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Scheler, Heidegger and Hermeneutics of Value

Abstract. A responsive moral phenomenology must take note of value's givenness. While I do not argue for this claim here, I want to explore the possibility of how value can be *given* in both Heidegger and Scheler. The "how of givenness" is the manner in which some thing can be given, or accessed phenomenologically. Thus, if we take a look at both Scheler and Heidegger, we can address their conceptions of phenomenology as limiting and enabling the givenness of value. On a whole, phenomenology's development issues more from Heidegger's influence than Scheler. Heidegger interprets value as *present-at-hand* and I argue this follows from the limits imposed by his hermeneutic phenomenology. Values are ontic for Heidegger. In Scheler's magnum opus the *Formalismus*, he is silent on what values are exactly, but describes them as given. Scholars familiar with Scheler's work will note that many times in the *Formalismus*, Scheler will assert the ideality of value and refer to the rank of values as an eternal order. However, he will never spell out the ontological nature of value nor how it is that they are eternal. Thus, if we can establish the givenness of value itself and what that requires, then we can recommend one phenomenological approach over the other. Thus, this paper is not an analysis of the historical relation between Scheler and Heidegger. Rather, this paper works out value's givenness itself in relation by putting two phenomenological frameworks together.

Keywords: Scheler, Heidegger, Ethics, Value, Givenness

Introduction to the Problem

Scheler offers tiny clues as to what he thinks phenomenology can do for him in the *Formalismus*. These insights are given in the introduction between the central preoccupations of method. For Heidegger, phenomenology is the way into working out the problem of Being in his fundamental ontology in *Being and Time*, yet the problem presents itself when Heidegger construes phenomenology as a hermeneutic turn. Like Scheler, Heidegger is preoccupied with method, but Heidegger's "method" comes across indirectly as a consequence of interrogating Dasein about the question of the meaning of Being and the history of ontology.

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In what follows, I want to ask the question: What is the givenness of value? How is value experienced in its givenness? If I can answer this question, then it is the phenomenological criterion of value itself that can answer which phenomenological framework better suits value's givenness. I will first discuss Scheler and then move to Heidegger later.

I. Scheler's Intuition of Essences

Scheler's conception of phenomenology is given in Chapter 2 of the *Formalismus*. In the *Formalismus*, he outlines his concepts of the a priori and phenomenological intuition, or what he calls "essential intuiting" (*Wesensschau*). Scheler designates "as 'a priori' all those ideal units of meaning and those propositions that are self-given by way of an immediate intuitive content in the absence of any kind of positing." (Scheler 1973a, 48) Like Husserl, phenomenology is opposed to the natural attitude and is therefore a special type of experience. (Frings 1996, 18) In the natural attitude, we regard phenomena as a natural fact described by the sciences, and in this standpoint, phenomena are described from a third-personal perspective. The natural attitude seeks only to describe from an objective or impartial perspective. It does not pay attention to how phenomena are disclosed to us in the first-personal perspective, and the natural attitude takes for granted the sense-constituting role of subjectivity in experience. The natural attitude reveals phenomena in its non-experienced features, and has, therefore, a skewed interpretation. Phenomenological description is the attempt to render experiential elements clear that undergird and constitute experience itself *as we truly live through them* by remaining true to both the subjectivity of the experiencer and the enjoined constituted object. If I told my wife that *love* is merely the evolutionary adaptive strategy to facilitate human pair-bonding and that we need not concern ourselves with the actual content of love (as it is lived), I would seriously disregard what it means to be in love in the first place. Moreover, the third-personal perspective does not and cannot address *what it is like to be in love*.² Thus, Scheler opposes the propensity of the natural attitude to posit and take for granted the origins of how acts constitute the meaning of phenomena. Instead, meaning-constitution of an act can only be apprehended in absolute immanence and we must pay specific attention to what is *given* in experience. What is given in experience is how a phenomenon is lived through *within* experience. For Scheler, attempting a description is more in line with an attitudinal approach than a well-established method. This also marks a considerable difference between him and Husserl.

² The priority of this type of act is central to the entire sphere of moral experience in Scheler.

...phenomenology is neither the name of a new science nor a substitute for the word philosophy; it is the name of an attitude of spiritual seeing in which one can see or experience something which otherwise remains hidden, namely, a realm of facts of a particular kind. I say attitude, not method. A method is a goal-directed procedure for *thinking about* facts...before they have been fixed by logic, and second, of a procedure of *seeing*... That which is seen and experienced is given only in the seeing and experiencing of the act itself, in its being acted out; it appears in that act and only in it. (Scheler 1973b, 137-138)

For Scheler, phenomenological description is about describing the sphere of acts in which we experience the world. As products of “spiritual seeing,” these descriptions aim at the primordial acts prior to all other cognition and experience. In such a way, the phenomenologist attempts to retrieve the “most intensely vital and most immediate contact with the world itself, that is with those things in the world with which it is concerned and these things as they are immediately given to experience.” (Scheler 1973b, 138) Experience, according to Scheler, means the immediately given nature of phenomena and these phenomena “are ‘in themselves there’ only in this act.” (Scheler 1973b, 138) It is only within the sphere of acts in which we have a living contact with the world, and it is only as a unity of these acts we experience each other as persons.

For Scheler, the immediate apprehension of whatness/essence cannot be disclosed by scientific thinking at all. Instead, the content of that immediate apprehension is what enables our efforts to understand science. Essences reveal the intelligibility and meaning of the world given in experience. Then, science is an abstraction of phenomenological experience. In Scheler’s terms “we can also say that essences and their interconnections are a priori “given” “prior” to all experience.” (Scheler 1973a, 49) Scheler equates phenomenological intuition with phenomenological experience. (Scheler 1973b, 48)

In phenomenology, this connection between act-center and the world is collapsed in how experience is undergone, and this is called “intentionality.” The act-center is consciousness of something. Anytime I am fearful, I am fearful of the spider. When I perceive, I am perceiving the tree. There is no moment in which consciousness is not taking an object. Thus, we are constantly undergoing moments of intentional relation with the world, and it is phenomenology that attempts to retrieve how it is that experience is undergone by careful attention to what we intuit as given within this intentional structure. Scheler’s term for intentionality that

emphasizes the constant unfolding linkage of acts and the world is *interconnection*.

An essence is not mysterious for the phenomenologist. Instead, essence refers only to ‘what-ness’ of a thing (*Was-sein*). For Scheler, it does not refer to a universal or particular *concept* of a thing. For example, if I have a blue thing in front of me, the essence “blue” is given in the universal concept of the thing as well as the particular experience of the thing in question. Therefore, the essence is the whatness that carries over into both the universal and particular conception of a thing. In this way, the phenomenological essence is neither a particular thing, or a universal abstraction or ideality. Instead, the phenomenological essence is the mode of givenness exhibited within experience and these modes of givenness constitute experience of the phenomenon as such. Therefore, it is wrong to say that the phenomenological content can be reified to support any particular ontology, and this is the reason why Philip Blosser articulates the weakness of Scheler’s thought and relationship it has acquired in relation to Heidegger’s fundamental ontology. On this, Blosser writes

...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*. (Blosser 1995, 16)

Blosser is not alone in his assessment. In addition, Stephen Schneck says “In accepting phenomenology, Scheler was already steeped in the life philosophies and was committed to an *unrefined metaphysical position* to an as yet undefined metaphysical position.” (Schneck 1987, 31) Scheler’s sense of ontology remains tenuous and is not fully developed in the *Formalismus* in a complete sense. Support for this interpretation can also be seen in what little Scheler says about essences.

Essences fill out both sides of the interconnection in terms of acts and propositions. Let us describe the latter. Scheler writes,

Whenever we have such essences and such interconnections among them, the *truth* of propositions that find their fulfillment in such essences is totally independent of the entire sphere of observation and description, as well as of what is established in inductive experience. This truth is also independent, quite obviously of all that enters into causal

explanation. It can neither be verified nor refuted by this kind of “experience.” (Scheler 1973a, 49)

In other words, essences pinpoint the interconnections between what is given originally prior to experience to such an extent that this originally prior sense is *independent* of the empirical determinations about experience. However, he does not develop what it means for phenomenology to be *independent*. The term “independent” follows from Scheler’s description of “immanent experience.” By immanent, he means “only *what* is *intuitively* in an act of experiencing” and by contrast, “non-phenomenological experience is in principle an experience through or by means of symbols and, hence *mediated* experience that never gives things “themselves’.” (Scheler 1973a, 51) Thus, phenomenological descriptions are independent from *mediation* of any symbols, or representations. In other words, they are not conditioned in any way, and immanence can only be disclosed to acts of experience, the being-in-an-act of experience.

Phenomenological facts are disclosed in acts but without any mediation. In this way, Scheler describes the essential interconnections that are possible to address phenomenologically.

- (1) the essences (and their interconnections) of the *qualities* and other thing-contents (*Sachgehalte*) given in acts (things-phenomenology) (*Sächphanomenologie*);
- (2) the essences of *acts themselves* and their relations of foundation (phenomenology of acts or foundational orders);
- (3) their interconnections *between the essence of acts and those of things* [*zwischen Akt- und Sachwesenheiten*] (e.g. values are given in feeling, colors in seeing, sounds in hearing etc.) (Scheler 1973a, 71-72)

Scheler’s ontological commitments are inadequately developed, and this makes them unclear. Does Scheler want to secure an ontological underpinning for his personalism from the brief treatment he gives it in the *Formalismus*? A passage in the *Phenomenology and the Theory of Cognition* provides support to such a reading linking his phenomenological efforts to future efforts of ontology. “Essential connections and essences have an ontological meeting from the start...the *ontology of the spirit and world* precedes any theory of cognition.” (Scheler 1973b, 158) Here, Scheler emphasizes the independence of phenomenological description from the causal sciences, in particular various epistemic theories of cognition, *must first presuppose the phenomenological priority of how spirit and world are first encountered in conscious acts*. Those very same acts are accessed through the essential intuiting of the phenomenological attitude to render it clear how being-in-an-act relates to the world.

In concluding this section, I explained some of the problematic features that accompany Scheler's thought about experience and how phenomena are *given*. I find Scheler's *Formalismus* wanting because by itself the language of phenomenology cannot get us very far when it concerns the ontology of value unless phenomenology becomes ontology. Clearly, Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology provides an example of phenomenology breaks into ontology, and it is where I turn to next.

II. Heidegger's Hermeneutical Phenomenology

Heidegger operates with a more skeptical, but equally complex conception of phenomenology. For Scheler, phenomenology accesses the foundations of meaning that later become concealed and taken for granted in the empirical sciences, or what he called "mediated" through signs and symbols. Heidegger denies a conception of phenomenological experience can access immediately pure phenomena. For him, the hermeneutic conception of phenomenology that arises in *Being and Time* conceives of the possibility of givenness as that which is always mediated, but brought into the clear. This difference will become apparent as I explain it from §31 and §32.

In what follows, I pay special attention to how this conception of phenomenology arises within the project of fundamental ontology and *Being and Time* as a whole. An entire work could trace out the consequences of hermeneutic phenomenology. Such an effort is certainly beyond the task of this work, but it is important also to keep in mind the methodological differences between Scheler and Heidegger before any exposition of Scheler's concepts and subsequent remedy can be introduced to the problem of dearth of value in Heidegger's fundamental ontology.

A central feature of Heidegger's fundamental ontology *qua* phenomenology involves the analysis of human beings not as epistemic agents, but as "Dasein." Dasein is being-in-the-world (*Sein-in-der-Welt*) and his name for "us." Heidegger seeks a solution to the meaning of Being in the very being that can pose the question before itself. It is therefore within Dasein (what Heidegger uses as a phenomenological term to stand for any being that can pose the question of its own existence to itself) that this concern arises. Dasein is described as Being-in-the-world. By understanding Dasein as being-in-the-world, Heidegger explicates the question of being in terms of the practical orientation we exhibit towards the world and others.

At the same time, Being-in-the-world is a collapse between Dasein and world. We come to understand ourselves only in light of the everyday contexts we find ourselves already in. We do not know a hammer from the detached perspective as just another epistemic object. Rather, we know the hammer from the contextual significance it possesses in a nexus of

instrumental relationships in which it is used. Thus, phenomenology attempts to bring to light that which is concealed over or taken for granted. Phenomenological description brings into explicit relief the hidden contexts and purposes that underscore practical interaction with the world. This point can only further be clarified if we explain understanding.

Under a hermeneutic conception, Dasein is centrally characterized as understanding, but as I have already emphasized this conception of understanding does not mean understanding only as knowledge. Understanding is not primarily a formal conception of knowledge that epistemologists analyze and consider primitively-basic to human experience. Rather, understanding is the implicit intelligibility that characterizes human activities as meaningful and already familiar in practice. When we understand objects, we understand them as neither objects with external properties, nor an explanation that attempts to stand over a phenomenon in a transhistorical sense either. (Heidegger 2008, 182/143) Instead, understanding is a primordial disclosure of possibilities of the world as a whole or the possibilities that pertain to my self-understanding as a historically mediated being thrown into the world.

Ontically, we often claim “to understand something” but for Heidegger we have to be clear. The ontic interpretations are those concealed over in the public cliché attitudes and natural attitude in Husserl and Scheler. Ontic explanations are unexamined and offer no primordial investigation of a fundamental ontology that hermeneutic phenomenology can. Heidegger offers a fundamental ontology through a hermeneutic phenomenology. He describes the ontological facticity of Dasein as the structure of care (*Sorge*). The structure of care Heidegger describes understanding as an *existentiale*—an ontologically constitutive characteristic of Dasein at pre-cognitive the layer of experience. Through the *existentiales*, one experiences the world. Accordingly, understanding is not a competence, but Being as existing, or what we might call a Being-possible. It is a *way of existing*. A candidate passage might help clarify:

In understanding, as an *existentiale*, that which we have such competence over is not a “what”, but Being as existing. The kind of Being which Dasein has, as potentiality-for-being, lies existentially in understanding. Dasein is not something present-at-hand which possesses its competence for something by way of an extra; it is primarily Being-possible. (Heidegger 2008, 183/143)

As seen above, Dasein is its “possibilities”, and those possibilities pertain not only to itself but how it understands Being as existing, as it already is thrown into the world. These possibilities are never *independent* of the world in the way we described in Scheler. In other words, Heidegger

does not think that possibilities are “free-floating potentiality-for-being in the sense of the liberty of indifference.” (Heidegger 2008, 183/144) In this way, possibilities are not like the “propositionalized” maxims of Kantian moral philosophy that have their source in something else other than being-in-the-world. Instead, Dasein is ontologically understood as its possibilities.

However, possibilities come already furnished in a world not of our own making. As he puts it,

As the potentiality-for-being which is *is*, it has let such possibilities pass by; it is constantly waiving the possibilities of its Being, or else it seizes upon them and makes mistakes. But this means that Dasein is Being-possible which has been delivered over to itself—*thrown possibility* through and through. Dasein is the possibility of Being-free *for* its ownmost potentiality-for-being. Its Being-possible is transparent to itself in different possible ways and degrees. (Heidegger 2008, 183/144)

In other words, Dasein is an undetermined potentiality full of possibilities it may choose for itself. Sometimes, it will make mistakes in that choosing, but it seizes upon those possibilities nonetheless. Accordingly, Dasein must be handed over to itself as a field of potential possibilities it may choose, and the formation of these possibilities is not completely within human control. There is a world already underway we are born into. We are *thrown* into the world. There are legacies shaping the direction and field of history I must and cannot help but respond to in my vocation. When I teach philosophy, I have come to expect that students from poorer areas have less developed writing skills on average than those that come from more well-to-do areas. While this is not always the case, part of this problem places undue burdens on me as a teacher of philosophy in a public American university. I have to work harder at getting clear what a text says to my students due in large measure by their lack of preparation for university life. I have to develop cultural references that might be analogous to the life of students far removed from philosophical texts. These legacies of under-preparation, failing high schools and open admissions subsist even if I had never chosen to be a philosopher teaching at a public university. In another sense, however, these possibilities are mine and mine alone. I am the one who assigned such and such a course with enrolling first-year students. All of these factors shape my situation. As Heidegger insists, it is a matter of “degree.”

Dasein is thrown, and thus understanding takes into account the whole of a situation, and has a basic idea of its capabilities already. But possession of this self-knowledge is not guaranteed. Dasein can fail to recognize that it is essentially its ownmost possibility. Understanding can go

astray. Heidegger summarizes his complete definition of understanding: *Understanding is the existential Being of Dasein's own potentiality-for-being; and it is so in such a way that this Being discloses in itself what its Being is capable of.* (Heidegger 2008, 184/144) To unpack this conception, Dasein is that which has its own being as it issue for it. We are in possession of our own possibility. This possession is not mysterious, but it is a structure exhibited in our everyday daily experience. In this way, the possibilities are concrete. In an intimate way, we know what we are capable of since an intimate familiarity with our own being is disclosed in a very practical orientation towards the world.

Let me take stock of what has been established thus far. For Heidegger, possibilities are not a deliberated choice, or a detached belief that will inform action later on. These possibilities are concretized in a particular context of significance. These possibilities are already present in a world we are thrown into, and the possession of these possibilities occur in matters of degree. These possibilities are always relative to a worldly situation. Understanding is always practically-oriented in a context—this is what Heidegger means by calling the projected understanding a “for-the-sake-of-which.” (Heidegger 2008, 182/ 143) By being constantly affixed to the worldly concrete possibilities and situational character, Heidegger introduces a distinction between factuality and facticity. Let me explain the distinction.

Many past thinkers have argued what is possible by connecting those inferences about possibility to what someone is “factually.” For example, Aristotle’s doctrine of natural slavery in the *Politics* (1254a28-32) largely depends on metaphysical assumptions. For Aristotle, a thing possesses its nature inherent within it, and as such, the distinction between those that rule and those that are ruled inheres in the nature of individuals. In another way, the pseudoscience of phrenology in the 19th century “secured” the truth of racist attitudes. In addition, understanding “agency” in moral philosophy has gravitated towards attempting to construct moral theories by first examining how humans operate socially through social psychology.³ This is an attempt at establishing what we are factually rather than looking at how it is we exist as being-in-the-world. The latter emphasizes the facticity of human life over what Aristotle, pseudoscience or the use of moral psychology can do for us in ethics. The point in raising

3 The turning point of this in the most recent literature and attraction to social psychology would probably be Gilbert Harman’s “Moral Philosophy Meets Social Psychology: Virtue Ethics and the Fundamental Attribution Error” in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 99 (1998-1999): pp. 315-333. It is fair to say that this probably goes as far back Hume. In his *Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume’s attempt at describing the moral sciences attempts to discern limited to normative theory by appeals to Hume’s psychology about sympathetic identification.

these examples is to open up Dasein's worldly structure but at the same time being aware of what Heidegger is not claiming. Dasein could never be discerned from what it is factually. Instead, "Dasein is 'more' than it factually is, supposing that one might want to make an inventory of it as something-at-hand and list the contents of its Being..." (Heidegger 2008, 185/ 145) Therefore, again, Dasein cannot be known by simply listing off the properties of its being as a scientific perspective might insist. Instead, Heidegger's analysis is an existential-ontological account of how the projection of self-understanding can become "what it is by becoming what is possible for it to be." (Hoy 1993, 181) In order to understand what one may become, interpretation is required since we must be able to interpret the already possessed conception of who we want to become. For my purposes here, the possibilities can thus be interpreted as "modes of givenness" and interpretation imposes the limit of how those modes of givenness can be understood.

By interpretation (*Auslegung*), Heidegger means a practically-oriented capacity of understanding to bring into view the parts and wholes of an entire possibility and context. Put another way, interpretation is the development of the understanding's projection upon what is inherently possible. In Heidegger's words, an interpretation is "the working out of possibilities projected in understanding." (Heidegger 2008, 189/ 148) Thus, we must already have a worked out understanding of possibilities prior to interpretation since interpretation is grounded in the understanding. Understanding is never generated out of interpretation. Instead, understanding is the pre-reflective, pre-linguistic and pre-cognitive practical orientation that makes it possible to interpret the world at all. We understand aspects of the world already; we understand *something-as-something*. When I engage in reading a book, I understand the book as something to be read. The book occurs in the in-order-to relationships that constitute the whole world and the possible interpretations of it:

That which is disclosed in understanding—that which is understood—is already accessible I such a way that its 'as which' can be made to stand out explicitly. The 'as' makes up the structure of explicitness of something that is understood. It constitutes the interpretation. (Heidegger 2008, 189/ 149)

In other words, there is an implicit background to the world, a nexus of practical relationships behind understanding and interpreting the world that Heidegger calls the "totality of involvements." I possess an intimate familiarity with many of these practical relationships already. For Heidegger, we are born into a world already underway within its own historicity and

likewise all interpretations are a working out of projective understanding in that historicity and totality of involvements.

The totality of involvements is always understood not as a grasping of facts independently of that historicity and already understood contexts of significance. Instead, the totality of involvements is what Heidegger calls “ready-to-hand” (*Zuhanden*). We do not apprehend properties about objects outside of the interpretively-laden contexts we inhabit. Such an apprehension would exemplify what Heidegger calls “present-at-hand” (*Vorhanden*). Moreover, this holds for value too. As Heidegger puts it, “In interpreting we do not throw a signification over some naked thing which is present-at-hand, we do not stick a value on it...” (Heidegger 2008, 190/150) In other words, interpretations cannot get outside of the contextual significance. Instead, this hermeneutic threshold holds for value. For instance, values are not disclosed as a mind-independent property through a type of moral intuition.⁴ In the totality of involvements, there are three pre-linguistic/pre-cognitive features that condition interpretation and further the hermeneutic threshold already described. As Heidegger put it, “an interpretation is never a presuppositionless apprehending.” (Heidegger 2008, 191/150)

First, there is fore-having (*Vorbabe*). We have a prior understanding that does not stand out clearly from the background. We understand the bridge is something to cross prior the practical involvement of driving. Secondly, there is fore-sight (*Vorsicht*). This is the act of appropriation in which the interpreter brings into relief an already understood but veiled aspect of a thing, and this is what is responsible for conceptualization of a thing for interpretation. Finally, Heidegger describes fore-conception (*Vorgriff*). This is the already decided and definite way of conceiving the thing to be interpreted “either with finality or with reservations; it is grounded in *something we grasp in advance*—in a fore-conception.” (ibidem) All three factors describe the fore-structure. These three features constitute the hermeneutic threshold that interpretation imposes upon what is possible for us.

Hermeneutic phenomenology is not simply a description about the limits of understanding and interpretations. Those are certainly part of it,

⁴ This holds really for any conception of philosophy that apprehends or discovers mind-independent truths. Such examples in some moral philosophy disobey this hermeneutic threshold that Heidegger sees as constraining all inquiry. R. Schafer-Landau is the most recent defense of moral intuitionism in his *Moral Realism: A Defense* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Similarly, this hermeneutic limit has consequences for any realism about science, art, ethics or wherever such efforts attempt at grasping the structure itself without seeing such efforts as operative in a context already. These conditions also elicit Heidegger’s suspicion about metaphysics and why it is that we must call for the de-structuring of metaphysics.

yet it is more. I see hermeneutic phenomenology as the fusion of the as-structure and fore-structure in Heidegger. The fore-structure is the particular way in which the whole “must already have understood what is to be interpreted.” (Heidegger 2008, 194/152) Hermeneutic phenomenology is the descriptive attempt to bring the as-structures and fore-structures *together* in which together they form an articulation⁵. The as-structure is the thing “as its own” but such a thing is given as part of a contextual whole. Their togetherness delimits how projective understanding actually works. In projective understanding,

...entities are disclosed in their possibility. The character of the possibility corresponds, on each occasion, with the kind of the entity which is understood. Entities within-the-world generally are projected upon the world—that is, upon the whole of significance, to whose reference-relations concern, as Being-in-the-world, has been tied up in advance. (Heidegger 2008, 192/ 151)

In other words, projective understanding is limited by the part-whole relation disclosed in the as-structure and fore-structure.

To say that understanding works out possibilities for interpretation within the part-whole relationship is not to commit oneself to circular reasoning. It is not a “vicious circle” as Heidegger insists. Instead, interpretation is an effort to see more than simply an ideal of knowledge operating as pure philosophizing but rather “a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing.” (Heidegger 2008, 195/ 153) Heidegger’s phenomenological description of understanding limits the very possibility of phenomenological ontology itself. More generally, many philosophers have imposed the standards of deductive rigor upon discourses in philosophy. These rigorous discourses attempt to get at the truth of a discourse. Yet, such an imposition of an ideal of knowledge is still a species of projective understanding. In the *Crisis of the European Sciences*, Husserl phenomenologically retrieves how the sedimentation of historical meaning in Galileo had “mathematized” nature to the point that nature itself could only be understood scientifically as an event within space-time⁶. Such events could not be *given* any other way. Quite similarly, Heidegger’s insistence on the priority of practical engagement with the world is a similar insight. Heidegger’s efforts return to *what is given*, and at the same time, the return

5 It is no surprise that so much time is spent on *logos* as a gathering together (*legein*) and letting-be in Heidegger’s essay *Early Greek Thinking*.

6 It is fair to say that beyond a transcendental idealistic phenomenology, Husserl’s draw to sedimentation is an influence of Heidegger’s hermeneutic turn.

establishes a limit that neither understanding nor interpretation can surpass. This would include how values could be given, if at all.

III. Phenomenological Tensions

The differences in these respective philosophies illustrate two ways values are interpreted though phenomenological evidence itself can discern how values are given. First, Scheler's silence on the ontology of value follows from his phenomenological attitude. From the earlier passage, Scheler regards the "given only in the seeing and experiencing of the act itself." In the sphere of acts, we could discern the essences of things, but this essential insight cannot glean any ontological insight. Scheler is a thoroughly committed pure phenomenologist at that point, and the ontological neutrality of the attitude of "spiritual seeing" does not seek to delimit that which can be given. Scheler's insistence on the immediate givenness of value through emotional intuition expresses that spirit may discern the what-ness of a phenomenon, yet we are never told anything about what essences are anymore than how it is that values are given as an eternal a priori order of ranks. On the other hand, Dasein cannot immediately intuitively apprehend a phenomenon. According to Heidegger, all understanding is – to put it in Scheler's words – "mediated" through "signs and symbols." Therefore, it is clear that insofar as the analysis regards the *Formalismus* and *Being and Time*, there are clear contradictory commitments to either a phenomenology that can discern essences immediately through intuition or a hermeneutic phenomenology in which the understanding works out its interpretive possibilities mediated through the as-and-fore-structures of experience. So if given the choice between the two, which allows for a better understanding of value's givenness?

In the *Nature of Sympathy*, Scheler argues that existence is pervasively already mooded—that is to say, Scheler's insistence that affectivity pervades human life is that such affectivity is being-in-the-world. I offer the following passage as evidence of this interpretation:

...the *value*-qualities of objects are already given in *advance* at a level where their imaged and conceptual features are not yet vouchsafed to us, and hence that the apprehension of values is the basis of our subsequent apprehension of objects. (Scheler 2008, 57-58)

We are actively borne into a world engrossed in an emotional tonality. Human life is thoroughly "mooded" in Scheler. Consequently, there is agreement with the Heideggerian insistence on Dasein as Being-in-the-world, and how the care structure unfolds emphasizing "moodedness." Scheler's analysis takes affectivity farther than *Being and Time*. He gives full

phenomenological independence to affective intentionality whereas moods are just one *existentiale* in the care structure.

For it is our whole spiritual life—and not simply objective thinking in the sense of cognition of being—that possesses “pure” acts and laws of acts which are, according to their nature and contents, independent of the human organization. The emotive elements of spirit, such as feeling, preferring, loving, hating and willing, also possess original a priori contents which are not borrowed from “thinking”, and which ethics must show to be independent of logic. There is an a priori *ordre du Coeur*, or *logique du Coeur* as Blaise Pascal aptly calls it. (Scheler 1973a, 63)

Scheler considers the experience of affectivity is the basis for all other experiences. In Heidegger, the moods are experienced in much the same way as Scheler. They are a co-penetrating part of the structure of care. Moods come from behind us, without our control, and we are constantly delivered over to them. Every situation is mooded, and therefore given as already mooded as such. In this way, both Scheler and Heidegger emphasize the same primordial level of affectivity in which all situations and the world itself is disclosed. Yet, there is a striking difference between both phenomenological approaches. In Scheler, the emotions form an *independent* autonomous logic disclosed in the structure of intentional acts. In Heidegger, the moods work alongside the other *existentiales*. This is the reason why Schelerian phenomenology is capable of grasping the values intended in emotions more fully than Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology, and explains why Heidegger could not adequately see values in the everydayness of Dasein.

The givenness of value-qualities in experience, when successfully bracketed phenomenologically, perdure. That is, values are given as a form of intransient permanence as evidenced in acts of love. These acts are of spirit, and they disclose values as objectively valid in their own way. Consider the experience of love. Love is an attitude I take on in relation to possible others. These others could be other persons, an anonymous other – such as other Americans, or maybe an idea like justice. Either way, the structure of love is the same and offers us phenomenological insight into the experience of values itself. In love, I will adopt a permanent intransient orientation to sacrifice all my effort to bring the other to proper fruition. I will not attempt to control, manipulate or dominate this other. Control, domination or manipulation would only attempt to bring about an imposed conception of what the other should be rather than allowing the unique other to be. Hence, love is the movement or ascendancy of Scheler’s value-rankings that allows the valued good to become more than what it is.

It could be proposed that Heidegger picked up on the givenness of value as a form of permanence, but Heidegger held value to be an ontic phenomenon that naively regards values as present-at-hand. As Heidegger first mentions ethics in *Being and Time*,

Dasein's ways of behavior, its capacities, powers, possibilities, and vicissitudes, have been studied with varying extent in philosophical psychology, in anthropology, *ethics*, and 'political science', in poetry, biography and in the writing of history each in a different fashion...Only when the basic structures of Dasein have been adequately worked out with explicit orientation towards the problem of Being itself, will what we have hitherto gained in interpreting Dasein gets its existential justification. (Heidegger 2008, 37, italics mine)

For Heidegger, ethics is but one example of an ontic interpretation that doesn't go far enough in elucidating the Being of Dasein. Heidegger thinks that various ontic interpretations of Dasein's possibilities have been overlooked and concealed over. In a sense, Heidegger was correct, yet had Heidegger explored the ground of values as "felt in experience" he would have gleaned Scheler's insight. I hope the reader understands I am not simply "playing up" Scheler, but offering the givenness of value as a reason to regard Scheler's phenomenology more sophisticated on this point. Phenomenologically speaking and independent of Scheler, values are given as enduring beyond contexts of significance. If I face a similar situation later on in life, then *ceteris paribus* the same value will apply to the same context of significance. Hence, we can understand it when Scheler claims the determinate order of values "is independent of the form of being into which values enter—no matter, for instance, if they are present to us as purely objective qualities, as members of value-complexes (e.g., the being-agreeable or being-beautiful of something), or as values that 'a thing has.'" (Scheler 1973a, 17) Heidegger had only picked up on the givenness of value partly. Indeed, values are given as a presence perduring throughout time because the act-center of persons realizes them into time as goods⁷. The act-

⁷ This is a point of contention in Parvis Emad's brilliantly argued *Heidegger and the Phenomenology of Value* Torey Press: Glen Ellyn, IL, 1984. In that work, Emad thinks the difference between Heidegger and Scheler turns on Scheler's acceptance of traditional concepts of the person that presuppose a temporality of presence. Heidegger, Emad insists, works out a completely different account of temporality that questions Scheler's acceptance of a traditional metaphysics concealed in his commitment to intentional acts as products of spirit (and likewise the whole of Western metaphysics for that matter). "The a-temporal nature of spirit is clearly manifest in its sole representative, the act. The nature of act is such that it does not exist *in time*. To use Scheler's terminology, acts exercise their influence

center of persons in realizing values exceeds representation, and so too do the values realized by persons.

An example might prove helpful. Scheler states that values only matter in relation to the dignity of a person, and this is the highest value (which for Scheler is the *value of the holy*). Therefore, if I enslave another person, I disregard how he is given to me in experience as a person. This insight is gleaned in the emotional apprehension I have in relation to a person. The dignity of a person does not come to us through the *a priori* form of the moral law as a Kantian would argue. Instead, the inviolable sense of the person is given in her inexhaustible richness as a wholly unique individuated being. The person emanates outward phenomenologically as absolute and unique. It does not matter if we are talking about the slaves of Ancient Egypt, or slaves in the American South of the 19th century. In all instances, the value of the person is felt in experience. There is no principled mediation for the value attached to the holy sense afforded to persons, nor would it be proper to think that given the phenomenon of person or value itself. In much the same way, Levinas insists on the transhistorical absolute value of the other. It is therefore no mistake that Levinas and Scheler insist on the trans-historical and therefore trans-mediated sense that the other or person has. No ethics can get off the ground if there was not a phenomenological givenness of the person and value itself.

A Heideggerian might counter we have simply paid too much attention to the as-structure, the immediate immanence of a person without paying attention to what context or fore-structure that allows us to make such claims as when Scheler opens in the *Second Preface* to the *Formalismus* with “The spirit behind my ethics is one of rigid ethical absolutism and objectivism.” (Scheler 1973a, xxiii) Consequently, it is no accident that the next sentence follows as “My position may in another respect be called emotional intuitionism.” (ibidem) By contrast, one could agree with Gadamer’s sentiments surrounding Scheler’s thought. Scheler’s major ethics merely “fused the tradition of Catholic moral philosophy for the first time with the most advanced positions in modern philosophy” (Gadamer 2008, 135) which by “modern philosophy” Gadamer indicates phenomenology and its supplementary role to a metaphysics informed by philosophical

into time without being extended in it...like the tradition criticized by Heidegger, Scheler is unaware of the subtle, hidden and elusive role of time” (p. 47) While I do not have the space here to revisit the entire presentation of Emad’s argument, Emad’s book only takes up the Heideggerian confidence in that line without asking first what the givenness of value is itself. The alternative explanation for Scheler’s lack of awareness about time is simple. Values are given in such excess that, like persons, they exhibit a type of givenness that cannot be captured in time. The givenness is a vertical dimension, given in height and only partially understood in the horizon of time articulated in hermeneutic phenomenology.

anthropology. Scheler's contribution is downplayed if a hermeneutic phenomenology in either Gadamer or Heidegger's formation succeeds. Yet, hermeneutic phenomenology is limited by its inability to capture the absolute immanence of an experience. There is no mediation in Scheler's thought. This follows from Scheler's commitment to a phenomenology of essences expressed in the interconnections between emotional acts and value-correlates.

Interconnections are, like essences, "given". They are not a "product" of "understanding." They are original thing-interconnections [*Sachzusammenhänge*], not laws of objects just because they are laws of acts apprehending objects⁸. They are "a priori" because they are grounded in essences [*Wesenheit*], not in objects and goods. They are a priori, but not because of "understanding" or "reason" "produces" them. The *logos* permeating the universe can be grasped only through them. (Scheler 1963a, 68)

The givenness of value shares in a completely different mode of givenness – more than Heidegger could anticipate in *Being and Time* – and this is why it is unfair to insist upon the hermeneutic threshold without fully paying attention to the how-of-givenness and what that how-of-givenness entails for value in particular. The givenness of value could only be articulated in a phenomenology of emotional life where they are experienced directly. For instance, if I find myself likely to eat fish from Lake Erie, I will refrain. Lake Erie is very polluted, and the game wardens in Pennsylvania near Presque Isle warn of the dangers to those fishing in Lake Erie. The fish are *given* as threatening my health. Moreover, I come to value my health over the pleasurable desire to eat fish. I choose the vital value of health over the lower pleasurable value. To experience value is to be thrust in situations in which values are given in relation to each other, and the phenomenological evidence of preferring acts indicates the higher values are chosen at the expense of those experienced as lower.

Some might be dissatisfied with thinking that Heidegger missed out on the givenness of value. It is not enough to elicit the motivations for why a philosopher has defended a particular conclusion. The givenness of value is its own evidence and this is why if a moral phenomenology is to take shape, the phenomenology in question cannot adopt a Heideggerian frame. Instead, a moral phenomenology can only be founded on a phenomenology open to value in the first place, and unlike Heidegger, Scheler

8 On its own laws apprehending objects would be a form of naïve realism or version of either epistemic or moral intuitionism.

accommodates value's givenness. However, there are some limitations to Scheler's approach.

Scheler provided an account of moral phenomenology that disclosed the how-of-givenness of values. However, in his ethics, he never provides a clear account as to what the content of values are, nor how that content is experienced. Instead, we know what value might be operative in a particular value-complex or situation and the phenomenological form of moral experience more generally. Therefore, Scheler's moral phenomenology cannot take the form of a particular moral theory, and nor do I think that phenomenology can provide a normative theory. At best, Scheler might endorse some type of virtue ethics in which *phronesis* is involved in apprehending what values are salient to a particular value-complex, duty or person, but this is a topic for another time.

In conclusion, this paper has urged two conclusions regarding the differences spelled out between Scheler's intuition of essences and Heidegger's hermeneutic turn. First, I have argued that the experience of value could not help but be given in terms of its presence-at-hand nature. Persons and values when viewed within time resemble presence in the Heideggerian sense because of the excess of givenness overtakes the phenomenal appearance. Heidegger's insistence that values are ontic follows from Heidegger's incomplete grasp of how values are given in experience. The intrinsence of value is simply *the manner in which it is given in experience*.

Scheler's silence about the ontology of value in the *Formalismus* is a product of seeking a phenomenological basis for ethics. Put simply, when we engage in phenomenological description, we are not to assume anything prior about the phenomenon, but let the phenomenon show itself from itself. From this phenomenological neutrality, Scheler cannot settle anything about the question of values ontologically, but unlike Heidegger, Scheler's phenomenology can capture the givenness of value. Scheler can only say how values are experienced in emotional intuition in preferring, loving and hating, and that there may be lessons to learn from Heidegger. Heidegger's efforts to "ontologize" phenomenological inquiry about factual life is a model for how Scheler's efforts may be better developed—though my audience must wait for another time to address the Heideggerian suggestions for Scheler's metaphysics yet to come. At present, Scheler's approach is more amiable to the givenness of persons and values.

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