S. Besoli, G. Mancuso (a cura di), Studi sulla filosofia di Max Scheler

Abstracts

Wolfhart Henckmann
The Problem of Spheres in Scheler

"Sphere" means in Scheler's ontology and theory of knowledge an unreducible whole of objects, by which the totality of whatever can be thought of is divided into a few regions of essentially the same kind of being. In general, but not consequently, Scheler distinguished five such unreducible spheres: socially personal beings, beings of the outer and inner world, living beings, physical beings – all these belong to the world of reality. Opposed to it is the world of ideal beings (fictive beings, values, numbers etc.), and both of them were distinguished from the world of absolute being. These spheres make up the material groundwork of his system of philosophy. The different spheres overcut each other, developing certain relations between them, mainly of foundational nature, but Scheler did not seem to have been very much interested in to him seemingly secondary questions like these. Though he worked on the problem of spheres through all the years of his academic career, he did not come to a definitive solution, neither in his neokantian period until 1906, nor in his conceptions on phenomenological or theistic grounds (until 1922), nor in his efforts to develop a metaphysical anthropology in the 1920ies. So at his early death (1928) he left a complex, multilevelled problem as an open question, documented in many fragmentary papers, and this fragmentary character may be one of the reasons why this part of his philosophy is generally neglected.

Philip Blosser
Toward a Resolution of Antinomies in Max Scheler's Value Theory

Two areas of Scheler's thought persistently present unresolved problems: (1) his Pascalian bifurcation of *reason* and *feeling*, which artificially limits the number of values in his classification, and undermines his account of the coherence of experience and of how our moral experience may be *rationally* understood; and (2) his restriction of *moral* value to a by-product of willing or bringing about the existence of bearers of *non-moral* values, which leads him to misidentify the value attaching to personal

agency exclusively with *moral* value, and the perceived normativities to which personal agency responds exclusively with *moral* normativity. To resolve these problems, I enlist the contributions of Herman Dooyeweerd, whose intricate analysis of experiential aspects, analogical concepts (e.g., analogies of "feeling" in aesthetic, moral, or logical aspects), and subject-object relations (e.g., horses function as aesthetic, legal, and economic *objects*, but not *subjects*, as people do) illumine both Scheler's insights and his oversights.

Ernst Wolfgang Orth
Max Scheler and Ernst Cassirer

Max Scheler and Ernst Cassirer, who belonged to the same generation, probably never met each other. Yet, their writings contain some remarkable mutual references, which show that their respective positions on certain issues are comparable both thematically and methodologically. Adopting a philosophical structural comparative approach is thus preferable to seeking mutual personal influences. Scheler and Cassirer share an appreciation of the phenomenon of expression as the paradigm of reality. From that common starting point, they both arrive at a conception of culture and anthropology (as a set of knowledge forms) in which the state of crisis plays a constitutive role. The two writers diverge on the subject of metaphysics. But metaphysical and religious views can be found even where Cassirer is most critical about Scheler's metaphysics – and such views articulate precisely Cassirer's basic anthropological-cultural stance.

Hans Rainer Sepp
Esse in actu. *The Boundaries of the Anthropological in Scheler's Later Thought*

This article refers to the form of the theoretical conception of Max Scheler's philosophical anthropology. The thesis is that Scheler's anthropological thinking is not a fixed element within the architecture of his philosophy since just the theoretical framework of the philosophical anthropology got moving here. In order to verify this thesis the article starts from Scheler's opinion that human being cannot be objectified, insofar as it is pure actuality. However, when human being cannot be concretized, by which means is it possible to realize the conception of a philosophical anthropology? The first part of this article analyzes this aporia by discussing the theoretical shape of the philosophical anthropology. This lay a ground that allows in the second part to radicalize the question about the status and the problematic nature of the theoretical shape of philosophical anthropology.

Giuliana Mancuso
Outline of a General Ontology of Nature and a Biological Theory of Knowledge: the Biologievorlesung *of 1908/1909*

This paper is an examination of Scheler's first *Biologievorlesung* (1908/ 1909). After some introductory remarks about Scheler's interest in the philosophical issues raised by biology, the *Biologievorlesung* is interpreted as an eidetic analysis of nature, in light of Husserl's *Third Logical Investigation*; the paper shows how Scheler, on the basis of this analysis, takes a stand on the controversy between vitalism and mechanism in the philosophy of biology. Much attention is then paid to the theory of knowledge that Scheler develops in this biology lecture, where his later "theory of the three facts" (1910-1911) is largely prefigured. Finally, the paper explains how the *Biologievorlesung* might be seen as a further confirmation of the ambivalent relationship that Scheler had with phenomenological philosophy.

Luca Guidetti
The problem of knowledge between Nicolai Hartmann and Max Scheler

While appreciating Hartmann's realist theory of knowledge, Scheler criticizes the dualistic framework of its picture-theory for introducing a third domain between subject and object, thus issuing in an epistemology based upon an old adequacy criterion. However, Scheler doesn't seem to have a correct understanding of Hartmann's theory, which is not founded on a form of "adequationism", but on a propositional logic that is reminiscent of Stoic epistemology, connected with a claim of ontological univocity. The limits of Hartmann's epistemology are best seen as a consequence of his difficulties about the *intentio recta*, not reflexively supported. To avoid such difficulties, Scheler invokes a separation between essence and existence; but the latter, which plays the foundational role, cannot include the whole sense of being without a radical transformation of every essence in a moment or "correlate" of the spirits' life.

Stefano Besoli
The Turn to Things. In the Recesses of Max Scheler's Material Apriorism

This paper focuses on the conception of the material a priori that was developed by Scheler in the context of his critique of Kant's ethical formalism. Starting from a reconstruction of the distinctive identity of Scheler's phenomenology, I dwell on some aspects of the relationship between ontology and phenomenology, with a view to differentiating his position from those of two major interpreters of twentieth century phenomenology,

Husserl and Heidegger. After considering Scheler's early transformation of apriorism, still largely influenced by Eucken's doctrine of spirit, I examine his gradual departure from transcendentalism via his criticism of the biases of Kant's notion of a priori. Next, an investigation of Scheler's objectivism, which is centred on a phenomenological attitude that crucially relies on eidetic intuition and the associated ontology, allows me to throw some light on the differences between his and Husserl's view of the material a priori. Finally, I attempt to show how the introduction of the concept of functionalization in Scheler's philosophy gave his material a priori an empirical twist, leading to the resurfacing of the neo-Kantian influences that had been somewhat characteristic of his early thought.