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# THE LOGIC OF MORAL VALUES ACCORDING TO MAX SCHELER

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to explore the world of values by examining the philosophy of values within the Western intellectual tradition, focusing on one of the prominent philosophers who systematized ethical action and its purpose. The central question he poses is: What ought we to do?

The study concludes that Max Scheler can be regarded as the Pascal of the modern age, advocating for spiritual values in opposition to material values rooted in utilitarian hedonism—values that have emerged from the utilitarian framework characteristic of Western modernity.

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## KEYWORDS

Value, Ethics, Max Scheler, Kant, Logic

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## Introduction.

Value occupies a prominent place in our everyday discourse and in various aspects of our daily behavior. It also holds a substantial position within the fields of inquiry in the social sciences and receives particular attention in philosophy, art, and religion. Human values, in particular, may be seen as the light that dispels the darkness surrounding humanity. The question concerning the stance that the human being ought to adopt in response to a world turbulent with events and revolutions across all domains of human activity—both intellectual and behavioral—is fundamentally a question of values. Before adopting any position or making any decision, we inevitably ask ourselves: What is the value of what we know? What is the value of what we do? And what is the value of what we aim to achieve? Hence, understanding the human being in their truest sense necessitates understanding the values that govern and direct them. In this light, values have come to constitute the foundational elements of renewal and reform.

The subject of values has long been, and continues to be, a fertile field for philosophical inquiry characterized by contemplation and abstraction. It remains a topic of interest across multiple disciplines, including philosophy, religion, education, economics, sociology, and psychology. This interdisciplinary engagement underscores the profound significance of values in understanding and shaping human experience.

Max Scheler occupies a distinguished position among the circle of philosophers influenced by the ideas of Franz Brentano (1838–1917), a German philosopher who initially trained as a psychologist and was concerned with the problem of distinguishing between psychological and physical phenomena. Brentano emphasized the need to arrive at a definitive description of each phenomenon, identifying mental phenomena as those that are intentionally directed toward an object.

Scheler was also profoundly influenced by Edmund Husserl and is recognized as one of the most prominent philosophers of value. He is considered one of the greatest contributors to the advancement of ethics since Immanuel Kant ('Awwa, 1986, p. 153).

Max Scheler was born in Munich, Germany, in 1874. He became a student of the German philosopher Rudolf Eucken, whose philosophical focus centered on the life of the mind, which he regarded as of primary importance. Scheler initially taught at the universities of Jena and Munich, and from 1919, at the University of Cologne. He was also invited to teach at the University of Frankfurt; however, he passed away in 1928 before taking up the position.

Scheler was regarded as one of the most brilliant German thinkers of his time. The field of moral philosophy represented his intellectual stronghold, and his writings addressed numerous ethical problems with particular intensity (Bocheński, trans. Qarni, 1992, p. 191).

As previously mentioned, Scheler was influenced by Edmund Husserl, whose phenomenology he would later develop and extend. Scheler is considered the first major phenomenological philosopher following Husserl. He appropriated phenomenology and enriched it significantly. This led Emile Bréhier to remark that Scheler's philosophy "cuts across the surface of phenomenology—it comes from somewhere else and goes somewhere else. It both contributes to phenomenology and diverges from it at a crucial intersection" (Rabī', 1980).

### **Problem Statement:**

Max Scheler wrote a book titled *The Formalism in Ethics and the Material Value-Ethics*. In this work, he criticized Kant's idea that only formal ethics—the a priori ethics independent of all experience—has the power to establish duty ethics in its universal form. Scheler sought to go beyond Kant by searching for new, solid foundations to establish a material ethics. He relied on the logic of the heart, as understood in Pascal's philosophy, and the Augustinian system of love, along with the logic of reason and the system of thought. This leads us to a fundamental question: How did Scheler view Kant's a priori ethics? And on what basis did Scheler build his material ethics?

### **Research Objective:**

The aim of this study is not merely to present and explain Max Scheler's philosophy of value. Rather, it seeks to reveal Scheler's value philosophy, his influences—particularly from Brentano and Husserl—and to clarify that his theory of values forms a complex hierarchical system with both vertical and horizontal links. He distinguished four levels of "value types": sensory, vital, spiritual, and sacred values. Since these values are objective phenomena with universal significance, they determine rules, standards, evaluations, and obligations. Scheler derives political and moral behavior from humanity's highest purpose: the application of objective values in the world, independent from people's subjectivity and arbitrariness.

### **Significance of the Study:**

This study gains its importance from understanding the critical role of value and Max Scheler's philosophy in discussing values and their role in reforming human life. This importance is evident in three stages of Scheler's life:

The first stage is characterized by the dominance of Professor Meinong's thought over Scheler's. The second stage is a period of maturity during Scheler's Berlin years, in which he produced several important works such as *Formalism in Ethics and the Material Value-Ethics* (1913–1916), *The Revolt of the Masses* (1919), and *On the Eternal in Man* (1921). During this period, Scheler appeared as a personalist thinker, advocating divine concepts and embracing Christianity.

The third stage marks a spiritual transformation where Scheler abandoned his Christian beliefs and the doctrine of divinity. Instead, he moved toward pantheism, as expressed in his works *The Place of Man in the Cosmos* (1928) and *Man in the Age of Humanity* (1929). In this phase, Scheler viewed humans as "the only place where God is formed," contrasting with the previous phase where the concept of God as personal love—strongly influenced by Saint Augustine's major theory of love—was central to his thought (Boushnisky, trans. Izzat Qarni, *Modern Philosophy in Europe*, p. 193).

Scheler also saw love as a movement by which every individual being, who carries values, reaches the highest value allowed by their ideal definition. Love elevates the beloved to the highest rank permitted by their ideal determination, and it also raises the lover. The highest degree of love is the love of God, which is the supreme center and source that grants a person their love, thus giving it meaning and value..

Max Scheler's spiritual development can be divided into three distinct phases, as follows:

1. The Phenomenological Phase
2. The Catholic Phase
3. The Phase Dominated by the Unity of Existence (Badawi, 1984, p. 40).

To clearly understand Scheler's contributions regarding the hierarchy of values, it is necessary to present some of his key ideas related to this concept.

There are two closely connected aspects in his philosophy. First, his foundational work on values, particularly ethics. Second, the connection to knowledge, because we cannot perceive or understand values without some form of knowledge.

### **1. Philosophy According to Max Scheler**

Scheler defines philosophy essentially as a precise and clear insight. This insight does not increase or decrease through induction but is pre-given and universally true for all contingent existence (Badawi, 1979, p. 14).

Scheler arrived at this definition through his phenomenological stance, especially his focus on the third kind of knowledge, which we will explain later. Philosophy, in his view, does not depend on the truth or falsity of induction. Instead, it is considered a priori valid in relation to external perception.

Through intuition into the essences and fundamental relationships of beings, we can reach true essence. This system and hierarchy of knowledge position philosophy in relation to the being and essence of the absolute (Mahmoud, 2004, p. 113).

According to Scheler, philosophy is a spontaneous form of knowledge, free from initial assumptions, but it requires certain personal elements that are essentially ethical in nature. This view links philosophy closely with ethics in Scheler's thought. He believed that while anyone can move toward the essential and absolute order, the philosophical movement of the spirit requires a moral condition.

Philosophizing, Scheler argues, originates from the act of love, through which a person's overall orientation and direction are determined and shaped. As Scheler states, "The philosophical orientation is a movement determined and necessitated by love for the inner personal self of a finite being toward true participation with all humans" (Mahmoud, 2004, p. 115).

We can say that Scheler is considered one of the most important contemporary philosophers focused on values and ethics, making them the central axis of his thought. Thanks to his efforts, the philosophy of ethics advanced significantly compared to other fields. Therefore, ethics plays a fundamental role in Scheler's philosophy.

### **2. Theory of Knowledge**

Scheler asserts that pure knowledge does not exist because knowledge is not an end in itself—that is, knowledge does not exist merely for its own sake or contemplation. Instead, knowledge aims at action and the construction of human existence. It is not a fixed relationship between humans and reality but should be interpreted as a form of socially, historically, and even biologically adaptive behavior.

After categorizing facts into three types—phenomenological facts, natural facts, and scientific facts (Mahmoud, 2004, pp. 137–148)—Scheler identifies three types of knowledge. He believes humans can acquire these types of knowledge according to their functions (Mahmoud, 2004, p. 149):

**First Type Knowledge for Achievement or Control:** This type belongs to the natural and experimental sciences and is based on observation to reach general laws. However, this knowledge can never attain absolute or necessary laws. Its object is the external reality, and reality's existence is confirmed by our experience of it. This knowledge lies in our power and ability to control nature, class, society, history, and specific groups, aiming to discover laws governing their relations in time and space. Based on this, we can predict events because the occurrence and repetition of phenomena enable prediction, and what we can predict we can control.

**Second Type: Knowledge of Essential Structure or "What" Things Are (First Philosophy):** While scientific knowledge concerns the study of particulars and relies on induction, this type of knowledge relates to philosophical understanding of essences. Its subject is a priori, and Scheler agrees with Kant that there is a priori knowledge, meaning all necessary propositions and archetypes. However, Scheler differs from Kant in several aspects within this domain.

**First**, the a priori domain consists of essences, not propositions, as Kant believed.

**Second**, the "a priori-intuitive" domain has no relation whatsoever to what is formal.

**Third**, Scheler disagrees with Kant in considering epistemology as the fundamental theory concerning the a priori domain. He argues that the primary mistake of the Kantians was to start by asking, "How can

something be given to the mind?" Instead, one should begin with the question, "What is the given?" Accordingly, Scheler views epistemology merely as part of the theories concerning objective relations between essences (Boshniski, trans. Qarni, 1997, p. 194).

**Fourth**, Scheler considers Kant's theory of spontaneity of thought to be unfounded. This theory claims that all relations must be products of the mind. In contrast, Scheler argues that no mind imposes its laws on nature.

**Fifth**, the greatest mistake of Kant and all rationalist philosophy, according to Scheler, is the confusion between the a priori and the rational. Scheler believes that our entire spiritual life has an a priori content, including the emotional part of the mind—that is, the part that feels, loves, and hates. He refers to this as the "a priori system of the heart" or the "logic of the heart." Building on this, Scheler developed Husserl's phenomenology in a unique and distinguished way, opening new horizons for phenomenological research. He calls this approach "emotional apriorism" (Boshniski, trans. Qarni, 1997, p. 194).

### **Third Type: Metaphysical Knowledge**

This type of knowledge aims at salvation or reaching the absolute. It begins with questions about the nature of humanity and is only possible through the integration of the first two types of knowledge (Badawi, 1984, p. 42). The subject of this knowledge concerns the problems and questions of philosophical anthropology, such as: "Who is the human?" and "What is their place in the universe and their relationship with God?"

## **2.1 Definition of Values According to Max Scheler**

The importance of values has emerged prominently among modern and contemporary philosophers, despite the fact that the roots of the philosophy of values reach deep into the history of philosophy. Greek philosophies, for example, extensively addressed values such as truth, goodness, and beauty. Traditionally, the study of values in moral philosophy was limited to defining the meanings of good and evil, beautiful and ugly, virtue and vice, and searching for a general principle to ground ethics. Some philosophers identified this principle with reason, others with emotion, and yet others with nature, pleasure, or private and public utility. Despite these clear differences, all agreed that the fundamental problem was to define moral value and justify the prevailing practical rules in society.

To clarify this, we will discuss values according to one of the most important contemporary German philosophers and a leading figure in ethics, Max Scheler.

Dr. Badawi categorizes Scheler within the direction of "ethics of content" as opposed to "ethics of form." The former views values as the objects of inclinations, desires, and evaluations, establishing an independent domain separate from the domain of existence and grounding special judgments that stem from feeling rather than reason. For Scheler, value in its essence is a creation. Reason, he argues, is blind to perceiving values, whereas sensitivity perceives them spontaneously—much like sight perceives colors. Values are a priori. Scheler undertook a critical and thorough effort, attacking nominalism in the domain of values—which reduces values to empirical facts—and simultaneously opposing formalism in the philosophy of ethics (Boshniski, trans. Qarni, 1997, p. 195).

Max Scheler defines values in line with his phenomenological approach as "the primordial foundations of feeling, the intentional objects of emotion." Although reason does not see them, values are a direct wave of feeling; they are primordial realities (Mahmoud, 2004, p. 249).

For Scheler, emotion thus plays a crucial and active role in discovering values. There is also another important domain besides reason, which is the heart. Emotion fades if it becomes rationalized; values are revealed through emotional perception of acts of preference in love and hatred.

This means that alongside the a priori rational, there is an a priori emotional dimension, which is a primordial feeling of value. The emotional domain of the soul—manifested in feelings, preferences, love, hatred, and will—contains, according to Scheler, a priori content independent of thought. This content is particular to ethics and independent from logic. Through it, we can know what is obligatory and its law.

Values, for Scheler, have a future existence beyond the existence of other things, and our perception of them does not depend on our cognition, because they belong to a special world with a fresh and subtle atmosphere that opens and guides us to them. We perceive values directly, seeing them as they truly are in their essence (Maymoun, 2004, p. 237).

Values, according to Max Scheler, are the intentional objects of sensitivity (feeling), but they differ from psychological states because they are primary, objective, eternal, and constant. Values are objective realities. They represent the a priori element in the emotional dimension of human beings: these are the values (Al-Awa, 2003, p. 151).



This means that a value is perceived through a priori intuition. However, this intuition is emotional and precedes all experience, as mentioned earlier. Thus, values resemble Plato's ideals (Al-Awa, 2003). Therefore, Scheler rejects defining values as objects of direct intellectual knowledge that we perceive as they are. Instead, values are given to us through an initial emotional experience. To establish objective values, Scheler also rejects the superficial relative values accepted by modern social sciences.

Those who believe in value relativism argue that values change with time and place. Positivists, on the other hand, view values as objective entities independent of humans, imposed by collective mental phenomena. Nominalists deny any substantial content in values, reducing them to mere words. Utilitarians link values strictly to usefulness, holding that whatever benefits oneself is good, and the opposite is bad. Immanuel Kant, in the eighteenth century, opposed all these views. He sought to purify values and ethics from relativism, utilitarianism, and consequentialism. Kant aimed to establish absolute and stable values through formalism, believing that values originate from pure reason, are absolutely true, and universally valid for all times, though they do not exist independently as objective realities (Mahmoud, 2004, p. 251).

Max Scheler then emerged to cleanse German thought from the dominance of Kantian formalism. Through a non-formal philosophy, Scheler asserted that values have objective existence. According to him, values are absolute and unchanging regardless of time and place. The variable factor is the human being, while values themselves are fixed entities that do not change (Mahmoud, 2004, 2010, p. 251). Values are absolute in a dual sense:

- Their content is not relational but belongs to the category of qualitative properties.
- They are constant and eternal.

## 2.2 Types of Values (Value and Existence)

There is always an intermediary between values and existence. The non-embodiment of a positive value inherently reveals a negative value. "What ought to exist" is negative and oppressed because it conflicts with and tries to eliminate the existence of negative values. This characteristic becomes more apparent in norms, obligations, and commands, which must be distinguished carefully from the former (Al-Rabee' Maimoun, *Nathariyat Al-Qiyam fi Al-Fikr Al-Mu'asir*, p. 236).

Scheler views values as having an objective existence that underlies every standard, obligation, and demand. He considers values as "material qualities" existing in a system according to their degree of nobility. These values are neither logical nor transferable nor rational. They are independent of the existence of psychic beings, just as colors and sounds exist independently. Moreover, values are unrelated to causal relations between things and feelings (Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics*, p. 255).

Scheler states that values can form the basis of relationships but are not themselves relationships, such as the relationship between red and blue. He argues that "values are objective realities attributed to a kind of experience. The essence of a value judgment is to correspond to it" (Max Scheler, *The Philosophy of Values*, p. 30).

According to Scheler, values create a world of relations among themselves, governed by essential relations and a priori formal laws. However, value itself is not existence in itself but rather an independent field from existence. It is a system that accompanies existence. Values appear as preferential qualities that generate judgments aimed at what we aspire to (Noura Bouhnach, *Ishkaliyat Al-Qiyam fi Falsafat Bergson*, 2010, p. 201).

Consequently, all values—whether moral, aesthetic, or others—fall under two categories: positive values and negative values. There is a relationship between value and existence. The existence of a positive value is itself a positive value. Its absence (i.e., the presence of a negative value) is itself a negative value. The absence of a negative value is a positive value. A single value cannot be both positive and negative simultaneously (Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics*, p. 255).

Scheler also divided values into lower and higher values. Higher values are more enduring, less divided, foundational for others, and provide deeper satisfaction and fulfillment. Finally, higher values are the least divided and serve as the basis for other values.

## 2.3 How do we perceive that one value is higher than another?

Max Scheler presents a unique hierarchical system in which values are arranged in degrees and levels. Through this ordering, one value can be considered higher or lower than another (Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics*, p. 86).

This hierarchy is realized in an emotional experience—specifically, an elevated emotion through which we perceive the superiority of one value over another, a process Scheler calls "preference." He states, "The

realm of values is entirely subject to its own special system. Values have an ascending order by which one value is 'nobler' or 'lower' than another."

Scheler distinguishes four levels of values:

1. The level of sensory values: pleasurable and displeasurable.
2. The level of vital values: which include, for example, the distinguished and the commonplace, the noble and the vulgar, the right and the wrong.
3. The level of spiritual values: which comprise aesthetic values (beautiful and ugly), juridical and intellectual values (justice and injustice).
4. The level of religious values: characterized by the sacred, relating to God and persons, dominating all other values as their foundation (Al-Awa, 2003, pp. 154–155).

Scheler also offers other classifications. One such division is between personal values and values of things—values related to objects of value such as possessions and wealth, including cultural experiences. Another classification is based on moral capacity orientations, and a third on a person's actions. From these distinctions, it is clear that moral values are primarily personal values (I.M. Bushansky, *Modern Philosophy in Europe*, pp. 197–198).

Moral values describe a person's actions; thus, they can be seen as primarily personal values—values through which a person expresses themselves (Al-Rabee Mimoun, *Theory of Values in Contemporary Thought*, p. 241).

Therefore, there is no single ethics but rather multiple ethics, corresponding to the degrees of values.

For Scheler, the Absolute Person is God, who stands above all other persons as the supreme being. God is the source of all values.

## 2.4 But what are the criteria and rules for preference?

The signs of nobility and superiority when ascending the value hierarchy are based on Scheler's evaluation standards, which are as follows:

First, one must distinguish between choice and preference. A person chooses between actions, and choice is directed by knowledge of the superiority of a value because choice is founded within the perception of the highest value. Preference, on the other hand, occurs without desire, choice, or will (inclination or passion). Preference happens without revealing tendencies of choice or desire, and it is primary and a priori. Consequently, the superiority of a value is not given before preference but is given within preference itself. Thus, when one chooses an end based on a lower value, the choice is mistaken.

The superiority of values is not clear before preference but is revealed through the act of preference. Therefore, it should not be assumed that superiority exists simply because a value has been preferred in reality, or else preference would be based on empirical grounds. Hierarchy is inherent in the essence of the value itself, and thus it is fixed and independent of experience (Mahmoud, 2004, pp. 271–272).

Thus, the superiority of one value over another is understood through preference. The elevation of one value above another guides choice. At the same time, it signifies the essence of that value. This means that we can select what is better among the values before us by emotionally perceiving that value.

Although the act of preference indeed reflects the dominance of one value over another, Scheler argues that it is necessary to establish each criterion separately. This allows for the determination of an axiological hierarchy, by which values are ranked from the lowest to the highest. Scheler sought to identify, through these criteria, the essential characteristics inherent in a given value. These characteristics distinguish it from others and enable values to develop. The criteria are as follows:

**1. Durability (Dauer):** Durability itself is a positive pattern or model — a type of content that fills time as well as succession or sequence. A value is durable if it inherently possesses the capacity to persist throughout time. The actual length of time that something carrying this value exists is irrelevant. Stability and permanence indeed belong to something valuable in the strict sense.

**2. Indivisibility (Teilbarkeit):** This criterion means that higher values cannot be divided among multiple people, unlike lower values. However, higher values can be shared more fully than lower ones, and they do not require division to be enjoyed equally.

**3. Foundation (Fundierung):** This clarifies that one value must serve as the foundation for another. In other words, some values depend on others and are therefore higher and more noble. Hence, the useful is the foundation of what is acceptable or agreeable.

**4. Depth of Satisfaction (Tiefe der Befriedigung):** Scheler observes that there is a necessary and fundamental relationship between the depth of satisfaction accompanying the emotional perception of values and their position in the hierarchy of values, as is the case with preference.

**5. Relativity (Relativität):** Scheler maintains that objectivity applies to all values, but values vary in their relativity to absolute values. Relative values are lower in relation to absolute values. Their mutual relationships are independent of reality and the actual connection to the goods in which these values are realized. Nevertheless, there exists an element unrelated to the precedence or subsequence of values — namely, the relativity of values or their relation to absolute values (Mahmoud, 2004, pp. 271–283).

### 3. Discontent and the Decline of Values

Scheler's study of discontent arises from his discourse on civilization. Nietzsche serves as Scheler's primary inspiration, especially through Nietzsche's work *On the Origin of Morality*. In this context, Nietzsche accuses Christianity of being a religion filled with discontent. He views it as a "slave morality" that praises all things of negative value. Scheler sought to defend Christianity against Nietzsche's critique, but he nevertheless came under the influence of Nietzsche's theory of resentment and discontent (Values in Max Scheler's *Philosophy*, p. 182).

Scheler condemns Nietzsche's attack on Christianity and rejects Nietzsche's claim that Christian love is weakness. To Scheler, Christian love represents an expression of strength and effectiveness.

According to Scheler, discontent is an ingrained tendency in the weak individual. He states, "Discontent is a self-poisoning of the intellect, which has definite causes and consequences. It is an intellectual attitude caused by the continual repression of certain emotions and feelings, which by their nature are ordinary components of human nature. Their repression leads to a persistent inclination toward immersion in particular illusions of value and the accompanying value judgments, emotions, and feelings. These primarily include revenge, hatred, envy, and tendencies toward regret and weakness" (Mahmoud, 2004, p. 183).

From this, we observe that resentment arises from repression and the comparison of oneself with others, accompanied by the feeling that others possess what one is unable to have. This, in turn, generates hatred and jealousy toward the other, which leads to the destruction of values.

Schleiermacher (Schleier) provides a clear example of the destruction of values in Western society through the bourgeoisie, which he considers the fertile ground that enabled the spread and eventual destruction of values. This is evident in his work *Discontent* and his essay on the bourgeoisie. He explains the emergence of modern bourgeoisie as follows:

First, the modern bourgeoisie arose as a reaction to the dominance of the old aristocratic class. Second, the bourgeoisie emerged as a response to the explosion of latent resentment within them. As a result of this explosion, values became fragmented. Traders and industrialists achieved their victories and dominance, which influenced spiritual and intellectual domains. Consequently, values and ideas became linked to production. With the increasing focus on production and growing wealth, materialism replaced ethics. Human judgment and evaluation became based on economic skills, success, and the ability to overcome any obstacles to wealth accumulation (Schleier, *Values in Max Scheler's Philosophy*, pp. 183).

#### Schleier identifies two types of Discontent:

- The first type is based on the loss of value (disvalue) and the inability to perceive an objectively lived value. Schleier states, "An individual or group who lacks content from a specific sphere of lived value becomes resentful," such as the resentment felt by the poor toward the rich.

- The second type is deeply rooted in a weak foundation of value and the inability to experience a particular value. This resentment is focused in a person's mood toward a relatively lower value, directed at another whose mood is centered on a relatively higher value. For example, a person may resent another who holds a higher scientific or literary status, where the value involved is a higher spiritual value rather than a material one (Schleier, *Values in Max Scheler's Philosophy*, p. 184). This second type of resentment is dependent on and emerges from the first.

The main consequence of resentment is what Schleier calls the "value delusion." He argues that this delusion arises when a person tries to reduce or eliminate the tension between their intellectual mood and the hierarchical order of values. This is done by seeking feelings of superiority or equality. The individual achieves this by artificially lowering the value of another person or by failing to recognize the valuable qualities in others. Here lies the core bias of resentment: the resentful person distorts the values themselves to fit their own desires and abilities. They invent a false hierarchy of values according to their personal goals and wishes. This



does not represent a genuine awareness of value but is the main source of what Scheler terms "value blindness," "value delusion," or "value deception" (Schleier, *Values in Max Scheler's Philosophy*, p. 187).

Schleier illustrates this with the bourgeoisie, which falsified values according to its own desires and capabilities. It established its moral rules and value perceptions on material grounds. Its main virtues became perseverance in work and increasing production, which made industrial ethics surpass spiritual ethics (Schleier, *Values in Max Scheler's Philosophy*, p. 187).

**Scheler identifies two forms in which value Decline expresses itself:**

- First, a person may convert what they secretly desire but cannot achieve into an object of loss of value by mocking, distorting, or destroying it. An example of this is unrequited love, where the lover turns into a hater of the beloved and may even resort to violence. This type of delusion results from the first kind of resentment described earlier, where the resentful person is unable to see the true value of things before them.

- Second, this delusion is often more malicious and corrupt because it is subtler and more cunning, making it harder to detect. In this form, an individual may secretly acknowledge that there is a value superior to their own. More than that, they try to interpret this higher value according to their own mood and perspective.

Schleier provides many examples demonstrating resentment in modern life. He states, "The deepest corruption and misuse of the value hierarchy is the subjugation of vital values to utility values, which gains more strength as modern ethics develop. Such distortion of values is what Schleier calls the mood or spirit of industrialization" (Schleier, *Values in Max Scheler's Philosophy*, p. 188).

According to this perspective, life itself seeks the individual's existence in their safety and thoughts. It highlights what is useful through its benefit or advantage to the community. However, it does not consider whether life contains higher values beyond what utility represents. Its existence must necessarily produce profit. Moreover, this benefit is denied according to Max Scheler's view of natural rights.

In other words, the behavioral standards governing the modern era—which have led to dissatisfaction—have made profit and property the main criteria for evaluating individuals. Here, people turn into objects, and relationships between them fade away because material things dominate. Thus, Scheler argues that the economy controls life in general, and the family in particular. The family's free will is not governed by intertwined personal relationships or the love among members but rather by the economy and wealth that control these relations (Mahmoud, 2004, pp. 188–189).

**Conclusions**

All the above conditions are fundamental causes of the deterioration and dissolution of values. This situation caused Scheler to feel disgust and rejection on the one hand, and to believe that modern society has misused values on the other. This led him to claim that self-control means the sovereignty of the spiritual person over sensory impulses, tendencies, and desires. Scheler views the corruption and distortion of values primarily as a result of modern industry and its harmful effects. In contemporary life, we witness many damages affecting both humans and animals.

This does not mean that Scheler is opposed to technology. Rather, what is happening now in the West is the dominance of material values over the three higher values Scheler mentions. When matter dominates and prevails, the result is the corruption of values. Scheler states, "The machine has become dominant over life and objects, while the human who created and invented it has become merely a cog in it." He continues that if we reflect on reevaluating the relationship between machine and human, we conclude that the spirit of modern civilization is not progress—as Spencer claimed—but rather a collapse in human advancement. It represents the rule of the weak over the strong, the intelligent over the noble, quantity over quality. This is a clear sign of decline and degradation (Mahmoud, 2004, p. 39).

Scheler raises the question seeking to identify the cause of value decline: "Who does not see that there is another—completely different—direction in which values can be given to humans? Provided that one can detach from self-interest or utility regarding values and develop them" (Mahmoud, 2004, p. 193).

Scheler believes that we must free ourselves from symbolic values attributed to things for our actions and other existing goods to recognize the other goods around us. Additionally, we must liberate ourselves from the symbols of value related to goods according to the value sphere we perceive purely and exclusively in that direction.

Here, Scheler invites us to understand the spirit of the era we live in. If we understand this spirit completely separate from materialism, we can employ these goods based on what we understand and absorb from values.

On this basis, Scheler emphasizes the role of experience based on intuition in providing us with knowledge of good and evil. He explains how good and evil reveal themselves to us. Furthermore, Scheler's

ethical philosophy lies not in the judgments made about value but in what these judgments mean—the content or substance of value regarding good and evil (Hussein, 1977, p. 48).

This summarizes Scheler's value philosophy in broad strokes. It is a philosophy that gained wide popularity, and its author is considered one of the giants of contemporary thought. Scheler emphasized the non-objective nature of the human person, thus marking a transition toward existential philosophy.

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