

Life and Spirit in Max Scheler's Philosophy

Robert Sandmeyer*

University of Kentucky

Abstract

Max Scheler was a philosopher of intuition who rarely worked out his ideas systematically. Consequently, his philosophical writings present something of a challenge for the reader. There is little unifying his disparate studies. In this paper, I suggest that a distinction between life and spirit which Scheler formulated early and held onto throughout his career can provide a heuristic principle by which to study his works. This paper is a clarification of this distinction. In the first part of the paper, I show that Scheler's dualistic metaphysics has its roots in Rudolf Eucken's idealistic philosophy. In the second and third parts of this essay, I clarify Scheler's concept of spirit as he develops it in confrontation with Edmund Husserl's phenomenological philosophy. Particularly, in the second part, I show that as he confronts Husserl's conception of philosophy as rigorous science he postulates a radically different idea of the nature of philosophy, an idea that is rooted in this distinction between life and spirit. I explicate in the next section the unique theory of the phenomenological reduction Scheler develops on the basis of this distinction. In the last part, I briefly present how this conception of life and spirit are worked out in Scheler's philosophical anthropology, particularly in his last work, *The Human Place in the Cosmos*.

This present essay concerns the conception of spirit and its relation to life as articulated by the German philosopher, Max Scheler. It has been said that Scheler was a philosopher of great philosophical intuition but with little will for the systematic articulation of his ideas. This is indeed the case. Given the breadth and range of his writings, a coherent survey of the main body of his works remains out of reach in this brief essay. Hence, I focus here on the distinction between life and spirit as a heuristic by which one may study Scheler's body of writings. Scheler, himself, suggested that this distinction is a central motif underlying his most important philosophical writings (Scheler 2009: 3–4). Unfortunately, he did not clearly work out this idea before he died. Manfred Frings, editor of many of Scheler's collected works and perhaps the most important interpreter of his writings, tells us that Scheler was working on three large writing projects at the time of his death: (i) a philosophical anthropology, (ii) a work on metaphysics, and (iii) a work on the theory of cognition (Frings 2). These comprehensive studies were to bring unity to the many essays and fragments Scheler had written and/or published over his lifetime. His sudden death left these works, whose themes articulate the basic contours of his thought, unfinished. This brief essay thus offers a sketch of a single basic motif at work in the variegated anthropological, metaphysical, and epistemological writings of Max Scheler.

This essay is divided into four sections. In the first, I briefly discuss his major works as biographical background. In the second, I argue that the life/spirit distinction articulated by Scheler exhibits prominent similarities to that advocated by his mentor at Jena, Rudolf Eucken. In the third, I turn to Scheler's engagement with Edmund Husserl in order to highlight a genuine disagreement between the two on the nature of philosophy, itself, rooted in the former's spiritual concept of the human person. This disagreement informs Scheler's unique spiritual conception of the phenomenological reduction, which I present

in the fourth section. I conclude with a brief discussion of the concept of the good implied by this life/spirit distinction.

Works

Born in Munich on 22 August 1874, Scheler died at 53 years of age in Frankfurt on 19 May 1928. As a young man, he entered the university in his home town of Munich with the intention of studying medicine but under the influence of Theodore Lipps quickly turned to philosophy. He moved to Berlin, where he had the opportunity to attend the lectures of Wilhelm Dilthey and Georg Simmel. In 1895, he left Berlin for Jena to complete his studies. He wrote his dissertation under Rudolf Eucken on the relationship between logical and ethical principles, which he published in 1897. He completed his Habilitation in 1899 on the transcendental and the psychological method while still at Jena. In this latter work, which is strongly influenced by Eucken, he attacks both the empirical methodology of the positivist philosophers and the transcendental method initiated by Kant as adequate to "the doctrine of spirit." In their place, he argues one should adopt a "noological method," a term taken from Eucken, whose foundational concepts are derived from the spiritual form of life rooted in the work world (Scheler 1922: 179f). This latter work gained him an appointment at Jena as *Privatdozent* or junior professor.

His most important work, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values: A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism* [hereafter *Formalism in Ethics*], was published in two installments in 1913 and 1916, respectively. This work is not merely the first but is in fact one of the most significant phenomenological studies of the objectivity of values intended in subjective acts. It has been said the work had a greater effect on the students of the phenomenological movement than Husserl's *Ideas I*, which was published at the same time and in the same journal (Stein 258). Scheler also published in 1913 *The Nature of Sympathy*, a phenomenological analysis of love and hate which concludes with a highly influential theory of intersubjectivity. In 1919, he published *Vom Umsturz der Werte* [On the overthrow of values], a series of essays on the nature of virtue, resentment, tragedy, and the idea of the human as well a number of important epistemological and sociological studies. *On the Eternal in Man*, a pioneering work in the philosophy of religion, came out in 1921. In this work, Scheler argued for the irreducibility of religious experience and the central significance of the Christian ideal of love for community life. In 1923, soon after his arrival in Cologne, he published a four volume collection of essays titled *Schriften zur Soziologie und Weltanschauungslehre* [Writings pertaining to sociology and the world-view doctrine]. Then in 1926, he published a collection of essays under the title, *Die Wissensformen und die Gesellschaft* [The forms of knowledge and society]. With these latter two collections, Scheler established himself as a leading figure within the newly developing field of sociology, most especially for his analysis of the sociology of knowledge. In 1927, he published what would be his last work, *The Human Place in the Cosmos*, an essay in which Scheler sought to articulate the essence of human being.

Rudolf Eucken and Beyond

The confluence of Rudolf Eucken's (1846–1926) thought with Scheler's is striking, particularly in the dualistic conception of life and spirit that Scheler held to and developed over the course of his career. Even in his earliest writings, he posited – similarly to Eucken – a separation of the human spirit from the impulses and drives rooted in our

organic nature (Scheler 2009: 60n). Both men were diagnosticians of modern life and were centrally concerned with “a force indwelling in life <that> must lead the individuals beyond their crude natural impulses and their narrow care for personal welfare” (Eucken 1914a: 75). Eucken argued that the conflict between natural and moral life must be overcome with “the establishment of a new position of life, in which the human and the cosmic types, subject and object, give up their hostility and unite in common work” (Eucken 1914b: 92). This bespeaks, for Scheler, a principled antagonism of two attributes springing forth from the ground of all things that find their meeting place uniquely in man (Scheler 2009: 57). Scheler would hold that human spirit is not merely a higher refinement of our life-drives. It is completely autonomous from life and as such has no energy of its own (Scheler 2009: 41). Though impotent, spirit has the capacity to guide and direct the drives of life to ends of its own choosing.

This latter idea is highly enigmatic, and it is one for which Scheler offers little argumentation. It is in many respects a basic premise underlying his studies. Though not strictly identical to the dualism advanced by his mentor, it is a standpoint in great harmony with it. Unfortunately Scheler's final metaphysical, epistemological, and anthropological studies all were cut short at the time of his death. This is a great loss as these were meant to work out of the implications of this idea.

Nevertheless, this dualism of attributes, i.e., life and spirit, stands at the very heart of Scheler's conception of human personhood and so at the heart of his theory of valuation. He argues that the human person is the unifying ground to all essentially differentiated intentional acts, including even the most basic non-cognitive drives and impulses (Scheler 1973: 383). He says “the *essence of the person*, like the essence of a pure act of the person, is *psychophysically indifferent*,” (Scheler 1973; : 382) and by this he means that personhood is neither fundamentally pure consciousness nor pure corporeality. She – and it is important to note that a person is never an *it* – is rather that unitary core in which both the inner and the outer have being. Heidegger is thus correct to point out as he does in *Being and Time* that for Scheler the person is no thing (Heidegger 1993: 47).

The spiritual center of acts, that is to say, the person of the human being [*die Person des Menschen*], is not a substance but rather a monarchic structuring of acts under which each *single* act has its guide and lure and is directed at that value and that idea with which the human being, at any given moment, ‘identifies’ (Scheler 2009: 46 translation modified).

As Scheler articulates it, therefore, the person is that spiritual executor of all acts, and she experiences herself not as a thing but only insofar she lives in these acts.

Although this conception may be reminiscent of Kant's notion of transcendental apperception, Scheler is careful to point out that “the being of the person is never exhausted in being a subject of rational acts of a certain lawfulness” (Scheler 1973; : 372). For Scheler, the person is always and necessarily a concrete, embodied individuality. Consequently, acts of judgment (or of love, even) express the irreducible peculiarity of this one person (Scheler 1973; : 386). Unlike Kant, therefore, “*the world*’ <as correlate of the person> is by no means an idea. It is an absolute, always concrete, individual being” (Scheler 1973: 394).

Scheler's Conception of Philosophy in Contradistinction to Husserl's

A younger contemporary of Edmund Husserl, Scheler is often mischaracterized as one of his students. In point of fact, he never studied with Husserl – having habilitated by the time the two men first met. As a young philosopher, though, reading Husserl's

Logical Investigations (1900/1901), Scheler grasped immediately the significance of these investigations to his own interests in establishing a theory of value objectivism. He explains in the preface to his *Formalism in Ethics* that Husserl's work provided "methodological consciousness of the unity and sense of the phenomenological attitude" fundamental to his own work (Scheler 1973: xix). Each, in fact, seems at times to counterpoise their unique conception of phenomenology against the other, and these disagreements offer insight into the very meaning of phenomenology, itself. We will now turn to the confrontation between these two men in order to make clear this fundamental distinction that Scheler draws between spirit and life and its significance to his own phenomenological philosophy.

In the early years of the 20th century, Husserl clearly recognized the significance of Scheler as a force within the young phenomenological movement and saw in him an important ally as he sought to establish phenomenology against the backdrop of neo-Kantian philosophy prevalent throughout Germany at the time. But Husserl doubted that such a mercurial personality could engage in the disciplined research necessary for thorough-going phenomenological analysis. As time wore on, their relationship soured. By the 1920s and 1930s, Husserl could be heard privately warning students to study phenomenology "unmixed with Scheler" (Schuhmann 409).

It is unclear how seriously Husserl studied Scheler's work while Scheler lived. After he died, though, Husserl conscientiously set about studying Scheler, most especially his last published work, *The Human Place in the Cosmos*. After Heidegger published *Being and Time* in 1927 (just under a year before Scheler's death), Husserl came to realize that the transcendental phenomenology he espoused was not merely misunderstood but also was suffering from what he believed were unjust attacks due to these misunderstandings. He decided, at first, to redress the situation by attacking what he referred to as his antipodes, who in his mind included both Heidegger and Scheler (Husserl 1968: 67). In 1931, Husserl presented his polemic against both men in a lecture before the Kant Societies of Frankfurt and Berlin under the title "Phenomenology and Anthropology." This is the most important engagement with Scheler's philosophy in Husserl's corpus.

In this lecture, Husserl sought to justify his own conception of transcendental phenomenology against the existentialist and life philosophies exemplified in the work of these two men. Taking up the problem of the possibility of a philosophical anthropology in his lectures, Husserl says:

I cannot help seeing the decision for a transcendental phenomenology as definitive, and I cannot help branding all philosophies that call themselves phenomenological as aberrations which cannot attain the level of authentic philosophy (Husserl 1997: 499).

According to Husserl, in other words, only transcendental phenomenology, i.e., a phenomenology that enacts Husserl's method of phenomenological reduction, attains the level of philosophy *qua* rigorous science. "There is only *one* definitive philosophy," he argues in the lectures, "only *one* form of definitive science, which is the science elaborated by the ordinary method of transcendental phenomenology" (Husserl 1997: 499). Neither Heidegger's analytic of Dasein nor Scheler's philosophical anthropology achieves scientific rigor, Husserl argued, for each presupposes that which requires ultimate philosophical clarification. For Husserl, this is precisely the significance of his phenomenological reduction. The reduction is a method of questioning back from mundane existence to the subjective constitution of the objective sense of worldly being as such.

Its basic guiding problem, that of the psychological-phenomenological constitution of the world as a human 'objectification,' now emerges for the first time, along with the method for explicating the horizon of consciousness, a method that follows clues coming from the *cogitatum*, from the intentional object (Husserl 1997: 500).

The problem in the phenomenologies of Heidegger and Scheler, as Husserl saw it, is that each rejects or misinterprets this method of leading clues which proceeds from the mundane being of human existence to the transcendental constituting sources bestowing upon *itself* an objective sense *as worldly*. The analysis of each, in other words, remains captive to the world and so never breaks through to clarify the sense of worldly being as the end product of transcendental constitution.

We will take up the question of the phenomenological reduction in Scheler's thought in the next section, but first it is important to understand the context of this dispute as Scheler would have likely seen it. In the lecture, Husserl pointedly attacks the anthropologism he saw in both Heidegger's and Scheler's writings.

Original phenomenology, which has matured into transcendental phenomenology, denies to any science of human being, whatever its form, a share in laying the foundations for philosophy, and opposes all related attempts at foundation-laying as being anthropologism or psychologism (Husserl 1997: 485–6).

This argument from the lecture is in essence little different from the argument he made in his *Logos* article, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," which he published in 1910–1911. Genuine philosophy is rigorous science. In the earlier essay, Husserl attacked Wilhelm Dilthey's doctrine of world-views, which is a theory regarding the morphology of distinct and historically relative manners of comprehending the world that bears a striking similarity to Scheler's sociological analysis of knowledge. According to Husserl, if philosophy, itself, were to be founded solely in the theoretical activities of mundane human existence, all expressions of truth would express nothing more than a historically relative world view. For all world-bound truths remain fixedly bound to the historical-empirical standpoint from which that view finds its expression. Consequently, there could in principle be no insight into trans- or omni-temporal truths or of the essential constitution of the world as such. According to Husserl, therefore, any anthropologicist standpoint – such as that proffered by Scheler – devolves necessarily into relativism and skepticism.

Although Scheler could not have read Husserl's attack of him in the "Phenomenology and Anthropology" lectures, he did read "Phenomenology as Rigorous Science" and understood Husserl's attack on Dilthey in 1911 as an indirect attack on his own views (Scheler 1960: : 82f). More to the point, he responded to this attack in a rebuttal obliquely inserted into his essay "The Nature of Philosophy and the Moral Preconditions of Philosophical Cognition," which he published in the work, *On the Eternal in Man*. In this essay, Scheler generally accepts Husserl's point regarding the relativity of world-views. "Philosophy can never be, as Husserl rightly maintains, *Weltanschauung* (worldview) but at most involve a theory of *Weltanschauungen*" (Scheler 1960: 83 translation modified). However, philosophy, Scheler argues, is not bound to any world view. Rather, it is

concerned in the first place with the 'natural' *Weltanschauung* and thereafter with the range of 'possible' variants, which forms the historical basis for treating the humane problems relevant to a theory of *positive* *Weltanschauungen* (Scheler 1960: 83).

In other words, Husserl's criticism does not apply to the theoretical elucidation of the forms of world-views as such. This sort of analysis clarifies the social-historical constitution of knowledge and, as such, falls explicitly within the domain of philosophy.

It is interesting to note that Scheler presents this as a minor point of terminological clarification. He argues simply that philosophy as a term should be restricted to the evident knowledge of essences whereas the term science can and should refer to the positive formal sciences of ideal objects and the inductive empirical sciences (Scheler 1960: 80f). This seemingly minor point should not obfuscate the central argument in Scheler's essay, which, at its core, expresses a position in substantive discord with Husserl's understanding of the nature of philosophy. Indeed, Scheler's main point in the essay is of great interest for the clarification of the distinction he sees between life and spirit.

According to Scheler, the idea of philosophy can only be fixed by examining the concrete person of the philosopher herself. Husserl explicitly rejects this view, arguing instead that philosophy is a regulative idea guiding a community of researchers over time. For Scheler, though, philosophy is unlike any other cognitive discipline in that it and it alone requires a spiritual technique by which the human engages her whole being in participation with the primordial essence of all things. In every other cognitive discipline, that is, in every positive science, the investigating subject concerns herself with only some aspect of reality. This aspect, insofar as it is picked out materially from the context of all other things, remains rooted ultimately in the living engagement of the investigator with her environing world. But philosophical cognition concerns not beings but being as such (Scheler 1960: 94). Consequently, the philosopher, herself, discloses a unique field of investigation. In order to grasp the nature of philosophy, Scheler argues, one must comprehend the comportment to being as such enacted by the person of the philosopher.

In order to philosophize, Scheler maintains that a set of moral acts is required in order to break from our living, practical, and theoretical engagement with things. The philosopher must (i) love absolute value and being as such. She must (ii) humble herself so that things can show themselves, not as things for her to use or to enjoy, but rather as they, themselves, are. And in order for her to humble herself, she must (iii) master the drives and passions within her, so that she is not ruled by them. Only by effecting these three moral acts, Scheler argues, can *spirit* break through the need structure of natural existence to contemplate the essential form of things.

The moral acts are needed so that the spirit may be enabled to *eschew* on principle the merely life-*relative*, the being which is being 'for' life and therein 'for' man as a living creature; they are needed that spirit may begin to participate in being *per se et in se* (Scheler 1960: 95 translation slightly modified).

These moral acts bring about a distinterestedness in pragmata as such. Philosophical concern centers rather on essence over fact. Yet the moral acts necessary to philosophical cognition are not mystical acts as perhaps a material reductionist might argue. They are acts of will, indeed, but acts that not reducible to our natural being. They are of a categorically different sort; they are acts of spirit. Spirit is thus that capacity within us to break our living engagement with things. To use a Platonic expression, philosophy is *to practice dying to all eternity*. "It is a requirement," he says, "whose basis is neither psychological, nor purely epistemological, but *ontic*" (Scheler 1960: 90f).

The Phenomenological Reduction

In part II of his *Formalism in Ethics*, Scheler addresses the method of phenomenological reduction, ostensibly articulated by Husserl in *Ideas I*, in a way that amplifies this concept of spirit. Specifically, he argues that Husserl's method of reduction neglects the ontic foundation of all intentional acts. In *Ideas I*, Husserl sets out to articulate and describe the

act-intentionality of an objectifying consciousness – at least insofar as this intentionality is paradigmatic of the form of intentional consciousness as such. His aim in the work is to articulate descriptively the absolute phenomenological datum containing within itself both the noetic moment of sense-bestowing activity enacted by a transcendental ego and the noematic moment of the objective transcendent sense constituted in that activity by an egoic consciousness. For Husserl, this is the central matter of phenomenological interest. “We direct and fix our regard,” he says, “to the sphere of consciousness with the ‘I’ that is inseparable from it and study what we find immanently in it” (Husserl 1971: 71). Scheler argues, however, that Husserl’s reductive technique abstracts from what should be the heart of phenomenological interest. What we obtain by application of Husserl’s phenomenological reduction are abstract essences in other words.

These are ‘abstract,’ not because they have been ‘abstracted,’ but because they require supplementation insofar as they are to *be*. ... If an act-essence is to be concrete, its full intuitable givenness *presupposes* a reference to the essence of the *person*, who is executor of acts (Scheler 1973: 383f).

Thus, the “matter” of real phenomenological interest is the concrete individual person from which all intentional acts emanate and in which all different sorts of intentional acts have their unity. By means of his phenomenological reduction, in other words, Husserl overlooked the intending subject herself.

The person is not an empty ‘point of departure’ of acts; he is, rather, a concrete being. Unless we keep this in mind, all of our talk about acts can never catch the fully adequate essence of any act, but only an abstract essence (Scheler 1973: 384).

Scheler accepts that acts can be described, their morphology worked out, and the regions of being to which they relate laid bare. His work attests to his skill at just this sort of analysis. But if the ontic core, i.e., the personality of the concrete human being (and her world), is left out of the account, then these descriptions remain devoid of any genuine content. For Scheler, therefore, the spiritual center of intentionality, itself, is or should be the ultimate subject of phenomenological investigation. This spiritual center is the person herself, “living in each of her acts, who permeates every act with her peculiar character” (Scheler 1973: 386 translation slight modified). A phenomenology such as Husserl’s thus fails in the very desideratum of phenomenology, itself, which is to get at the heart of the matter.

Yet we should note that Scheler nevertheless placed great importance on the phenomenological reduction as an anthropological category. “While I do not agree with the details of Husserl’s theory of reduction,” he writes in his last published work, *The Human Place in the Cosmos*, “I do admit that this reduction refers to the act that, first of all, defines the human spirit” (Scheler 2009: : 37f). Spirit (*Geist*), according to Scheler, is this fundamental capacity that we humans have to see the form of things. That is to say, it is the ability to ideate. Clearly, what Scheler understood as the phenomenological reduction is not what Husserl meant by the term in *Ideas I*. For Scheler, a genuine phenomenological reduction is what Husserl would call, more restrictively, a *Wesensschauung*, the immediate grasping of the whatness of something. Nevertheless, for Scheler, “this ability to *separate essence from existence* constitutes the *fundamental* character of the human spirit” (Scheler 2009: 37).

This “phenomenological reduction” is explicitly defined by Scheler as a technique. It is the technique whereby we deny the living ground of our sense of reality. He likens the act of reduction to the ascetic attitude taken up by the Buddha. Sheltered as he

was during his childhood, the Buddha never experienced poverty, never saw how sickness can rack the body, and never perceived the mortification of another's body. A pivotal moment in his life occurs, however, when he escapes the confines of his father's palace.

The prince sees *one* poor person, *one* sick person, and *one* dead person...yet he immediately grasps these three accidental facts, 'now here as they are,' as mere examples of an *essential* makeup of the world (Scheler 2009: 35 translation modified).

The Buddha in other words grasps the essence of things, not inductively, but immediately. In this sense, the Buddha is an example of the human par excellence. The Buddha is just this kind of living entity capable of effecting a de-realization of the center of vital impulsion from which his sense of reality gains its force (Scheler 2009: 39). He is a spiritual being. For spirit (*Geist*) is "precisely just this being [Sein] capable of performing this act of de-realization" (Scheler 1995: : 44, cf. Scheler 2009: 39).

Conclusion

In Scheler's phenomenological philosophy, every intentional act bears the stamp of the peculiar human personality as executor of these acts. We have left undiscussed to this point, however, the important consideration that each person is, as Scheler argues, ruled, first and foremost, by her heart. Every objectivity in experience is colored by an emotive stance toward (or repelled away from) that thing. Take for instance the experience of sugar on the tongue. Underlying the objectification of the quality of sweetness that we find in sugar is the value-feeling that it is tasty. So "a child knows that sugar is nice sooner than it is sweet" (Scheler 1960; : 86). Thus, Scheler asserts a primacy to the acts of valuation over all other intentional acts, which at their most basic are acts of love or hate. "They are the *basic acts* in which alone our theoretic and our practical life discovers and conserves its ultimate *unity*" (Scheler 1960: 88).

As a living spiritual entity, the human is a being capable of withdrawing from the commerce of her experiences in order to contemplate the formal structure of the world in which she finds herself emplaced. At root, she is of course an organic being. As an organic being, she is inclined emotively toward or away from the things pulling and repelling her in her environment. However, her unique personality allows her to extricate herself from this worldly captivation. She can, from within the well of her own being, say no to all this. This denial gives her the capacity to "see" value rather than merely follow it. Consequently, she can guide herself to one value over another. That is to say, she can grasp the value-essence of the useful, for instance, and compare this against the value-essence of the pleasing. She can even comprehend the distinction between lower life-relative values and higher spiritual values. And she can steer her impulses for the higher over the lower (or *vice versa*). She is in other words capable of grasping an objective hierarchy of values and in her person can steer and guide her impulses toward the higher (or lower) values. "It is ... precisely this theory which claims that there is a true good-in-itself which not only allows but also *demand*s that there be a *good-in-itself* for each person in particular" (Scheler 1973: 490–1).

The human being, Scheler argues, enjoys therefore a special place in the sphere of things, since the human being is capable of something more than mere practical intelligence. There is something, some X within her which defines her uniquely and steers her impulses. This X is more than mere animal cleverness; it is in part – Scheler asserts – what the ancients referred to as reason.

We wish to suggest another and more comprehensive term for this X. The term also contains the concept of "reason," but it encompasses, in addition to the *thinking of ideas*, a special type of an "intuition" [*Anschauung*] of primordial phenomena and essential contents, and it encompasses also a specific class of volitional and emotive *acts* such as kindness, love, repentance, awe, states of wonder, bliss, despair, and free decision-making: this more comprehensive term is "spirit." The center of acts, however, through which this spirit appears within all finite spheres of being, is what we designate as "person" to sharply differentiate it from all functional centers of life ... (Scheler 2009: 26).

Thus, two cosmic principles subsist within the human as aspects of her being: the principle of life and the principle of spirit. Each person finds in herself the dynamic energy of life and the impotent but governing principle of spirit. Though we many at times act *like* brutes, this is a choice which, as a choice, remains completely foreign to animals. Spirit and life are complementary and interrelated [*aufeinander hingebordnet*]. Indeed, it is our special station in the cosmos to infuse spirit into the world. In so doing we participate in the co-execution of the activity of life *and* of spirit as individuals and as communities. This participation defines our unique human station in the cosmos. This is, indeed, the very essence of human personhood.

Short Biography

Bob Sandmeyer's research is growing in two broad directions based on results obtained in his book, *Husserl's Constitutive Phenomenology: Its Problem and Promise* (Routledge 2009). One branch focuses on developing a coherent ontology of life, while the other concerns the history of the phenomenological movement in Germany. Sandmeyer's current research program aims to flesh out the meaning of phenomenology as articulated by its original contributors. He holds a BA in Philosophy from George Washington University, an MA from Colorado State University, and a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Kentucky. He presently teaches classes in logic, philosophy of biology, and environmental philosophy and ethics at the University of Kentucky.

Note

* Correspondence: University of Kentucky, 1429 Patterson Office Tower, Lexington, KY 40506-0027, USA. Email: bob.sandmeyer@uky.edu.

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