THEORETICAL / PHILOSOPHICAL PAPER

Values, Knowledge and Solidarity: Neglected Convergences Between Émile Durkheim and Max Scheler

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Abstract Within the purview of the sociology of knowledge Durkheim and Scheler appear among its important inaugurators theorizing the social foundations of knowledge, seemingly from mutually exclusive perspectives. Scheler's phenomenology of values and community is often juxtaposed with Durkheim's attempt to integrate values in reality, represented by the social configuration of organic solidarity. This essay argues that the affinity between Scheler and Durkheim deserves reexamination. Means employed for pursuing this aim include a reconsideration of how values mediate reality, but, above all, an attempt to show that both thinkers converge on their principal normative goal. This is no other than a global community of solidarity which both Scheler and Durkheim, albeit through different trails, visualize as the culmination of value-ethics. While Durkheim pursues this goal through a systematic exposition of the transition from mechanical to organic solidarity, late Scheler's view of 'the age of adjustment' discloses a normative approach on modernity at odds with the then prevalent *Kulturkritik*. This ideal helps to rehabilitate Scheler and to approach the notions of sociality, the sociology of knowledge and the configuration of the 'encompassing person' through Durkheimian lenses. The essay concludes with a brief appraisal of theoretical gains drawn from this newly lit affinity.

Keywords Adjustment · Convergence · Durkheim · Scheler · Solidarity · Values

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Introduction

Sociological commentary on the Scheler–Durkheim affinity has been reticent. This is not unexpected, given the distinct epistemological and normative trails both thinkers follow. At first glance, an attempt at theoretical convergence appears uninviting. Without glossing over the fact that the two thinkers speak often different languages in terms of basic theoretical principles and exposition, I will try to rectify the perception that Scheler's affinity to Durkheim resides in some shared but vague interest in the sociology of knowledge. Rather, aside from its intrinsic interest in terms of intellectual history, this essay offers a theoretical synthesis based on comparable epistemological and normative concepts culled from both thinkers' vision of society as a moral order.

Before we disentangle the threads which tie Scheler to Durkheim, we need to commence with some remarks on the value controversy in Europe. Max Weber's insights on axiology and the thesis that a rational criterion cannot be elicited as adequate means for resolving value-conflicts, has generated a variety of critical responses within the tide of neo-Kantianism, logical positivism and value-theory. Adorno (1968/2000: 78) aptly placed the controversy over values between the extremes of Weber and Scheler. To Weber's value-incommensurability, Max Scheler retorts by positing an ahistorical and eternal value-hierarchy, the validity of which is given intuitively to emotive experience. While the discussion around values waned for a few decades after WWII, the Weber–Scheler confrontation ushered a growing and often turbulent debate over moral, cultural and cognitive relativism and the alternative of a rational and objective value-ethics.

In spite of the offensive against Weber's value-pluralism, value-theory since Weber did not succeed in breaking free from further epistemic and sociological difficulties. Max Scheler and Nicolai Hartmann, in generating a material (i.e., non-formal) and a teleological axiology respectively, stumbled upon the problem of community. If Scheler's theory is apposite to sociology rather than Hartmann's teleological ethics, it is because the latter evades the problem of mediation of values with social reality. Scheler's phenomenological axiology, however, creates ample sociological space for rethinking the problem of values in terms similar to Durkheim's moral constitution of society. As I argue, Durkheim's objectivist approach to the moral foundations of society brings him, at least in terms of its basic theoretical tenets, close to Scheler's value objectivism.

Starting, therefore, from this tacit and unacknowledged convergence, the foregoing discussion identifies similar trails, which Scheler and Durkheim traversed in mapping modernity and in countering many of its discontents. After addressing the necessity of mediating values with historical reality, which Durkheim and Scheler see as crucial for ethics, I discuss their parallel interest on the moral constitution of human societies founded on solidarity. Then, I look at how both felt compelled to build ethics on a solid foundation and at how both developed distinct stages of sociality conducive to this goal. Precisely because ethics needs an outlet in history and society both Scheler and Durkheim see the project of the sociology of knowledge through moral lenses and both attach to knowledge a rational foundation but at different degrees of normative commitment. I also examine here, albeit

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briefly, the neglected milieu-theory in Scheler. This is crucial for my next goal which appraises how they sought to supersede relativism through the narratives of adjustment and solidarity. The adjustment thesis constitutes the last terrain where the affinity between Durkheim and Scheler can, if plausible, tell us something about the difficulties and prospects of the normatively forged ideal of social integration on a global scale.

Values and Reality

The dominant paradigm in both sociology of knowledge and value-theory perceives Scheler and Durkheim as mutually exclusive theorists (Frisby 1992: 48; Frondizi 1963: 130; Wolff 1991: 88–91). In a long overdue study on the origins of values, Joas (2000) discusses Durkheim's collective effervescence as a category attached to the problem of modern cohesiveness but does not address, however, the equally pressing issue of how values mediate (and are mediated by) social reality in the case of Scheler. He thus, unwittingly, relegates Scheler's coupling of values to society into the status of a non-item. This omission adds one more incident in the list of those scholars who read Scheler's value-theory through phenomenology only, obscuring its sociological dimension. It is the latter, however, that renders Scheler's value-theory partially compatible to Durkheim's thesis about the collective origins of values (as cognitive and emotive structures) and how these guide social action. The main trend, therefore, in Scheler scholarship is to evade sociological issues altogether (Blosser 1995; Frings 2001; Spader 2002), or at best, to read Scheler's prejudiced critique of Durkheim's sociologism at face value (Deeken 1974: 72–76; Staude 1967: 165–166). Barber (1993), for instance, devotes an entire chapter to Scheler's distance from sociologism but he overlooks Durkheim, rendering the reasons unclear: because he classifies him as an exponent of the sociologism so unpalatable to Scheler, or because Durkheim can also be counted among the critics of sociologism? This paper argues that both thinkers açcommodate ideal factors and seek normative mediations with material factors in collective configurations, although the method implemented, as well as the principal theses from which their converging projects emanate, differ considerably at decisive points. Correctly, however, Barber accords intersubjectivity a cardinal role in Scheler's social theory, as an early pointer to Habermas' discourse ethics. This relaxation of the phenomenological canon marks, as we shall see later in the argument, at least one significant theoretical gain drawn from the Durkheim–Scheler affinity. It also enables us to appreciate the sociological input that Scheler's value-theory can generate for fields other than the sociology of emotions (for the latter, see Frère 2006; Vandenberghe 2008).

To be sure, there is much in Scheler that can efface rigorous transitions to Durkheim. Before 1922 Scheler's philosophical and moral project is markedly at odds with Durkheim's. The Catholic philosopher and sociologist trumps phenomenologically deduced values in an ahistorical hierarchical scheme. Like many of his *Kulturkritik* contemporaries, Scheler glorifies war, equating death with the aggrandizement of vital urges in the front. He also endorses facets of the then

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fashionable *Lebensphilosophie*, which he later depreciated as a symptom of a declining mass culture. Since 1922, however, Scheler enters a secular phase and supplants his metaphysics of adjustment, via the sociology of knowledge, with a new scientific foundation. In detecting affinities to Durkheim, I focus, therefore, on late Scheler, but such insights can be fleshed out from his early works, especially when Scheler concedes that the early *Kulturkritik* which he had promulgated was narrow, wanting in avenues to society and history.

Becker and Dahlke (1942: 319) confirm this "essentially Durkheimian bent" in Scheler's sociology of knowledge, which entails sociology's contribution to the philosophical problem of justifying the social institutions of modernity as ethical matrixes. Their intuition about shared aspects between Scheler and Durkheim surfaces in other commentators (Bershady 1992: 15; Ranly 1966: 62, n.1; Stark 1953: xiv) as well. On top, therefore, of Scheler's impact on phenomenological sociology (i.e., Schütz 1942), we can observe that Scheler was led, responding to the risks of a morally fragmented modernity, to the quest for an appropriate institutional framework conducive to solidarity. Yet, Scheler's envisaged solutions may appear inchoate, if one is to read him simply as a reconverted to Platonism Catholic, or, if one endorses the claim of Marxist critics, that the realm of essential values constitutes a reified and typically bourgeois cluster of arbitrarily concocted value-claims.[1] What remains concealed in such criticisms, however, is the fact that Scheler sees axiology as culminating in a novel research program for the sociology of knowledge. This is no other than the tendency to 'adjustment,' a project rooted in the coordination of distinct levels of knowledge (religious, metaphysical, positive) in history, which Scheler (1921/1963) retrieves from Comte.

Both Scheler and Durkheim share, therefore, a belief about the centrality of values for ethics and both extend their conception of values to social ethics. While Scheler's version of value-theory arises initially in the context of an a priori hierarchy of values given, along with their content, phenomenologically to emotive consciousness, Durkheim addresses the need to reconstruct the value-laden dimension of reality and to configure the latter as inherently social. If, therefore, we limit Scheler's appreciation of values to an ahistorical and a priori domain of validity and we identify Durkheim's concept of values solely with the constraining dimensions of collective beliefs, then we clearly end up with mutually exclusive standpoints. But this reading tells us only half of the story. We need to recall that Durkheim's entire sociological project regards values and Enlightenment values in particular, as enabling modalities, operating both as functional prerequisites and as normative collective representations. Like Scheler, Durkheim discerns in European modernity the tendency to adjustment and broaches the topic of the moral constitution of social reality, in light of the anomic phenomena detected across an array of institutions. The binding function of values, according to Durkheim, sets up society as a collective subject worthy of affirmation and respect. While at a first

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[1] For Marxist criticisms on Scheler, see Lenk (1972/1987), Lukács (1962/1980) and Wittfogel (1931/1990). More generous approaches can be found in Marcuse (1933/2005: 124) and Psychopedis (2004). This is also another convergence between Durkheim and Scheler: both negate the abstract and reductionist aspects of revolutionary Marxism, but both cling to a defense of ethical socialism (either as personalism or as solidarity). For Scheler's ambiguous reaction to Marxism, see Schneck (1987).

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instance the submission to such a collective authority raises the paradox of a "liberating dependence" (Durkheim 1911/1974: 72), this becomes resolved at the stage where society registers human autonomy and the dignity of the human person (*la personne humaine*) among its core institutional and normative constituencies.

While Durkheim distances his moral sociology from neo-Kantian axiology, we will need to accept that he embraces an affirmative approach to social reality and that he founds his sociological theory on modern institutions along the tracks of moral autonomy. While Scheler's personalist breach with neo-Kantianism can hardly qualify as an epistemological and normative move that sees in social reality an active partner to value-formation in history, it needs to be reminded that the project of social ethics formed also part of Scheler's philosophical horizon. For example, in the preface to his *opus magnum* on ethics, Scheler adduces community as an important factor in how the modalities of values render historical reality possible. Then, in the third preface to the same work, Scheler (1916/1973: xxvi) upgrades the role and scope of the sociology of knowledge; now it contributes to realizing man's rational organization in history. He also chides Nicolai Hartmann for the "too little significance" he attributes "to the *historical* and *social nature of all* living ethoses and *their* own special orders of values" [Scheler 1916/1973: xxx (original emphasis)]. Tilting the emphasis to the socially mediated activation of values, Scheler's critique of Kant displays that in his secular development, like Durkheim's own attempt to reconstruct Kantian apriorism as a collective configuration, Scheler is obliged to enter the domain of society and history.

Evidently, the postulate of a priori value-hierarchies has stumbled upon various objections. The one from Victor Kraft, a formidable exponent of logical positivism, deserves our attention because it generates the platform for our proposed synthesis. Like Scheler, Kraft envisages the dangers of a relativistic epistemology with its historicist implications. But in contrast to Scheler he posits the validity of values along the tracks of intersubjective recognition. The universal validity of values is then grasped as "binding only when it is voiced in the name of an impersonal authority" (Kraft 1951/1981: 144). The appeal to an impersonal authority does not reify a collective subject ineluctably placed beyond individual agency, a misplaced criticism against the Durkheimian solution that Kraft reverts to. Rather, it is construed as "inter-subjective community" (Kraft 1951/1981: 154) grounded on "collective valuations" (Kraft 1951/1981: 162). The collective validity of values is seen then as an entity with superior authority over the individual. Unlike Durkheim, Kraft does not break free from conventionalism, since he subsumes the collective factor to the force of tradition, custom, habit and cultural norms. He feels compelled, however, as he witnesses the growing division of labor in modern society and its eroding effects on morality, to theorize the universality of values (justice, morality, education among others), seeing them now as conditions for civilization (Kraft 1951/1981: 177). Values as foundational for society and civilization define equally Scheler and Durkheim in their respective projects. Scheler, for instance, posits life as foundational for the realization of the hierarchy of values in society, while Durkheim's entire sociological project, aims at demonstrating the functional dimension of normativity, culminating in the dignity of the individual. That Kraft misses this point in his bout with Durkheim and Bouglé

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concerning their positivist approach to valuation (Kraft 1951/1981: 188, n. 55), should not inhibit us from identifying notable similarities among them. These are also evident in further aspects of Kraft's critique: The a priori value-hierarchy is refuted by the empirical existence of different value hierarchies across society and history but is re-inserted as a collective level (Kraft 1951/1981: 20) a priori construction. Again, this Durkheimian strategy to the problem of values followed by Kraft, surfaces in Scheler's pressing need to renew a supra-individual 'ought' in the shape of an 'encompassing person'.

This excursus on Kraft is instructive in that it displays a sociological sensitivity to the problem of the validity of values and for rethinking the Scheler–Durkheim rapprochement in normative terms. Kraft's masked Durkheimian critique is damaging to our argument only if Scheler's concerns about the historical activation of values become, as they are in Kraft's case, marginalized. In any event, Scheler was too committed to sociology to break completely with the collective validity of values. Scheler's anti-relativism led him eventually, to mediate values with the historical interplay between real and ideal factors under a pluralist sociology of knowledge and to envisage a balancing intersection of value perspectives among groups and cultures. Society's moral foundation binds the hidden natural law intimations in the eternal value hierarchy that Scheler posits, to what its ultimate value-content implies, namely planetary solidarity.[2] What social ethics would look like had Scheler completed this ambitious project can only be surmised. A plausible and Durkhemian route, however, includes the levels of moral solidarity, which Scheler associated with degrees of social cohesion and togetherness.

Social Configurations of Solidarity

Although the project of solidarity for Scheler commences systematically with the treatise on sympathy, since I deal here with Durkheim's macro-solidarity, the focus can expand to Scheler's similar concerns. In the aftermath of WWI, Durkheim and Scheler pursued consistently, but with different degrees of rigor and commitment, the founding of a morally sound societal solidarity. Like many others they partially adhered to Tönnies' captivating model of community and modernity, but felt that the typology of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft needed normative reconstruction. The two types of social organization undergo a normative reversal by Durkheim as he reserves the 'organic' component for modernity despite Tönnies' skeptical provisos. Scheler, for his part, opened up Tönnies' classification subsuming under Gemeinschaft the sociologically primitive category of the 'mass,' while raising above Gesellschaft (in terms of categorial and normative adequacy) the exemplar of moral solidarity coined somewhat tenuously, 'encompassing person'.[3] The entire

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[2] Only in this light, I think, can Scheler survive the sharp criticism, by Ingarden (1970/1983: 168) for instance, that the a priori contents of values are, ultimately, tantamount to formalism because they regress to ahistorical essentialism.

[3] Gurvitch (1950: 219) rightly objects that Scheler's category is opaque, since it can account for virtually anything, ranging from a nation, a church, to a World Federation of Syndicates and the United Nations. However, if looked at through the lens of Scheler's wider moral concerns, the idea of an 'encompassing

edifice he erected owes to the turn of the century sociology, Durkheim included, although, again, surveys in the history of ideas capturing this turbulent phase in German sociology (Liebersohn 1988; Vandenberghe 2009) pass over its impact on a major thinker like Scheler and thus render the critical aspects of his sociological thought hard to notice.

Commencing with the category of the 'mass,' Scheler invokes motifs apposite to pre-reflective consciousness where impulsive drives take precedence over the faculty of understanding. Scheler's 'mass' would correspond, by the standards of Durkheim's scheme of societal development, to the lowest stages of sociality within mechanical solidarity. The largely amorphous, subject to psychic contagion configuration of the mass, is cornered in Scheler's ideal type as a container of coarse emotive material. As a condensed category equivalent to Durkheim's primitive horde or tribe, Scheler's concept of the mass retains only genetic explanatory significance. Durkheim, although reticent on Le Bon's ideas—from which Scheler develops the 'mass'—configures the idea of the 'mass' more productively, in so far as he—under the influence of Tarde's theory of social imitation—recognizes some positive effects emerging from 'contagion' (Durkheim 1912/1961: 364–365). Moreover, if we ascribe to the mass, as Scheler believes, base followership instincts, then the analogy with Durkheim's 'collective effervescence' can be sustained only to the extent that he too fears the indeterminate consequences of such collective fusions, especially, when these may turn unrestrained, transforming the "bourgeois to a butcher" (Durkheim 1912/1961: 241–242).[4] The mass, therefore, for Durkheim, and to a lesser degree, but equally identifiable for Scheler, is reproduced at a higher level of sociality, mediated by the institutions and value orientations that characterize systemically higher configurations of the social. Still, regressions to the lower levels are probable, given the systemic complexity of *Gesellschaft* or of the 'encompassing person'. Durkheim's apt descriptions of ethical aberrations within the context of the French Revolution as well as Scheler's aversion for the fanaticism of proletarian struggle, confirm the presence of the mass in modernity not only as a deformation of the latter's ethical constitution, but, also as the minimum prerequisite of collective value-formation.

Scheler's second level of sociality, the 'life-community,' is structured largely as a blueprint of Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft*. Various features are amassed in this category many of which are typical of conservative thought. The natural attitude of the life-world, the absorption of the individual in the communal life-feelings (equivalent to Durkheim's likeness criteria in mechanical solidarity), the tradition-directed notions of time and the awe-inspiring presence of the world, which was to shape later Heidegger's reservations against modernity's productionist metaphysics, constitute motifs figuring palpably in Scheler.

Footnote 3 continued

person,' while sociologically inert gains considerable normative appeal. But for Gurvitch, Scheler is guilty of idealizations and errors committed also by Durkheim (Society idealized) and even by Marx (the Proletariat idealized). The charge of categorial imprecision against Scheler is shared by Joas (1996: 187).

[4] Durkheim refers here to the abstract and hasty "applications" of Reason in history (e.g., the French Revolution and its regress to Terror), a central theme of political philosophy from Constant and Kant to Hegel's famous passages in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*.

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While at first glance compatible with Durkheim's concept of modern society, Scheler's 'society' (*Gesellschaft*), which constitutes his third level of sociality, differs in crucial ways, if one, of course, unlike the standpoint pursued here, depicts organic solidarity as an accomplished historical 'fact'. It is evident that Durkheim did not see it that way. Organic solidarity although configured along the tracks of modernity's institutions, is marked by an internal lag in that its moral values fortifying the dignity of the individual, have only partially become actualized (in Hegel's sense). Durkheim then is far from implying a transition to organic solidarity's fully developed form through historical necessity only. His Kantian heritage precludes this possibility, when Durkheim refines—via Boutroux and Renouvier—the Kantian notion of indeterminacy as freedom (Durkheim 1883–1884/2004: 164). Rather, organic solidarity's 'future' is built in the indeterminate zone that implicates freedom but also modern anomie.[5] Anomie flourishes among other things, under conditions of formal and abstract solidarity, which as early as 1893, Durkheim had discerned as a structural dimension of the modern division of labor, but never as its sole functional and moral backbone. His distance from Herbert Spencer is attested in this and many other ways, especially as Durkheim demarcates (moral) division of labor from a purely instrumental societal differentiation. When, Scheler therefore, sketches *Gesellschaft* in skeptical terms, pointing to its divisive, contract-based and plebiscitarian formal equality, he is operating through Tönnies' lenses. It is worth remembering here that Durkheim did not simply reverse the signs in Tönnies' categories. Rather, he integrated aspects of each, in the novel types of mechanical and organic solidarity. In Durkheim, mechanical solidarity already entails organic outlets, which crack its self-referential cluster through, for example, the covert internationalism of early religion and of primitive systems of classification. Organic solidarity too preserves a mechanical function either as the constraining force of modernity's institutional logic or, as the fully mediated by the values of freedom and justice, functional social system. It is this mechanical and 'formal' dimension that early Scheler cannot supersede and remains thus trapped in a *Kulturkritik*-laden typical construction of a 'mechanical' modernity.[6]

To compensate for this normative deficit in the modernity within which his thought is historically situated, Scheler ascribes to the highest socio-ethical

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[5] While the late Durkheim distanced his theoretical tools from the idea of anomie, this seems to survive implicitly and perhaps more dramatically in his treatise on the painful dualism in human nature, his pamphlets on war and the urge to couple God to some sort of 'general will'. Why would Durkheim struggle so persistently in forging a binding social ethics, unless he was feeling uneasy with modernity's discontents?

[6] Durkheim's organic solidarity is marked by the principle of moderation (see Durkheim 1902–1903/1973: 122). Philosophical anthropology reached similar conclusions about phenomena of anomie, radicalism and romanticism, invoking anew moderation as an index of affirming society (*Gesellschaft*). Plessner (1924/1999) in particular, embraced the social organization of *Gesellschaft* against social radicals, precisely because of its normative and organizational capacity to contain 'difference' and systemic complexity. The ancient principle of moderation (Plessner 1924/1999: 191) against the evil of "infinity" (Plessner 1924/1999: 47), invites analogies to Durkheim's Aristotelian transformation of moderation within organic solidarity and his admonitions of anomic "infinity sickness" (Durkheim 1902–1903/1973: 40). The era of convergence in Scheler mandates similar moral principles on a planetary scale.

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configuration of the 'encompassing person' the ideal of world-solidarity, which has not yet achieved sufficient historical affirmation. This category, although it cannot fully square with Durkheim's organic solidarity, seems to capture the latter's tendency toward a cosmopolitan ethic. A vision of a world community of solidarity[7] founded on the (Kantian) principle of perpetual peace is supplemented by the inductive generalization, to which Durkheim's methodology often returns. Thus, in his appraisal of Saint-Simon, Durkheim writes that "[u]ndoubtedly, in some shape or form internationalism is observed at all moments in history, for there has never been a people who lived in a state of hermetic isolation. Every society has always had something in common with the neighboring societies it most resembled. It thus was led to form associations with them that were more or less stable, more or less definite, more or less broad, but which—whatever their nature—opposed a counter-weight to strictly national egoism" (Durkheim 1895–1896/1962: 215).

Scheler, for his part, submerges the abstractness of mass to the organic immediacy of *Gemeinschaft* but what demarcates him from his conservative contemporaries, is the fact that the normatively structural differentiation signaled by *Gesellschaft* is acknowledged as a binding historical formation the antinomies of which are held to be resolved in the planetary solidarity of the encompassing person. The latter supplants the surplus moral thrust missing in modernity. Axel Honneth points to the ethical backdrop that binds Scheler to a normative theory of society. Honneth (1995: 94) writes: "Max Scheler, for example, distinguishes 'life-community,' 'society,' and (based on solidarity) 'community of persons' as three 'essential social units,' which, like Hegel and Mead, he associates with develop-mental stages of human personhood". This is a crucial insight underpinning my claim that Scheler's thought cannot be exhausted in the phenomenological paradigm. Unfortunately, Honneth does not pursue this connection further, but I guess that, if persuaded by this linkage, there is little that prevents us from inserting Durkheim into the developmental logic adduced by Honneth, namely of adjusting the ethic of individualism to structurally differentiated, but morally robust social configurations like organic solidarity.

The Sociology of Knowledge

Because the sociology of knowledge was immediately absorbed by the hegemony of Mannheim's paradigm,[8] Scheler's contributions in this field were by default excluded from classical sociology's heritage. It is worth looking at how Scheler and

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[7] Even Nicolai Hartmann's axiology makes room for solidarity as a universal value "in connection with the collective unit" (1926/1975: 236–237) and as a claim to collective validity. Contemporary accounts of solidarity are silent about Scheler's relevance for solidarity debates. Others discuss Durkheim and Scheler, but as offering mutually exclusive accounts of solidarity (Stjernø 2004; Zoll 2000: 181).

[8] Regarding adjustment, Mannheim (1971: 59–115) distances himself from Scheler in a particularly astute and emphatic manner. As I lack the space to discuss this richly textured critique, I need only to note that Mannheim fails to appreciate the wider consequences of material factors and the dialectics of values, which 'meet' in the era of adjustment, even if Mannheim's own democratic personalism bears on late Scheler's social outlook.

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Durkheim meet in the way they attach a collective framework to the social credibility of knowledge-claims, especially as both, in their own ways, refuse to subordinate the social validity of knowledge to crude social reductionisms of the historicist or Marxist sort.

To be sure, Scheler (1926/1980: 200) is mistaken when he equates Durkheim's epistemology with sociologism. The belief that Durkheim reduces knowledge to collective practice has been refuted by many scholars (Wallwork 1972; Gieryn 1982; Hund 1990) and need not be revisited in this essay. Nor do I wish to delve into the crude scheme of real factors (reproduction, power and nutrition) and how these open, rather arbitrarily, the "material sluices" of social life's intellectual and artistic accomplishments. Indeed, as Merton (1970: 347) rightly observes, compared to Durkheim and Mannheim, the positing of vague real factors by Scheler seems muddled and sociologically counterproductive. As we will see, however, in the concluding part of this essay, the material factors device enables Scheler to account for historical and cultural diversity and to seek, simultaneously, the ideal of adjustment he advocated, through value-shifts in the way material factors can be socially reshaped to serve it.

Often, however, Scheler argues like a Durkheimian via a phenomenological detour. He claims that the ultimate indubitable reality in us is that of society (Scheler 1926/1980: 72). Although he distinguishes the contents of knowledge (values) from their social criteria of credibility, he, like Durkheim, holds that "the classification of knowable things in general, are co-conditioned by the division and classification of the *groups* (for example, clans) of which the society consists" [Scheler 1926/1980: 73 (original emphasis)]. Scheler defends the ideal of Reason he belatedly registered in his axiology, when he writes that the "noble forces of reason, philosophy, and science have risen throughout European history because of the progressive liberation of human activity from all forms of compulsion. They rose in close association, even shoulder to shoulder, with *democracy*" (Scheler 1925–1928/1958: 16 [original emphasis]). To the reactionary reduction of democracy to myth and mass metaphysics, Scheler pithily juxtaposes a European rational metaphysics, with a view to coordinate the scientific community and realign it to Enlightenment values. It is no coincidence that these visionary outlooks on modernity's dilemmas emerge in his sociology of knowledge. Refusing to sever the link between democracy and scientific knowledge, Scheler rebuts the reactionary charges which see democracy as a politicized specter of exchange-value. Rather, he creates the groundwork for a reformist philosophical anthropology serving the ideal of scientific endeavor under the aegis of a "rational metaphysics" (Scheler 1926/1980: 176–177). Guided by the ideal of convergence, Scheler rethinks the sociology of knowledge as a program conducive to the "easing of tensions" between incommensurable knowledge-claims. Like Husserl, Scheler believes that European non-instrumental culture sets the a priori of dialogue and communication among cultures. The "minimum common metaphysical convictions that will make possible a fruitful cooperation" of the sciences resisting the inert alternatives of "positivism, romanticism, or proletarianism" (Scheler 1926/1980: 184), reflects a belief that objective values are now transferred to the realm of historical possibility. With Scheler's focus on the discursive and normatively intersubjective grounds for choice and deliberation, we reenter the life-world problematic in sociology and political theory (Habermas). Durkheim has a similar outlook but offers a vastly superior exposition. He too, brings forth the pivotal role of

collective (and moral) beliefs and practices for religious and scientific worldviews via a social theory of knowledge. But this does not inhibit him from seeing in modern science an institution the epistemological justification of which transcends conventionalism. The implacable wave of relativism generated by many of his epigones in the domains of anthropology and the sociology of scientific knowledge is moderated by Durkheim's own accounts when he wishes to contain cultural diversity under binding collective representations, one of which is scientific rationality. This scientific rationality is not positivism, a label that Durkheim does not accept for his axiology and social theory, but is sanctioned and mediated by organic solidarity's institutional arrangement and moral values; it is not even tension-free since Durkheim repeatedly addresses the impact of scientific compartmentalization and its anomic consequences for modern society. Rather, Durkheim's depiction of scientific knowledge preserves the pluralism of knowledge-claims that Scheler also sought to harmonize in the emerging rational metaphysics of adjustment.

For Scheler then the sociology of knowledge reconstitutes metaphysics, but now in the realm of intersubjective knowledge claims. The meta-scientific status of the sociology of knowledge grapples with historical contingency, but, moreover, seeks convergences among competing collectivities. Under this scheme, Scheler's late writings lead, curiously, to a historically transcendental a priori, which the sociology of knowledge has the task to discern. The contrast to *Formalism* concerning incommensurability claims stemming from discrete milieux is evident and challenging. Scheler's early structuralist approach (1916/1973: 143) boxes a milieu (as the particular life-world of the artist, the peasant, the bourgeois etc.) into largely self-contained life-experience clusters from which value-essences are intuited and preferred (an intriguing anticipation of Luhmann's self-referential system codes). But again, there is the suspicion that Scheler does not rest with claims to milieu self-referential credibility. This is confirmed when he makes room for "a given milieu-structure which is *common* to the units of life" (Scheler 1916/1973: 283 [original emphasis]). This meta-milieu intimation points, albeit still unsystematically by Scheler, to a condition of possibility for any competition and struggle among milieux to take place. In line with Durkheim's refutation of cultural isolationism that we saw earlier, once these milieux start developing sensors for taking input from other milieux, they cease to encounter each other in mutually exclusive terms; the Durkheimian turn in the Schelerian milieu theory becomes even more noticeable, when Scheler emphasizes that "the total aspect of life is *inner solidarity and unity, but outward struggle and discord*" [Scheler 1916/1973: 282 (original emphasis)]. Demystified, therefore, Scheler's insight adds import to current debates about cultural relativism and moral universals in the direction of the common moral and functional meta-milieu of social life. This view, envisaged by early Scheler in quasi-mystical imagery, gives way now to the logic of adjustment and renders late Scheler a neighboring figure to normative sociological theories. Durkheim, for his part, placed the human being, in marked contrast to Cartesianism,[9] within a wider social milieu defined by collective value-sets, symbolic orders,

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[9] For an illuminating exposition of Durkheim's milieu theory as a response to genuinely philosophical issues, see Parsons (1978: Ch. 10).

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representations and institutions. But Durkheim's conjunction with relativism ends somewhere here. The *milieu social* escapes self-referential credibility, both due to its own internal inconsistencies and due to external constrains coming from other milieux. The latter need not repel one another. The upshot here is that communities can qualify as collective learners and thus adopt conceptual and practical tools from other milieux, essential to their own reproduction. Collective collaboration among social mileux figures among the normative possibilities, which Durkheim justifies philosophically and corroborates through sociology and ethnography. Like Scheler, he sees in the milieu theory an index of value-pluralism, which, however, is never so pronounced as to efface common concerns across milieux. These common functional requirements and normative principles set societies to engage in cross-national and cross-group synergies. Modernity's crises, so alarmingly intense for Scheler and Durkheim, lead both to acknowledge pluralism but also to mediate pluralist agency stemming from local milieux with reciprocally founded forms of adjustment and solidarity on a planetary scale.[10]

Late Scheler claims that history discloses "an increasing scope in the power of reason" and that "this is the case only by virtue of the fact that ideas and values tend to become appropriated by the great instinctual tendencies in social groups and by the common interests that link them" (1928/1961: 68). This shift resembles Durkheim in more than one ways. These common interests do not secrete utilitarianism into Scheler's value theory. Rather, they reflect conditions for a common life founded on solidarity the ethics of love he advocated. The transcendental turn here comes from *Formalism* (i.e., a value is higher if it is a condition for lower values to function) but the social form that these value-conditions acquire, points to a wider project of social ethics, intimated but unfulfilled in Scheler, affirmed and scientifically developed in Durkheim.

Pragmatic Universal Convergence

Given pragmatism's relevance for the sociology of knowledge and its growing appeal in *fin de siècle* modernity, it is interesting to note that, although hostile to its ultimate principles, neither Scheler nor Durkheim dismiss pragmatism in its entirety. Durkheim's lectures on pragmatism confirm essentially his belief that the openness to experience generated by pragmatism need not be incompatible to a priori values (see Durkheim 1913–1914/1983: lectures 13 and 20).

Hans Joas alerts us to the fact that Scheler like many of his contemporaries held many reservations against pragmatism. What demarcates Scheler from this cohort, however, is the fact that he acknowledged pragmatism's problem-solving procliv-ities vis-a-vis grand theories, provided that pragmatism's openness remained within

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[10] Durkheim's moral sociology, which sees society as a "new personality (*personnalité nouvelle*) distinct from individual personalities" (Durkheim 1902–1903/1973: 104) and late Scheler's philosophical anthropology conceptualize God as a superior moral milieu (Scheler 1925–1928/1958: 29). Even in his theist phase, Scheler (1921/1972: 365–366) sees Christianity as a "coalition of the most heterogeneous forces," including *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. For Durkheim, collective personalism is, ultimately, equivalent to society's sacred looking-glass self, namely religion.

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the "boundaries of a personalistic metaphysics and a religious view of the world" (Joas 1993: 105). The notion of 'functionalization' (*Funktionalisierung*) attests to Scheler's partial commitment to pragmatism. It refers to the formation of ideas and images about the physical and social world developed by agents and collectivities during a process of piecemeal and tentative theory building. This pragmatist engagement with practical adequacy enables Scheler (1927/1973: 288–356) to probe into the idealism-realism dualism and annul its dichotomous aspects. As values call for actualization, adjustment envelops (but is not reduced to) a pragmatist logic since it implies that criteria for adequacy may lie in all sorts of cultural formations, age groups, genders, value-ideals, which cannot be determined in an a priori fashion. What is a priori, however, as transcendental condition for adjustment, is the life-ideal, itself a presupposition for values to become embodied across collective configurations leading to the encompassing person. If there is one insight that has received little attention so far, is Scheler's notion that a value is higher if it constitutes the foundation for another value. This assertion seems to lock Scheler's hierarchy of values into explanatory closure. Rescuing it from its ahistorical rigidity involves inquiring as to which values qualify as foundational for other values to come into view. Thus, moral ideals can reemerge as value-networks (rather than as a single hierarchy), and can, therefore, invite further elaboration on their reciprocally forged normative foundation. In this fashion, Scheler's reactionary motifs (e.g. the logic of sacrificing a lower value for a higher one) extricate themselves from a contemporary theory of values to which a renovated Scheler can contribute. Scheler writes, that life "has these values in fact only insofar as *life* itself (in all its forms) *is* a bearer of values that take on certain heights in an objective scale" (1916/1973: 95 [original emphasis]). Albeit tinged with *Lebensphilosophie*, this formulation from Scheler's early value-theory allows man to reappear as the centre of Being only if man attests to the infinite spirit of the encompassing person. In the mature Scheler, this infinite spirit unfolds still in utopian terms as planetary solidarity. Only if the sociality of the encompassing person is primed, can talk of objective values acquire sociological significance like the one served when, for example, Durkheim defends an "objective scale of human values" (1911/1974: 83).[11] For Durkheim, "life is, of all amoral and profane goods, the one to which we cling hardest, since it is the necessary condition for the rest" (1911/1974: 58). This type of moral essentialism can be unveiled in Scheler's value theory, provided that it is not divorced from the sociology of knowledge. Again, Scheler's belief that lower values are to be experienced with greater emotive fulfillment, once higher values have already been realized (1916/1973: 96), finds an analogy to Durkheim's

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[11] Appositely, Parsons writes that the problem of "*Ausgleich*, the ultimate balancing of the motivational and moral economy, is the core of the significance of religion in a sociological context" (1951: 164). He also recognizes that the "compensatory re-equilibrium" of *Ausgleich* needs to enhance its credibility if it transfers the realm of salvation from the transcendent to the "*future* state of the social system itself" (1951: 37–373). This secular shift, as I argue in this essay, is pretty evident in Durkheim and can be defended for late Scheler. Parsons has already grasped in *Ausgleich* terms the unsatisfactory resolutions of utopianism for a structural-functionalist normative integration of society but sees neither its regulative function (Stark 1958: 339) nor its humbler pragmatic possibilities.

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dialectic between the *vie sérieuse* and the *vie légère* (1893/1960: 239–240). The former (i.e. the normative-religious-institutional aspects of social life) gains logical and moral primacy as a condition for the latter's (i.e. the playful aspects of social life) consolidation in modern society.

Durkheim's and Scheler's confrontation with pragmatism, adds another twist to current pragmatist responses to the problem of solidarity, like, for instance, Rorty's.[12] Both thinkers are open to pragmatism's call to loosen up 'essentialisms,' should the latter stifle knowledge, moral action or hope. They concede, of course, that cultural particularity needs to be taken on board by the sociology of knowledge. Still, their attachment to binding norms leads them along the trail of rethinking the collective person or the all-encompassing "we" through variables collected across cultures. Hence, they refurbish philosophical anthropology's cultural and moral potential.[13] As Frings (1996: 146) puts it: "the All-Man of the Age of Balance" embodies "the ontic unification of all human qualities and possibilities". Rather than committing *hubris* here, Scheler makes room for relative world-views nearing, therefore, pragmatism. He subjects, however, this relativity to the hierarchical scheme of values. But again, value-hierarchies cannot be seen only as arbitrary postulates, abstracted from history. It is social action in history which functionalizes these values and societal processes: Forms of togetherness stand or fall in how they perceive man and his world through a particular value-perspective (also a Nietzschean influence on Scheler).

The easing of tensions that Scheler visualizes during the 'era of adjustment'[14] parallels Durkheim's criticism on the exacerbation of conflicts, when adjustment is attempted by the 'part' in the name of the 'whole,' like in the case of Germany during WWI (Durkheim 1915). Durkheim's reflections here germinate the same mood as late Scheler's repudiation of war. However, this assertion can stand only in the generous sense that the ideals visualized by Durkheim and Scheler set the conditions within which history can disentangle itself from the realm of necessity and enter a new cosmopolitanism. The cosmopolitan ideal defended today by Ulrich

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[12] The subtext of a logic of 'adjustment' surfaces in Rorty's repeated calls to "an agreement among groups to cooperate with one another in support of institutions which are dedicated to providing room for as much pluralism as possible" (1999: 237). Whereas Scheler and Durkheim accommodate 'difference' and plural voices (hence their openness to pragmatism) without eschewing the search for a meta-value that will coordinate these diverse voices, Rorty's neo-pragmatism repels this wider project, pejoratively (and unjustly, perhaps) labeled 'essence'. Moral essentialism, for reasons outlined in this essay, need not be a priori incompatible with historical openness and practical contingency, as Bayertz (1999: 7) finds unconvincing in Scheler as opposed to Rorty; in fact, sensitivity to open practical exigencies marks essentialism's explanatory strength, rather than its weakness.

[13] For philosophical anthropology's moral, social and cultural horizons see Landmann (1969/1974) and Honneth and Joas (1980/1988).

[14] The German term '*Ausgleich*' used by Scheler carries also a market connotation, in that it conveys the sense of compensation intrinsic to economic transactions. The reasons why this nuance does not exhaust Scheler's ethics is provided by Deeken (1974: 222), who traces the use of Scheler's term in the idea of 'convergence'–Scheler also uses the verb *konvergieren*–as propounded by Teilhard de Chardin. It should be added that Scheler could not possibly envisage something like a utilitarian market reciprocity in the ideal of adjustment, given his ethics of love and the value-ideal of the 'encompassing person', both of which are foundational for economic adjustment to materialize in history. Elsewhere (Scheler 1928: 106), '*Ausgleich*' figures as "Mutual Adaptation" between particular mental trends and group identities.

Beck, for example, presupposes both an encompassing global value (not in its singular form but rather as a network of interdependent value-commitments and functional prerequisites) and as a call to material conditions without which this cosmopolitanism becomes inert. For Scheler peace is envisaged as a regulative ideal, which cannot be consummated under capitalism or socialism. Although, it emanates from the deepest structures of the human system, both as a vital urge and as spirit, it remains coupled to historical conditions, like its opposite, aggression. As Smith (1974: 85–100) shows, aggression stems for Scheler from incidents of *ressentiment* (negative feelings of inadequacy stemming from cross-value comparisons over recognition amongst others). Durkheim's polemic against the German inflation of nationalist egoism that led to WWI bears also on the *ressentiment* problematic. As alienation of the collective *amour propre*, *ressentiment* emits this emotive pathogeny into the social, through largely the same entry point like Scheler, namely the value inflation of the capitalist value-set.

Even astute scholars like Joas play up the reactionary label for Scheler's applause of the war, steeped with *Lebensphilosophie* motifs but, paradoxically, silence the pacifist resolutions he envisaged. To the view that the metaphysics of adjustment constitutes a symptom of political correctness or languid moralizing on late Scheler's part, the flipside to that coin shows that it forms the logical outcome of the latent sociality in Scheler's axiology. Classifying Scheler as a reactionary thinker prevents Joas (2003: 67–71) from identifying affinities to Durkheim's pacifist values, discussed actually in the same section and context. Scheler's ideal of peace appears inviting because it suggests, like Habermas and Beck, that the complexity of the social world today precludes single moral and political narratives from gaining theoretical advantage; while not on a par with one another with respect to their explanatory adequacy, moral theories along with their epistemological and sociological justifications are forced to seek wider practical synergies.

Conclusion: Scheler and Durkheim Today

While it is difficult to be persuaded by the absence of bolder and more policy-specific goals in the age of convergence, the exposition of the logic of adjustment by Scheler can buttress contemporary theories and practical projects and can illuminate the interdependence of interests between a personalist ethics and a normative social theory. Scheler's 'balancing-out' is designed to counter parochial stalemates and the ideological "excesses of both capitalism and socialism" (Kelly 1997: 220).[15]

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[15] Extremist attempts at 'adjustment' include abhorring phenomena of categorial extermination and mass murder in the form of genocide and ethnic cleansing. Bauman (2008: 35–37), for example, invokes Scheler's diagnosis of *ressentiment* (1915/1961), as an index of distorted adjustment that pulls society into an endless spiral of competition over rewards and recognition. In a similar context Derrida (1994: 77), at his most normative, portrays a sprawled world strewn with intense social problems, as "unjust" and "dis-adjusted". Although one cannot extrapolate secure verdicts from Derrida's penchant for rhetoric, at this juncture this motif is normatively in tune with Scheler's attempts at adjustment. The ongoing intensity of the post-2008 financial crisis has reintroduced with urgency the narrative of adjustment between states, markets and communities; it thus confirms the perceptive insight by Stikkers

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Both Durkheim and Scheler drive axiology away from methodological individualism and decisionism. Organic solidarity and the logic of adjustment figure as ethical configurations with a view to undermine forms of value-dogmatism. Durkheim's motif on the abstract realization of values during the French Revolution and Scheler's treatise on *ressentiment's* inversion of values, corroborate a marked sensitivity on the negative possibility of value fanaticism and tyranny perceptively diagnosed by Hartmann (1926/1975: 423) and Schmitt (1979/1996: 25). While cultural, religious and nationalist fundamentalisms figure as refutations of adjustment, the Schelerian strategy holds the advantage that such attempts reflect 'distorted,' *ressentiment*-driven adjustments forcing communities to hold tightly to this or that parochial identity. In similar lines to what Sen has aptly called the 'solitarist belittling of human identity' (2006: 178), Scheler and Durkheim combat all sorts of partitionist tendencies in their own territory.

It may useful here to bring once more Ulrich Beck into front stage. Against the incommensurability of system differentiation (Luhmann), Beck primes "*functional coordination*, cross-linking, harmonization, synthesis" (1993/1997: 27 [original emphasis]) among socio-cultural systems. Scheler's theory of milieux with emphasis on their tendency to convergence, anticipates Beck's normative reinvention of the political. It does so in socio-politically engaged priorities (conservation of nature and biodiversity, welfare policies, protection of women and children), which he inculcates into his vale-set, as absolute priorities, through a logic of 'conditions,' securing thus, "the maximal accumulation of wealth and material goods," towards the "*weak and helpless*" (Scheler 1913/1970: 107–108 [original emphasis]). In Durkheim too, functional coordination had always been integrated into his moral sociology, anchored perhaps in Kant. Under organic solidarity's mode of development, differing social groups become "coordinated and subordinated one to another around the same central organ which exercises a moderating action over the rest of the organism" (Durkheim 1893/1960: 181). While in Durkheim the central function of moderation is reserved for the communicatively fortified democratic state, Beck's negative solidarity cannot envisage yet the configuration of centrally initiated coordination, although he upholds elements of the institutional ethics that define Durkheim's organic solidarity.

The logic of adjustment reflects, thus, a collective drive of coordinating local participants towards greater degrees of commitment to planetary sociality. Mediated by the 'Age of economy' and the incipient material exigencies it generates, Scheler's sociology of knowledge crowns finally the convergence of axiology and the sociology of knowledge and points to their interlocking in history and modernity. The primordial materiality posited by Scheler through the real factors device, resurfaces both as a planetary exigency (i.e., environmental deficit, global poverty, economic crises in the affluent societies) and as a value-ideal, which informs other channels of intercultural communication along materially set coordinates. This materially infused value theory culminating into the social ethics

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Footnote 15 continued
(1980: 30) about the predominance of the nutritive-economic drive in our era (the 'Age of the Economy') that Scheler's sociology of knowledge anticipated.

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of love and solidarity, commits Scheler and Durkheim to a moral economy of reciprocity and adjustment that cuts across macro–micro dualisms and mends ruptures between reason and collective sentiments.

The themes shared by Durkheim and Scheler are far too many to keep neglecting. Drawing on the triptych of values-knowledge-solidarity, I argued in favor of some considerable space for communication between their theories. I also attempted to systematize scattered hints offered by scholars regarding a Durkheim-Scheler dialogue. Although Scheler begins from an ahistorical essentialism and Durkheim from an empirically and historically rooted social science of morality, their theoretical trajectories 'meet' at several points and foster a renovated moral essentialism of the dignity and autonomy of the person, aided by the programme for a sociology of knowledge. While I am convinced that Durkheim's system is better equipped to cope with the damaged moral fabric of modernity, Scheler's 'adjustment' normativism fills up the missing moral content of organic solidarity's cosmopolitan scope.

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