* for Scheler.⁵¹ In the original sense, emotion is, first of all, motion or action. Also, it is a movement by referring it as an act to change position.⁵² In this case, movements should be understood in the meta-physical sense, referring to Scheler's axiology. One of the main tasks of axiology is to demonstrate how a human person moves from the lower to the higher rank of the values, and how he develops himself through this movement. This intellectual 'locomotion' is ruled by love, the highest spiritual value. Emotion as motion or action has a second meaning, i.e., it denotes the powerful religious movement of a person. In this context, a human being has the ability to open himself/herself to God and to the others. The role of the person here, therefore, is far not just a minor aspect for the theme of love. Scheler considered human beings as having the ultimate and highest positive moral value, and love fulfils that apex; the most fundamental act which empowers human beings to become a distinctive identity. Also, love is a spontaneous and a free act of the person. Following the above discussion, love, and person are profoundly interconnected in Scheler's phenomenology. Moreover, the person is always the origin of love in his thoughts.

Let us also review the main dissimilarities of sympathy/fellow-feeling to love in Scheler's thoughts.⁵³ While love is a dynamic movement, sympathy is designated as a *function* because it has a *passive* or *receptive* nature. Likewise, fellow-feeling and sympathy do not bear any value, but refer to values or circumstances. Another fundamental difference between love and feelings is that the later always requires the act of love even if the object of love and the object of sympathy do not

⁴⁷ This aspect is discussed mostly by Scheler's GW5.

⁴⁸ It refers to Scheler's general ethical analysis.

⁴⁹ Scheler's *Formalism* examines the order of values and establishes love as the highest value.

⁵⁰ Scheler's anthropological writings in GW12 discuss love as dynamic movement.

⁵¹ On terminological clarification and Scheler's differentiation between love and fellow-feeling, and related axiological analysis see the comprehensive analysis by Alfons DEEKEN, *Process & Permanence in Ethics: Max Scheler's Moral Philosophy*, New York: Paulist, 1974, 177-199.

⁵² SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 156-61; DEEKEN, *Max Scheler's Moral Philosophy*, 181-84.

⁵³ SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 140-144.

coincide intentionally. The actual forms of love, however, determine the territory wherein fellow feeling may occur. To sum up, the fundamental difference between love and fellow-feeling is that the latter is a passive and reactive function, always supported by love. Love, by contrast, is an emotion, a dynamic spiritual act from the person.

B. The Religious Act

One of the most fundamental aspects of love is the religious act. Scheler elaborated this specific act in the essay of *The Problems of Religion*.⁵⁴ The treatise announces the heart of Scheler's religious phenomenology, i.e. the idea of *essential phenomenology*. For Scheler, essential phenomenology serves to be a general philosophical foundation of all types of religious investigation. Scheler summarized the essential phenomenology as "It is not metaphysics, neither is it natural theology, nor epistemology, or explanatory and descriptive psychology, nor the concrete phenomenology of religion, but it is the ultimate *philosophical foundation of all and every* other philosophical and scientific study of religion."⁵⁵

Essential phenomenology, in Scheler's thoughts, has three branches, such as the religious acts, the essential nature of divine, and the forms of revelation.

The nature of religious acts is crucial here to comprehensively understand. Generally speaking, it is a distinctive, regular *noetic* act, having four main dimensions. First, the religious act is immanent as such, yet the act has to transcend the world and its objects. Secondly, religious acts are "*a law unto themselves*". In other words, it can never be fulfilled from within the outer world. Also, the religious act implies not only divine personal participation but also requires reciprocity to guarantee an interpersonal relationship between God and the person, and the others. Thirdly, a religious act is not only individual as such, but has external, interpersonal (social) relations. Lastly, a religious act is applicable to all human beings.

Now, let us elucidate these dimensions. The religious act is immanent in the sense that it possesses "its own genuine essence", meaning that the acts "conform to an *internal regularity*". It is also internal insofar as the religious act maintains

⁵⁴ SCHELER, GW5, 101-355.; SCHELER, "Problems of Religion", in Max SCHELER, *On the Eternal in Man* (transl. B. Noble), Hamden CT: Shoe String: 105-357.

⁵⁵ SCHELER, Problems of Religion, 160.

a separated, autonomous sphere which is inaccessible from “empirical physical causality”. As a consequence, the different religious acts are not merely psychological and psychic phenomena because the latter “form and disintegrate within us according to natural psychic law.” Also, religious acts possess regularity because of their *noetic* and not their psychological character, making possible their essential, distinct nature.⁵⁶

Religious acts are “*a law unto themselves*” and embrace three “unmistakable characters”.⁵⁷ First, the intention of the religious acts must either overlap or transcend the world, coming before that “all things of a finite and contingent kind are gathered together in a single world, which includes the subject’s own person”.⁵⁸ Secondly, “only the «divine» can fulfil its intention”.⁵⁹ Thirdly, a religious act has a distinctive nature to metaphysics. While a religious act requires “an act of reciprocity” and implying a “divine personal form”, metaphysics is necessary self-restricted by the “boundary of cognitions”, becoming unable to achieve this personal form.⁶⁰

Religious acts are not only immanent, “which confine itself within the human interior”, but also having outside manifestations, such as ‘exhibition’ and the “purposive conduct and expressive action”.⁶¹ For Scheler religious acts are both individual and social, especially due to the fact that religious knowledge refers to “the *community of love and salvation* as an essential *constituent*.”⁶²

As the last characteristics of the religious act, it belongs to the very nature of being human. It does not mean that a religious act cannot be misrepresented or misunderstood, according to Scheler. There are different kinds of reasons of the inadequacy of the religious object, such as the incorrect identification of an object as god, divine, holy, etc. Therefore, “every finite spirit believes either in God or in idols.” – claimed Scheler.⁶³

⁵⁶ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 247-248.

⁵⁷ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 250.

⁵⁸ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 250.

⁵⁹ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 251-253.

⁶⁰ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 253-254.

⁶¹ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 253-254.

⁶² SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 267.

⁶³ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 267.

To sum up the third part of my paper, I explored the different aspects of love, and showed fundamental differences between love and fellow-feeling. Among similar lines, I introduced the religious act, and I shall return to this in the fifth section.

4. The Typology of Knowledge

The theory of knowledge is one of the leading themes for Scheler, beside his ethical, religious, and metaphysical interest. The discussion of knowledge embraces books from sociology to *Weltanschauungslehre* (study of world-views) to *Erkenntnistheorie* (theory of cognition) to ethics.⁶⁴ This section's main goal is to explore the three types of knowledge, such as the control, the essential, and salvific knowledge in respect to Scheler's thoughts. It is also interesting here to relate them to the forms of knowledge and to the three fundamental world-views by the philosopher.

Scheler distinguishes three fundamental world-views such as, natural, scientific, and philosophical. These attitudes to the world are related to both a particular meaning of knowledge and a form of knowledge. Forms of knowledge are means to, as Scheler formulated, "reshape a realm of being – that of things, that of culture pattern of man himself, or that of the absolute".⁶⁵ Thus, the key motive here is the reshaping and transforming power of knowledge. Forms of knowledge, however, do not completely harmonize with the world-views, and may make more sense in light of Scheler's anthropological and ethical writings, such as *Man's place in Nature* and *Formalism*. In these works, Scheler focused on the deification of man and on the different levels of transformation conforming to the forms of knowledge.

A fundamental differentiation, underlined by Scheler, between knowledge (*Wissen*) and cognition (*Erkennen*) is also crucial to keep in mind. Basically, the two are different from each other by dependence on inner mental processes. Thus, cognition covers all kinds of dependent inner mental processes, by referring to scientific and natural world views, while knowledge applies to the entirely autonomous ontological sphere of philosophy. In short, knowledge is an inde-

⁶⁴ SCHELER, GW 6, GW 10, and GW 11.

⁶⁵ SCHELER, GW 9, 77. To English translation see *Philosophical Perspectives*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1958, 3.

pendent ‘relation to being’ (*Seinsverhältnis*). Knowledge, on the other hand, has no reference to any kind of knowledge. To sum up, knowledge is prior to objects and categories, while still dependent on experience.

To move on to the types of knowledge there are three intrinsic types. (1) *Leistungswissen* also called *Herrschaftswissen*, (2) *Bildungswissen* is also interchangeable with *Wesenswissen*, and (3) *Heilswissen* or *Erlösungswissen*. The order is given from the lowest level of the person to the abstract or to the metaphysical level. It should be noted that Scheler’s terminology varies. Moreover, his commentators also apply different English translations or descriptions to the terms. I will use Alfons Deeken’s translations⁶⁶ because his theological background gives us a refined religious interpretation. First, I will review the meaning of the three types of knowledge, and then turn to the translations by Deeken.

First, *Leistungswissen* or *Herrschaftswissen* comprises the desire and the capacity of human technical power to control nature, society, and history. This type of knowledge is of the specialized and experimental sciences (*Fachwissenschaften*). The German terms are translated with the same expression of ‘control knowledge’ to express human aspiration for domination.

Second, Scheler devoted significant essays to explore the characteristics of *Wesenswissen* or *Bildungswissen*, such as the *Nature of Philosophy* or *Philosophical Perspectives*. Principally both terms refer to ‘First Philosophy’ or in terms of Scheler’s phenomenology ‘the metaphysics of first order’.

Now, let’s briefly explore what metaphysics of first order is. Then, I will explain how Scheler distinguished the two orders of metaphysics. To put in a nutshell, he makes a clear distinction between two orders of metaphysics, the First Philosophy and the higher level. The ‘metaphysics of first order’ is the old metaphysics of Aristotle, also called First Philosophy. This initial level of metaphysics investigates the ontology of beings, their forms and essential structure by propounding essential questions, such as ‘What is life?’ By contrast, the second order refers to a higher level of metaphysics and deals with the absolute existence (*ens a se*). First Philosophy, therefore, is not metaphysics in the narrower sense of the meaning because its limits overlap with the essential forms of the natural sciences. Scheler realized that Aristotelian metaphysics became equal with the ontological sphere of natural sciences. Therefore, he wanted to guarantee autonomy for both phi-

⁶⁶ DEEKEN, Max Scheler’s Moral Philosophy, 221-37.

losophy and theology by proposing the second order of metaphysics which would separate them from the natural sciences.⁶⁷

To return to *Wesenswissen* or *Bildungswissen*, the German terms are translated as ‘essential knowledge’ or ‘knowledge of culture/cultivation’. Similar to ‘control knowledge’, ‘essential knowledge’ is also a kind of drive to control. By contrast, ‘essential knowledge’ is a spiritual and creative one to obtain the essence of things by phenomenological intuition (*Wesensschau*). Phenomenological analysis uses bracketing to exclude all the relative aspects of natural sciences and all the real existence of things. Consequently, essential knowledge is derived from the absolute reality and serves as a ‘springboard’ to the highest form of knowledge: *Heilswissen* or *Erlösungswissen*.⁶⁸

Third, *Heilswissen* or *Erlösungswissen* is translated as *salvific knowledge*. However, later in his life, Scheler called this third type of knowledge as metaphysical, focusing more and more on the deification of man; therefore, this is explicitly religious; the human desire of becoming. Thus, the metaphysical knowledge applies the religious act, which I have already specified above. Among the three types of knowledge, it is, unsurprisingly, the less defined. One may generate a cautious definition of metaphysical knowledge. However, I would prefer to show the fundamental differences between essential and metaphysical/salvific knowledge in the last part of this paper by connecting it to the religious act.

5. Love and Knowledge in Relation to God

A significant, however not yet mentioned aspect of the religious act is, how to prove that God exists? The second thing to be considered is the specification of essential knowledge and its differentiation from salvific or metaphysical knowledge. Since Scheler did not develop the latter in details, especially concerning the connection between salvific knowledge and the knowledge of God, thus this section attempts to reconstruct their relationship.

⁶⁷ SCHELER, GW9, 81; SCHELER, *Philosophical Perspectives*, 9.

⁶⁸ SCHELER, *Philosophical Perspectives*, 9.

A. *Different Ways to God: Beweis, Aufweis, and Nachweis*

Why does one need to prove the existence of God? – one might ask. The reasons can be varied, while Scheler describes the devoted as, “Only one who has found God can grow aware of a need to prove his existence.”⁶⁹

The Church Fathers sought to develop different ontological, cosmological, or design arguments⁷⁰ in order to recapitulate the mental steps of discovery⁷¹, while such proofs are considered futile in the field of phenomenology, “owing to the *a priori* region of transcendence”.⁷² Nevertheless, in philosophy of religion it is not unusual to apply formal logical tools to prove the existence of God. Scheler, in accordance with the classical intention to understand the ramble of the soul toward God, but still in contrast to the Church Fathers’ belief that the divine “is not demonstrable by ‘proofs’ derived from facts of extra-religious experience”.⁷³ On the contrary, the only possible proof, in his view, living through a religious act in the human soul is a unique ‘personal demonstration’ of the existence of God.⁷⁴

To characterize the types of possible demonstration, verification, and proofs in relation to the existence of God, Scheler developed the triad of *Aufweis*, *Nachweis* and *Beweis*.⁷⁵ Scheler recognized that “to teach the way to *discover* God is something basically other than to prove his existence.”⁷⁶

To understand Scheler’s ideas, let’s review and separate these three notions *Aufweis*, *Nachweis*, and *Beweis*. *Beweis*, in Scheler’s view, is a strict, scientific type of proof, a judgement not being applicable in religious phenomenology. It can be true or false with regard to the understanding of the experienced, but it does not apply to the experience itself. In other words, *Beweis* is not able to transform the experience at all. *Aufweis*, in contrast, fulfils the demonstration of the exist-

⁶⁹ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 260.

⁷⁰ BRIAN DAVIS, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, Oxford-New York: Oxford UP, 1993.

⁷¹ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 260.

⁷² MANFRED S. FRINGS, *The Mind of Max Scheler. The First Comprehensive Guide Based on the Complete Works*, Milwaukee: Marquette UP., 1997, ²2001, 134.

⁷³ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 255.

⁷⁴ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 255.

⁷⁵ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 255-260., FRINGS, *The First Comprehensive Guide*, 135-36.

⁷⁶ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 260.

ence of God. It is “appointing toward God, an invitation and a challenge to the yet unbelieving to open his eyes and to see for himself.”⁷⁷ Furthermore, *Aufweis* functions like an index, which immediately leads the unbeliever toward the gate of the religious act, but the act itself is not included. At last, *Nachweis* embraces the rational rethinking of what has already been experienced.⁷⁸ Also, it represents both the consideration and protection of the already known. Notwithstanding, the experience touches the ‘pre-logical phase’ of cognition, whether it is labelled as deception or not, but it is absolutely impossible to take the religious act as a mistake or error which needs to be corrected.⁷⁹

To conclude this section, Scheler did not recognize scientific proof (*Beweis*). He rather applied demonstration (*Aufweis*) and verification / recapitulation of the already experienced (*Nachweis*). Such method is considered as higher, personal and a more valuable act, than to prove the existence of God. It is because the latter does not require personal commitment or participation. *Aufweis* and *Nachweis*, by contrast, not only presuppose a personal participation to discover the divine, but also to oblige the soul to analyse and recapitulate the experienced. Likewise, Scheler’s method accompanied the two highest possible knowledge: the essential and salvific knowledge.

B. Essential and Salvific Knowledge

Although closely related, fundamental differences exist between essential and salvific knowledge. In that context, in this section, I explore the following: their differentiation and two interrelated questions.

⁷⁷ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 260.

⁷⁸ Religious experience is primordially individual and private, thus it is subjective. Nevertheless, it should, at the same time, be objective. It is not affected by the veracity or falseness of logical judgments. It is also impossible to question the unity and the constancy of the experience. The process of valuation thereof, however, can be inaccurate. How and why, it is the task of the sociology of knowledge to describe. On philosophical side, the description concerns the question of the ‘forms of knowledge’. Cf. DUNLOP, *Scheler*, 61-69; FRINGS, *Max Scheler*, 176-184 and 187-193.; FRINGS, *The First Comprehensive Guide*, 220-21.

⁷⁹ FRINGS, *The First Comprehensive Guide*, 220-21.

The questions are: First, how the religious act is connected to the knowledge of God? Secondly, in which sense do we possess this knowledge?

First and foremost, essential knowledge is not yet the original sense of metaphysics, called metaphysics of the absolute or the metaphysics of second order by Scheler, but it is the prolegomena to the absolute (*ens a se*). Second, essential knowledge requires moral preconditions of love, humility, and self-mastery to swing over (*moralischer Aufschung*) the natural/environmental world. The three moral acts are, 1) love of the absolute value and being, 2) humility of the natural self and the ego, 3) ascetic attitude of self-mastery over all instinctual impulses of life.⁸⁰ This is the very context where essential knowledge takes on a special meaning. At last, essential knowledge seems to be fundamentally different from salvific/metaphysical knowledge. Namely, essential knowledge aims to shatter our idols. Scheler has an extensive theory about the nature of idols.⁸¹ However, not to be side tracked; this paper does not explore its depths. I have already mentioned that the reasons of such can vary, why the religious act may lose its direction to God, therefore can be misinterpreted by believing in idols instead of the divine. Now, I want to add, what Scheler did not elaborate in detail, that the removal of idols is merely an initial step toward the unique love of God. What Scheler did imply in his late years that man has an enormous mental and emotional capability to both disengage from his own environmental nature and shatter his idols (mentally), and then rebuild his world.

The significant contrast here between the two knowledge, considering the results, is that by essential knowledge man can destroy his idols, while salvific/metaphysical knowledge aims to restore the broken reality by using the religious act.

What is well established in Scheler's thoughts is that salvific/metaphysical knowledge by the aid of religious act, insofar as its direction is proper, goes hand in hand for the sake of a new, authentic reality by repopulating the broken, empty and hallowed dimension of reality. To simplify, with essential knowledge we can shatter metaphysics of the first order (First Philosophy), and in salvific knowledge we gain a new reality, the metaphysics of the second order or the metaphysics of the absolute.

⁸⁰ SCHELER, *Problems of Religion*, 89-98.

⁸¹ Max SCHELER, GW3, 215-92. To English translation see "The Idols of Self-Knowledge", in Max SCHELER, *Selected Philosophical Essays* (transl. David R. Lachterman), Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1973, 3-98., SCHELER, *Ordo Amoris*, 114-116.

Let me recapitulate in which manner we know God in Scheler's thoughts. Naturally, there are classical discussions of the characteristics of God, among others, such as omnipotence, omnipresence or invisibility. For Scheler, however, who supports the religious act as being positive; God connotes personal contribution. The knowledge, however, what makes a real difference in his phenomenology is the 'personal demonstration' of the existence of God by active participation. Love as one of the main prerequisite to realize this knowledge, plays a primordial role in the process of demonstration.

An authentic knowledge of God for Scheler requires a total and *radical self-identification* with the direction of the spiritual loving act of divinity. This spiritual act of the person has a twofold direction: one is directed to the world (*amare mundum in Deo*); another has a self-direction in terms of God: the love of oneself (*amare Deum in Deo*).⁸² To know God, therefore means an active, personal participation in God and for God. What is the motivation to participate in this twofold spiritual act? The absolute nothingness – Scheler would say.

Nothingness appears because man shatters his natural, primitive realistic environment by means of the *experimental break*, and anchors his centre of actuality "out of the world". Being out of the everydayness of the world generates "*absolute nothingness*". Nihilism calls for a radical personal participation and protection of God and of the others: this is the love of God and the knowledge of God in Scheler's thoughts.

6. Summary and Conclusion

To recapitulate the main line of thoughts of this paper, after having shown a historical overview of the emotion theories and Scheler's place therein, I considered the nature of love in his thoughts by elaborating the idea of the religious act and the questions of how feelings and love are differentiated from one another. I elucidated that love is an active phenomenon, an emotion, while feeling is more passive, a function. I introduced the religious act by showing its dimensions and characteristics. Then, I reviewed the typology of knowledge, with special concerns to the essential and metaphysical/salvific knowledge as the most important types of knowledge in Scheler's religious phenomenology. In the fifth section, I explored the differentiation of these two, and highlighted the connection be-

⁸² SCHELER, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 164.

tween a religious act and salvific knowledge. At last, I showed the primordial role of love in our knowledge of God.

Religious act, in terms of love, is one of the central ideas in Scheler's phenomenology. It is a positive, *noetic* act, having the powerful capacity to restore the shattered reality. Nothing else but the terror from the absolute nothingness compels human person to discover the ultimate power of love: the love of God for the sake of Him and for the others.

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Abbreviations

GW: *Gesammelte Werke*, Max Scheler's collected works in 15 volumes. The editors: Maria Scheler 1933, 1954-1969; Manfred S. Frings 1970-2008. The publishers: 1954-1985: Berne, Franke Verlag, Switzerland. Since 1985 Bouvier Verlag, Bonn, Germany.

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GW6 *Schriften zur Sociologie und Weltanschauungslehre* (Berne: Franke, 1963).

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