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THE CASE FOR PARTICIPATORY REALISM IN SCHELER'S ETHICS

abstract

If we accept that Scheler is not that clear in the Formalismus about the ontological status of values, might one ask how phenomenological commitments relate to value ontology. Consider Phil Blosser's words:

...the chief defect of Scheler's phenomenology, like all philosophies of value, was the weakness of his treatment of the ontology of values. The insufficient development of this fundamental aspect of Value Theory has left it especially vulnerable in a philosophical climate that has been distinguished, since the 1930s, by the major "growth industry" of Heideggerian ontology, making this appear probably the most critical defect of Scheler's Formalismus.*

In this paper, I will argue that being-an-act (Akt-sein) will provide us with insight into Scheler's value ontology. My efforts rest on two fundamental premises: showing how Scheler's phenomenology opens up into ontology, and how being-an-act is understood with that opening in mind in Scheler's Idealism and Realism essay.

In Part 1, I argue how phenomenologists can reify one-side of the intentional relation and generate different ontologies, and these thoughts underlie the opening of the Idealism and Realism. In Part 2, I show how being-an-act opens up into ontology. In Part 3, I reveal how the participatory sense of realism is shown in the intentional relation, and how persons participate in value. In the final section, the "ontologization" of the intentional relation is found in the problem of reality.

**Philip Blosser, Scheler's Critique of Kant's Ethics, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1995), 16.*

keywords

Scheler, realism, ontology, ethics

1. Scheler offers us a glimpse into his ontological turn in his “Idealism-Realism” essays. This text opens up with a criticism of both idealism and critical realism with respect to three errors. First, both positions start on a false statement of the question. Second, both positions offer unsatisfactory understanding of the parts of the problem. Third, both positions share in the “false presupposition that we cannot separate what we call the existence or reality (*Realität*) of any object (whether of the internal or external world, another self, a living being, an inanimate thing and what we call its nature (*So-sein*)”¹ We cannot separate out the existence or reality of an object from its nature when it is immanent to knowledge or reflexive knowledge more generally.

For Scheler, this inseparability is a deeply troubling since both idealism and critical realism are ontological theses motivated by how we fundamentally relate to objects. Both critical realism and idealism of consciousness treat the nature of an object as inseparable from its possible immanence. Understanding this separability thesis and its negation is a key to navigating both idealism and critical realism offered in *Idealism and Realism*.

First, any realism accepts the fact that there exists a mind independent of its object. In Scheler’s thought, this mind-independence amounts to accepting that *the existence of an object is always transcendent to every possible consciousness*. If the object exists apart from any knowing consciousness, the object can never be the content of any knowledge or consciousness for that matter. This error forces our hand to accept the wholly independent status of the object. The object stands detached and separated from every knowing consciousness. In such a view, there is no phenomenological givenness to consciousness. Instead, at best, we only have representations or signs that stand in for the character of the object. A similar line of reasoning can apply to idealism. According to Scheler, idealism is the thesis that all existing objects reside in the mind. It follows that such a thesis is committed to an erroneous falsehood. Thus, *there is no existence transcendent to or independent of consciousness*. As such, if the object exists as a constant dependence of the mind, the mind’s constant operation is needed in order to sustain the transcendence of an object. In idealism, being an object is conflated with being-an-act to the point that any articulation of the *given* is

1 Max Scheler, “Idealism and Realism” in *Selected Philosophical Essays* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973): 288-356. Scheler, *Idealism*, 288 here.

vitiated. There is no separability, and there is no getting at the core of what is experienced. The mind is in constant circular reference to itself such that whence it understands an object it cannot get out of itself to experience the transcendence of the given rendering phenomenological insight all but impossible.

Both positions reify one aspect of the overall intentional structure described by all phenomenological thinkers. In Scheler, the intentional relation has two sides—being-an-act and being-an-object. In Husserl, the subject constitutes the object. The constituting subject is one-side, the constituted object is the other. Phenomenological tensions arise when one puts more stock into one side of this intentional-relation than the other. If objects are not given to us in acts, but instead subsist on their own, independent of being given to acts, then a non-phenomenological realism is true. If the subject's constituting is given prominence over objects to the point objects are rendered as mere representations of minds, then idealism is true. As such, the phenomenologist walks a tight rope between both sides of the intentional relation. Scheler maintains this balance when he claims that one cannot reify either side. Such reifications can take hold when one is convinced entirely that a science can explain the sense of the world or that in explanation we must prioritize one-side of the intentional relation over the other.

In Scheler, acts flash forth from spirit and are non-objectifiable. The being of an act "*possesses its own mode of being only in the performance*" of the act.² For Scheler, experiencing is its own mode of evidence similar to Husserl.

In the broadest sense, evidence denotes a universal primal phenomenon of intentional life, namely ... the quite preeminent mode of consciousness that consists in the self-appearance, the self-exhibiting, the self-giving, of an affair, an affair-complex, a universality, a value...³

We *participate* in the intentional relation with the world, and the participatory aspect of being-an-act captures the truest sense of Scheler's ontology yet-to-come. Scheler insists that any act can be in relation to any possible kind of being. Acts can be "analyzed in terms of its character or essence and its existence in some mode."⁴ In this interpretation, intentionality and acts become the very ontological categories later on.

2 Scheler, *Idealism*, 291. Italics are mine.

3 Edmund Husserl. *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology* trans. Dorion Cairns (Martin Nijhoff: The Hague, 1960), 57/92.

4 Scheler, *Idealism*, 292.

To understand my interpretation, we must understand how the intentional relation opens up into ontology.

2. It is by no accident that Scheler begins next by advocating that knowledge is prior to consciousness and is itself ultimately “a unique and underivable ontological relationship (*Seinverhältnis*) between two beings.”⁵ This underivable ontological relationship is the irreducible participatory aspect of being-an-act.

A knows any being B when A participates in the essence or nature of B, without B's suffering any alteration in its nature or essence because of A's participation in it.⁶

Thus, participation is ontological through and through. When Albert knows the tree is alive, Albert's knowing the essence of the tree requires an intentional relation. In vital feeling, one can apprehend the growth and vitality of the forest. One picks up on features of the growths or decay of the forest. Trees are *given as* unfurling towards the sun or *given as* wilting away in an unhealthy industrialized landscape. These aspects are *given in feeling*. At their root, *all feelings are modes of apprehension and participation*. There is no separable moment between apprehension of an object and apprehension requires participation in the world. Feeling-states are affected in relation to the world, but in their own directedness, persons participate in the very intentional relation at root in act being. For all the phenomenologists, subjectivity folds into the world, and the world folds back upon persons too. Thus, ontological participation in the essence of a phenomenon can occur in either act or object, but for his value ontology, I find it rooted in his being-an-act. Yet, this interpretation can only work if phenomenology is linked with ontology in Scheler's work.

According to Scheler, participation is non-causal, but rather the source of creation itself.⁷ When we relive an essence in co-feeling (*Mitgefuehl*), we are participating in a phenomenon's essence. If I stand before the forest, close my eyes and take in its vitality in one breath, I can turn to another say, “Can you feel it?” Moreover, this participation-in-the-essence not only takes place with respect to intentional feeling, but also with respect to the already effected feeling-states and objective being.

⁵ Scheler, *Idealism*, 292.

⁶ Scheler, *Idealism*, 292, Italics Mine.

⁷ Notice how love realizes and creates value in Scheler's *Nature of Sympathy* trans. Peter Heath (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2011.), 150-159.

We say that further of B when A participates in B and B belongs to the order of objectifiable being, B becomes an objective being (Gegenstandsein) confusing the being of an object (Sein des Gegenstandes) with the fact that an entity is an object is one of the fundamental mistakes of idealism.⁸

The being of an object is that which can be given phenomenologically. That an entity is an object has no bearing on its givenness, and notice in the passage above, Scheler attributes the becoming of an “objective being” to a fact of its participation and not its status as an object.

Now, I have been urging that the intentional relation is fundamentally participatory in a full-blown ontological sense. Scheler framed his definition of the intentional act to reflect this participatory status. An intentional act is defined as “the process of becoming (*Werdesein*) in A through which A participates in the nature or essence of B or that through which this participation is produced.”⁹ I come to be joyful through my participation in the essence of joy as experienced. Moreover, this ontological interpretation of participation is present in the *Formalismus* that discloses who we are as persons,

It is the person himself living in each of his acts, who permeates every act with his peculiar character. No knowledge of the nature of love, for instance, or of the nature of judgment can bring us one step nearer to the knowledge of how person A loves or judges person B; nor can a reference to the contents (values, state of affairs) given in each of these acts furnish this knowledge.¹⁰

Therefore, only participating in the essence of feeling discloses oneself to another. The knowledge of any particular act cannot bring us any closer to understanding that act itself without reference to the participating person. Notice the language of persons in Scheler's *Formalismus*. We only know the person “as a being that *executed acts*, and he is in no sense ‘behind’ or ‘above’ acts, or something standing ‘above’ the execution and processes of acts.”¹¹ Instead, the *whole person* is simply contained in every act and there is nothing prior, before, or outside that gives rise to knowing the person except that the person permeates each and every act that she executes through participation! Accordingly, execution is participation. The person *participates* in these acts wholly and concretely.

Just as the person is known through the execution of acts, participation

8 Scheler, *Idealism*, 292-93.

9 Scheler, *Idealism*, 293.

10 Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and the Non-Formal Ethics of Value: A New Attempt Toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 386.

11 Scheler, *Formalism*, 385.

in and functionalization of the essence are two sides of the same coin. In *Idealism and Realism*, we have evidence for this interpretation: “thoughts and intuitions belonging to the human mind first arise through ‘functionalization’ of insights into the essence of a thing, originally achieved in a single exemplary experience.”¹² Functionalization is the process whereby our ideas, concepts and the mind interact with reality. In that sense, Scheler’s understanding of functionalization is very much akin to that developed in pragmatism or the operative everydayness in Heidegger’s analysis of *Dasein*.¹³ In this way, the *a priori* in Scheler and Heidegger is a material or existential *a priori*. Unlike Kant, Scheler’s *a priori* originates in the ontological participation in the active sense implied by functionalization. If our ideas mesh and function in accordance with reality, then our ideas work. If they do not mesh and function in accordance with reality, then they do not “functionalize.” Thus, persons intuit essential interconnection of insight into the nature of things derived from this interaction (participation). In Scheler’s words, “all functional laws derive from original experience of objects.”¹⁴ These insights become the basis for the rules and norms governing our future participation. Meaning arises only from an interaction with the world through which all other subsequent apprehension and meaning of the world are made possible. Therefore, functionalization is participation.

3. Scheler observes that every intention points “beyond the act and the contents of the act and intends something other than the act.”¹⁵ Being-an-act, therefore, gestures to an order and evidential insight not contained within the immediate immanence of the given. In this way, the *intentio* signifies “a goal directed movement toward something which one does not have oneself or has only partially and incompletely.”¹⁶ Contained within being-an-act is an insight, a givenness of a content that is not present, a form of absolute evidence. The immanent givenness in Scheler’s phenomenology therefore contains a sense of something or some structure beyond itself. Absolute evidence given in feeling is what Scheler calls value. According to Scheler, the transcendence of the intentional object in relation to the intention and its present content holds for every being-an-object. For

¹² Scheler, *Idealism*, 312.

¹³ For more on the connection between William James and Max Scheler, see my “The Jamesian Appeal of Scheler’s Felt Metaphysics” forthcoming in *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*, Spring 2014.

¹⁴ Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man* trans. August Brunner (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2010), 202.

¹⁵ Scheler, *Idealism*, 296.

¹⁶ Scheler, *Idealism*, 296.

Scheler, mathematical objects, like the pure number three, have no physical reality, but are an ideal quality (like values). These ideal qualities, Scheler says, are “produced from the *a priori* material of intuition in accordance with an operational law governing the steps of our thought and intuition.”¹⁷ Moreover, fictitious objects also possess the same level of transcendence. Scheler’s point is that proper to objects given to consciousness they acquire a transcendence all their own. For Scheler, a distinction can be introduced between the transcendence of the object *in principle* from the existential status of objects themselves. In the latter, we are involved with the object in many different ways. We can talk about the different existential relations we have towards the sun, yet the transcendence of the sun *in principle* allows us to focus on its givenness in its real concrete phenomenological depth.¹⁸ The distinction between transcendence in principle and existential status of objects does is remove our ability to ask about the ontological status of objects. My usage of “ontology” follows this line of thought. When I say “ontology,” I do not mean the reification of one side of the intentional relation on the part of the subject, namely, idealism, or the reification of objects, namely, realism. These two reifications are first introduced in *Idealism and Realism* since they are proffered as what Scheler calls the “problem of reality.” Instead, for Scheler and myself, *ontology has always meant the material unfolding of the intuitive givenness of a primordial affective depth at the heart of all existence to which all other forms of knowledge are subordinate*. Given the distinction of transcendence in principle from existential sense, it becomes silly to ask whether objects subsist in our minds or are produced by our minds. The problem of reality thus construed between idealism and realism has no traction. However what role does Scheler’s thought on transcendence of the object play? The consciousness of transcendence may make some headway about the problem of reality. In his articulation of the problem of reality, phenomenology opens up into an ontological space in Scheler’s work.

The transcendence of the object leads to an identifiability of the object in a plurality of acts. To use Scheler’s example, no matter the being-an-act in relation to the meaning of the sun, the sun will be the same sun whether I relate to it as an astronomical body or a mysterious disk that hides behind mountains. This identifiability can hold for one object or many, nor is this identifiability restricted to ideal objects alone like Scheler’s number three. Identifiability is the result of a definite operational law and the same material of intuition that produces the act of the given prior to any sense-

17 Scheler, *Idealism*, 296.

18 Scheler, *Idealism*, 303.

experience. The transcending quality of the given object constitutes the sum of the same in all these manifestations. For Scheler, there is only one-way consciousness of transcendence can enter into the problem of reality properly considered.

The acts which consciousness is present can bring the givenness of reality...into "objective" form, and can therefore elevate that which is given in this way as real to the status of a real "object". But with this, the contribution of consciousness of transcendence is at an end.¹⁹

In other words, the being-an-act when described puts us into relation with what is to be described-as-real. The phenomenological attitude can bring aspects of reality into givenness. These aspects of reality, however, consist in our intentional relation to reality. When a phenomenon is properly given phenomenologically, the consciousness of its object's transcendence can contribute no more to the status of its reality. All that can be established is the fact that acts relate to objects: in Scheler's words, "*Whenever there is consciousness, objects transcendent to consciousness must also be given to consciousness. Their relationship is indissoluble.*"²⁰ Self-consciousness and object arise in relation to each other simultaneously and through the same process. This process is ontological participation.

The intentional relation between the spiritual-act center of the person and the objects that accompany those acts is a process. This process does not occur in any one primary cognitive egoic act. Instead, the process is more primordial and fundamental, and this process is the insight I have articulated about Scheler's phenomenological thinking. Phenomenological description is an attempt to acquire insight into the pre-reflective modes of how experience is first given to us. As such, "Consciousness of an object precedes all judgment and is not originally constituted by judgment."²¹ The sense of the real only comes from paying attention to the intentional relation, the fact that consciousness is a consciousness of reality. The *sense* of the world originates only from the standpoint of intentional experience, that is, in terms of how consciousness encounters the objects toward which it is directed.

Here, in *Idealism and Realism*, what Scheler is doing with this intentional-relational structure finds expression in the "pulling back" of the act in which "the ecstatic act knowingly turns back onto itself and comes upon a

¹⁹ Scheler, *Idealism*, 298.

²⁰ Scheler, *Idealism*, 298. Emphasis Mine.

²¹ Scheler, *Idealism*, 299.

central self as its starting point.”²² The unfolding structure of an ecstatic consciousness and its encounter is given in a reality (*Realität*) of resistance (*Widerstand*). Reality discloses itself to us as resistance. This resistance throws us back upon our self, and in this inward awakening of resistance we find reality disclosed personally. Here, Scheler gives flesh to the intentional relation. He “ontologizes” the process by which we come to know the simultaneous occurrence of self-consciousness (being-an-act) and the consciousness of the object (being-an-object). In giving flesh to the process of the intentional relation, Scheler’s phenomenology opens up into ontology. The meaning of the intentional relation finds concretion in reality’s resistance. Reality’s resistance generates the conditions of that intentional relation, and Scheler informs us about the nature of givenness itself:

The consciousness of transcendence shows how mere ecstatic possession of reality on the level of immediately experienced resistance of an X to the central drives of life passes over onto the reflexive and this objective possession of reality.²³

According to Scheler, reality is encountered as a resistance to the life-drive (*Lebensdrang*). These “central drives of life” are carried into the very being of our relation, but so is the transcendence of the object. Later, Scheler will develop a metaphysics in which both spirit (*Geist*) and life-drive will each have their own developed principles in his unfinished philosophical anthropology. For now, the ontology of value rests on the awareness of how phenomenology opens spaces of inquiry that develop into these specific areas of concern. In my interpretation, there are many forces converging on that experience. These energies come at the cost of constantly undergoing experience of the world and how the feeling of reality constitutes and renews a person’s experience of reality. Yet, phenomenology can suspend in part aspects of our ontological participation in the world, but phenomenology cannot suspend reality entirely—that is, the sense of reality (*Realität*) entailed in resistance. Part of fleshing out the conditions under which phenomenology and the intentional relation manifest is the ontological delimitation of what each may purport. Reality slips away from our grasp, and we can only catch glimpses of the transcendence of an intentional object in the phenomenological attitude.

It is the prior passage “the ecstatic act knowingly turns back onto itself and comes upon a central self as its starting point” that struck me as evidence of

²² Scheler, *Idealism*, 299.

²³ Scheler, *Idealism*, 300.

the move from phenomenology as the description of immanent structures in the whole of *Idealism and Realism* to a phenomenological ontology. In fleshing out the intentional relation, Scheler provides further description of how phenomenology becomes ontological. Quickly after the above passage, Scheler posits several spheres of irreducible reality:

1. The sphere ens a se, absolute being in contrast to relative being;
2. The spheres of the external and internal world;
3. the sphere of the creature and its the environment;
4. The sphere of the I, the thou and society.²⁴

For each sphere, Scheler provides a basic law: “the being of the sphere itself is always given prior to the individual empirical objects, which are given through the various types of perception and intuiting.”²⁵ In other words, these spheres of being possess a givenness, a sense of them already in reality prior to empirical study. This givenness occurs within these spheres of being, and Scheler has prescribed the totality in these spheres of what can be given. Again, this passage is evidence for a phenomenology that puts us into contact with reality, suspends the fact that reality resists our affective drives in it, but in so doing, phenomenology identifies those transcending aspects in relation to and beyond me.²⁶

Moreover, these four spheres do not map onto value-modalities or value-feelings all that well. In some sense, the absolute reality more than likely refers to that which is absolutely given, and in Scheler only that which expresses itself in spirit that could even occupy the absolute sphere of being—God and persons. However, the spheres of the internal and external world occur at all levels, but the sphere of the creature and its environment occur most prominently in vital value and feeling. Given this difficulty, I only want to point out that resistance now comes into play and Scheler becomes mindful of the limitations of phenomenological attitude. For this reason, I turn to characterize precisely where this journey of Scheler’s comes to fruition much later in *Idealism and Realism* in Section 8: The Problem of Reality.

24 Scheler, *Idealism*, 300.

25 Scheler, *Idealism*, 301.

26 Scheler articulates that spirit is independent of human organization and phenomenology, and while “the structure of this world and the structure of spirit form one essentially connected structure in all their parts,” we can apprehend the form spirit takes independently of how we are organized: God (157). See his “Phenomenology and the Theory of Cognition” in *Selected Philosophical Essays* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973): 136-201.

4. The problem of reality refers to the two central questions opening up *Section 8* in *Idealism and Realism*. Scheler asks,

What is the givenness of reality? What is experienced [Erlebt] when anything whatever is experienced as real?²⁷ Scheler calls this the “question of the lived-experience of reality.” Since it is the first question, it reveals the final collapse of pure eidetic description motivating phenomenology. Instead, Scheler’s phenomenology has become a phenomenological inquiry into the ontologically participatory nature of intentional lived-experience. Lived experience becomes conjoined with a sense of the real. The real is now reality-as-a-whole, and its givenness. Reality is given in the ontological dimension of life. Unlike Heidegger, Scheler regards the vital experience of life as the point of contact with the world and its disclosure. Life is given in terms of the unfulfillment of drives that stem from worldly resistance.

This drive of life becomes more and more prominent in Scheler’s thought. One could see that already in the *Formalismus* the vital sphere of both values and feeling is the most significantly developed of all his distinctions, and in the *Nature of Sympathy* the analysis of the psychic bonds of community are articulated with a figurative sense of organism.²⁸ For Scheler, the organic movement of life is not simply contained in a distinction between life and nonlife. Throughout nature, Scheler’s sees an animating principle of movement, and this movement in us is the tendency to move from the life drives [Drang]²⁹ towards ever increasing modes of spiritualization.³⁰ In this way, the life drive is not random, but is an ordered striving towards higher modalities, and within us, it is a projection of possibilities. In a sense, participation is where vital-urge meets worldly resistance, and within that encounter, values are felt-as-real.

Heidegger put death first and foremost as that which lies ahead of ourselves. In this way, Heidegger used vitalistic symbols and expressions to which his existentialism could not reach any further. In other words, the whole of Being given is our being-onto-death. Unlike Heidegger, Scheler is putting us

27 Scheler, *Idealism*, 313.

28 Scheler will even call his metaphysics a “meta-biology.”

29 I like rendering *Drang* as vital drive, or vital urges of life. I do not think that Frings’s later translation of *impulsion* connects this to the prominence of the vital sphere more generally in both feeling and value-content. While it might not be clear to the reader in this study, *Drang* is put into operation alongside *Geist* in Scheler’s later metaphysics found in his phenomenology of religion and philosophical anthropology.

30 For evidence of this increasing spiritualization, see Scheler’s “Philosopher’s Outlook” in *Philosophical Perspectives* trans. Oscar Haac. (Boston: Beacon Hill Press, 1958), 9.

first and foremost into contact with a greater whole. Scheler pays attention to the givenness of reality, and the disclosure of the world alludes to senses beyond the vitalistic drive of life intimated in Heidegger's existentialism. Scheler describes the givenness of spirit even though the ontological dimension of human life is manifested within the movement of life's drives. In Scheler, the spiritual potencies reside within *Drang* even though many may be drawn to interpreting a dualism in his thought.³¹ Spirit is always already manifest within life. The phenomenological attention to the givenness on the part of Scheler apprehends these two-aspects of the world, yet these aspects are disclosed as one and the same.

As I said, the vital drives encounter the world and the world resists our efforts to fulfill its projected interest and prohibition. What I find 'real' is then that which withstands or resists the emergence of vital drive's projected interest. The sense of our ego emerges from such resistance. This encounter is the source of realism for what I am calling the participatory realism about values. Within the sphere of life, I value the serene landscape of a park before me. I lose myself here from the de-personalization common from living an industrial life inside an office cubicle. I feel at peace here in the park. Say a commercial developer is petitioning the state to develop this park. Even though developing the natural landscape will bring jobs and an influx of well-paying jobs, the value of the forest is higher as a place of serenity than the economic utility it could provide, and it is important to the local community that such a place persist unspoiled. Given that economic interests occur as agreeable in the sensible sphere, the pristine serenity of the forest is *felt as more valuable* in its current natural form as a green space in the vital sphere. Moreover, in our age, these green spaces are disappearing rapidly.

Their rarity reflects the disordered heart that has captured our age and can only feel the value of the forest as instrumental to profit. In my valuing, I experience the values as felt. They are *felt in resistance* to persons blind to the serenity of the forest and natural landscapes.

Strife constitutes life. Strife is the experience of resistance when our desires or wants, and even our most basic vital-urges clash against a world that does not yield to them. The world is disclosed as that which resists and challenges us. It is an ontological principle of the world that its reality is given only in terms of resistance, and the vital urges are constantly in relation with the world. This principle of strife cuts all the way into our vital urges. We would have no urges if there were no strife and no resistance, as in the

31 I have to really thank Kenneth Stickers for bringing this to my attention.

example above. Moreover, this principle of strife cuts all the way down into our vital drives. Vital drive encounters the world in the experience of resistance preceding consciousness of experience. The vital drive's experience of worldly-resistance is primordial; it is a foundation in itself just as much as the world is saturated in emotions prior to any other perceptual or epistemic act. In this way, this ontological dimension of experience is prereflective.

The primordially of worldly resistance means that humans suffer from an inability to fulfill these drives. Human life is, then, one of suffering. Therefore, Scheler reveals that the impulse behind philosophy, art and science is to suspend the movement of this suffering. As Kenneth Stickers has noted, "Thus the task of all thinking—philosophical, religious, scientific, etc.—is, according to Scheler, to eliminate this and this means to make the world less real."³² By suspending suffering, we do not make the world "less real" in a full-blown ontological sense. Instead, we cultivate strategies of coping with that suffering, modes of *participation*.

In conclusion, I have attempted to interpret *Idealism and Realism* as a way to explain Scheler's value ontology. Values are given to us in experience and insofar as that givenness occurs in a phenomenological ontology that can be gleaned in *Idealism and Realism*, a phenomenologically-based realism can be defended. While the interpretation may not be novel in relation to Scheler's work in particular, such an understanding can be quite novel if phenomenology can be extended to value ontologies in metaethics. In this short piece, my engagement with Scheler's *Idealism and Realism* should be considered the hermeneutic basis for participatory realism.

³² Kenneth W. Stickers, "Introduction to Scheler" in *Problems of a Sociology of Knowledge* trans. Manfred Frings (New York: Routledge, 1980), 11.

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