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# THE IDEA OF A EUROPEAN CULTURAL COMMUNITY IN SCHELER'S POLITICAL THOUGHT<sup>1</sup>

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## abstract

*Drawing on Max Scheler's political-programmatic writings produced during and after World War I, this contribution intends to examine the content and consistency of the ideal of a cultural-spiritual unity of Europe (as distinct from its political, legal, or economic unity), and to provide a basis for discussing its plausibility and fruitfulness for the present time. About 100 years ago, the philosopher thought about the future of Europe, and claimed to be able to infer concrete orientations for political action from fundamental philosophical insights. Thus, the paper proceeds from conceptual foundations to their application to concrete practical problems. The first section intends to outline the concept of cultural unity and the principle of solidarity between cultural unities; this makes it possible, in the second part, to distinguish the European cultural sphere from others; the final section gives a positive determination of the specific unity of European culture, including some educational consequences.*

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## keywords

*culture circles, education ideal, Europe, Scheler, solidarity*

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1 I am most grateful to my highly esteemed colleagues, Michael Murez and Agnès Grivaux, as well as to the anonymous reviewer, for their critical reading of this paper and their valuable advice.

Drawing on some of Scheler's political-programmatic writings produced during and after World War I,<sup>1</sup> this contribution intends to examine the content and consistency of the ideal of a *cultural-spiritual unity of Europe* (as distinct from—not necessarily in opposition to—its political, legal, or economic unity), and thus to provide a basis for discussing its plausibility and fruitfulness for the present time. Indeed, current references to the topic, and occasions for its relevance, are numerous (today's international, intercontinental and intercultural relations—from “Brexit” to the Russian war against Ukraine—, programmatic orientations of European Union's policy, national and international principles of education, etc.) and need hardly be mentioned specifically, as they will become obvious in the course of the presentation.

What does a philosopher have to say to us who, a little more than 100 years ago, thought about the future of Europe, and claimed to be able to stringently derive concrete orientations for political decision-making and action from fundamental philosophical insights? To what extent are his reflections at that time suitable for illuminating our current situation? (Certainly, some details in them—which we shall not address here—are outdated and unacceptable by today's lights.) Methodologically, I start from general philosophical foundations and subsequently apply them to concrete political problems. This results in the three parts of the present paper: the first section intends to outline the concept of cultural unity and the principle of solidarity between cultural unities; this makes it possible, in the second part, to distinguish the European cultural sphere from others; hence the final section provides a positive determination and description of the specific unity of European culture, including some practical consequences.

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1 These writings are the following: *Europa und der Krieg*, *Die Weißen Blätter* II/1, 2, 3 (1915), pp. 124-127, 244-249, 376-380; *Soziologische Neuorientierung und die Aufgabe der deutschen Katholiken nach dem Krieg*, *Hochland* XIII (1916), vol. 1, pp. 385-406, 682-700; vol. 2, pp. 188-204, 257-294; *Die christliche Gemeinschaftsidee und die gegenwärtige Welt*, *Hochland* XIV (1917), vol. 1, pp. 641-672; *Recht, Staat und Gesellschaft*, *Hochland* XV (1917-1918), vol. 1, pp. 129-141; *Vom kulturellen Wiederaufbau Europas*, *Hochland* XV (1917-1918), pp. 479-510, 663-682; *Politik und Kultur auf dem Boden der neuen Ordnung*, in: *Der Geist der Volksgemeinschaft*, Berlin: Zentrale für Heimatdienst, 1919, pp. 30-51; *Prophetischer oder marxistischer Sozialismus*, *Hochland* XVII (1919), vol. 1, pp. 71-84. Hereafter, I shall propose my own translations of all passages quoted (with one exception—see next footnote) from Max Scheler, *Gesammelte Werke* [Complete Works] in 15 volumes (Bern/Munich: Francke, 1954-1986, Bonn: Bouvier, 1986-1997), with reference to the volume number and the page number. I also provide (after a slash) the title and page number of the published English translation, if such a translation exists.

In this part, I pursue the task of developing two concepts step by step. From Scheler's concept of the person arises—mediated by the concept of the collective person—the concept of the culture-circle. The concept of the person also gives rise—mediated by the idea of solidarity between persons—to the principle of solidarity between culture-circles. This principle will mark the culmination of the first part, as well as the linchpin of my whole presentation. I shall proceed in six steps.

## 1. The concept of cultural unity and the principle of solidarity between cultural unities

### 1.1 Person

“Person” is a spiritual, individual (not necessarily human) being, describable as the center—i. e. as an ordered structure—of the performance of all kinds of spiritual acts (e. g. loving, knowing, willing). Each individual act of the person is embedded and interwoven in a totality of acts, in such a way that every change in the whole also changes all the individual acts, but also conversely each individual act affects the whole (see *F* [397] sqq. / *Formalism* 382 sqq.<sup>2</sup>). This has immediate ethical significance:

Since the whole person is and lives in *each* of her acts [...] without being absorbed in one or in their sum, there is no act whose performance does not also change the content of the person's *being*, and no act-value that does not increase or decrease the value of the person [...] (*F* [559] / *Formalism* 537).

### 1.2. Collective person and co-responsibility

From the concept of the person, which is only hinted at here, we immediately move on to the concept of the “collective person”. Every person is given to herself, in self-experience and in every act she performs, as a *member of a comprehensive community of persons* of some kind. This is based on the fundamental acts of inner perception of others, which are: re-experiencing and co-experiencing, re-feeling and co-feeling, and the like. In this class of acts, the intention toward possible community is inherent *by essence*. Therefore, the sense of “community” is not something empirically established in the physical world, but is originally linked to the sense of “person”. Everyone always discovers herself against the background and as a member of a totality of *centered experiential contexts*. Scheler calls the various *centers* of this co-experience “collective persons” (*Gesamtpersonen*). The unity of a collective person is therefore neither geographical-territorial, nor is it the temporal unity of a tradition, nor is it the unity of a biological descent. *Several* collective persons can in turn experience themselves as members of a community, which constitutes a collective person of an *even higher* order. Thus, we are presented with a gradation of nested communities: the family is a member of a tribe, the tribe a member of a people, the people a member of a nation, the nation a member of a *culture-circle*, the culture-circle a member of humanity, humanity a member of the community of all finite persons. Analogously to what has been said above, the following proposition now applies: A collective person as a whole changes with every act of one of her member persons, and every change in the collective person also affects all member persons. This applies to all levels. The self-experience of membership, in turn, appears from an *ethical* point of view as the self-experience of the co-responsibility of the member person for the collective person encompassing her. Each person experiences herself not only as a member, but also as co-

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<sup>2</sup> In the particular case of this book, I translate from the new historical-critical edition, M. Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, Hamburg: Meiner, 2014 (henceforth: *F*), and I refer to the original page number [in brackets] of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of 1927 (also given by the historical-critical edition). I also provide (after a slash) reference to the published English translation (henceforth: *Formalism*, followed by page number).

responsible, as a “co-perpetrator”—as Scheler says (F [542] / *Formalism* 520)—for everything ethically relevant in the collective person, just as conversely the collective person knows and feels responsible both for herself and for each of her members. How does Scheler come to assert such an interaction between parts and whole of the collective person? He justifies it—as befits a phenomenologist—through the precise and complete analysis of the types of acts, in this case by an analysis of the *conceptual essence* of morally relevant acts, i. e. explication of the *meaning* inherent a priori in such acts. One result of such an analysis of essence is that morally relevant acts are *reciprocal* in nature. From this, a co-responsibility of each bearer of such acts for the moral value of the counter-acts and their bearer flows directly. “One who loves not only realizes a positive act-value in himself, but [...] also such an act-value in his counterpart” (F [559] / *Formalism* 537).

### 1.3. *Cultural collective persons and the notion of culture-circle*

One of the characteristics of a collective person is that she is, from the outset, aware of *all* types of values and takes them all into consideration. As spiritual communities of persons in the strict sense, however, collective persons are *particularly* directed towards the realization of “super-vital” values. That is, they are responsible for goods of the value type of *cultural* values and values of the *sacred*. Two types and levels of collective persons can thus be distinguished according to “the type and rank of the *values* in whose direction the members [of a collective person] ‘look together’ in order to act together according to norms” (F [547] / *Formalism* 525); there are two basic forms of spiritual community of persons: the cultural community and the religious community. The latter is the collective person “Church”, who is dedicated to the realization of *salvation* values, and whom we do not have to examine in detail here. We are interested in the cultural community, or—in a typical Schelerian coinage—the cultural collective person (*Kulturgesamtperson*). The factually existing cultural collective person par excellence is the *nation*. “Above” nations, however, there is another, superordinate collective person related to cultural values, namely the *culture-circle*. Scheler gives the following explanation of this concept:

I speak about a culture-circle when there is still an identical structure of the world view and the corresponding forms of being as well as an identical ‘ethos’, but the reflective consciousness of this identity, that characterizes a nation, has not yet been developed. The existence of a group as a nation always presupposes that this group belongs to *one* ‘culture-circle’, so that there can never be more nations than culture-circles (F [577] fn. / *Formalism* 554, fn. 225).

A culture-circle thus comprises several nations, and within humanity there are in turn necessarily several culture-circles. Scheler thus largely re-interprets, in the light of his own philosophical axiology, the notion of *Kulturkreis*, introduced into German-speaking anthropology around 1898 by Leo Frobenius.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.4. *Unrepresentable solidarity in spiritual collective persons*

The solidarity principle can be fully realized only in *spiritual collective persons*. Only there does it become the principle of *unrepresentable* solidarity. This concept may be developed in contrast to *representable* solidarity as it exists in a *life-community*. In a life-community, each individual is in principle representable, i. e. replaceable, by other individuals. There, everyone is the representative of a certain profession, an office, a rank, i. e. everyone fulfills the form

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<sup>3</sup> See Georget *et al.* (2016).

of a certain life-task in the community. As the representative of such a formal function, everyone is both co-responsible and replaceable. It is quite different in the spiritual collective person: here the member person is responsible for herself and for the collective person, not as a representative of a position in the community structure, but as a *unique, i. e. irreplaceable, personal individual*. Because of the principle of unrepresentable solidarity thus established, the entire moral world becomes a whole which, even with the slightest change within it, “*rises and falls as a whole*, and as a whole possesses at every moment of its being a unique total moral value” (F [556] / *Formalism* 534-535). A cosmos of finite moral persons thus has a total guilt and a total merit. Each member person has a share in it according to her own unique membership. In Scheler’s words: each member is both an *organ* and a *representative* of the *entire* community.

#### 1.5. Cooperation of different forms of ethos

In order to define the concept of culture-circle more precisely, we should remember Scheler’s distinction between absolute and eternally valid *values* on the one hand and historically changing *ethos* on the other. What changes in the course of history and from people to people, from culture to culture, is not the absolute ranking of value modalities, which arises from the timeless essence of values themselves. It is only the *ethos*, i. e. the set of *rules of preference* by which these values become the basis of human experience and human action. Central to this is Scheler’s thesis that our access to reality always takes place first through feeling, and only subsequently through knowing. Values and, as a function of these, value judgements are the first orientations that determine our worldview. Each *ethos* shapes its own worldview and science. It follows that

the full and adequate experience of the cosmos of values and its hierarchy [...] is *essentially* linked to a *cooperation* of different forms of ethos which unfold historically according to their own laws. It is precisely a correctly understood absolute ethics that *requires* this diversity, this emotional value-perspectivism of the units of time and people [...] (F [314] / *Formalism* 303-304).

The experience of peoples penetrates the objective realm of values only gradually and according to different structures of value selection. Each *ethos* grasps a section of the realm of values. The development of the entire realm is therefore only possible through cooperation between the major cultural circles, and one of the parts that phenomenology has to play consists in helping us penetrate the values functional in other cultures.

#### 1.6. Solidarity between cultural circles

This is how we arrive at the principle on which Scheler bases all his ideas on the cultural unity of Europe, on building a Europe in the full sense of solidarity: that “every State, every people, every nation [is] called to deliver an irreplaceable and unrepresentable contribution to a world-culture” (V 416 / *On the Eternal in Man* 416). For this very reason, every nation is also *co-responsible* for the realization of every other nation’s share in the whole of this world-task. Europe represents “in this [...] cooperation of mankind throughout the ages a special, relatively *uniform* culture-circle with a special talent and task” (V 416 / *On the Eternal...* 416-417). Hence it becomes understandable why “internationalism” and cosmopolitanism (today we would say: “globalization”) on the one hand and cultural “nationalism” on the other are pseudo-opposites. They only make up the two sides of the same error, which stands in opposition to the truth of world culture, in which each nation unrepresentably participates. This is what I wish to highlight as the take-home message of this first part.

### 2. Distinguishing the European culture-circle from other culture-circles

#### 2.1. *Spiritual boundaries of globalization*

In order to see the spiritual unity of Europe clearly, one must have an inkling of the spiritual characteristics of the other culture-circles (more than that is not possible). One must have learned to trace the diversity of phenomena (languages, customs, arts, myths, State spirit, religions, types and aims of knowledge) back to uniform intellectual structures. In Kant's, Herder's and Goethe's times, people tended to regard as universally human what was only a Europeanism unaware of itself. Even in Scheler's time, and probably to this day, this tendency prevails among Europe's average educated people (see V 422 / *On the Eternal...* 422). Already in the last decades of the 19th century, however, began what we now call globalization, and what Scheler describes as the "enormous expansion of the world economy, the consequence of increased communication technology, and the subsequent exchange of intellectual products, teachings and teaching staff" (IV 159). In the process, it became clear that *boundaries* exist "between the permanent way of thinking" of Europeans and that of members of other culture-circles. "And precisely the process that has been erroneously called the 'Europeanization' of foreign [...] peoples, i. e. the adoption of science, technology, capitalist methods, certain European forms of law" (IV 159), came up against such intellectual boundaries everywhere. Although raising the issue probably defies political correctness, it is perhaps worth asking whether this is still the case today.

#### 2.2. *Superficial differences between culture-circles*

Scheler distinguishes five large cultural areas (Europe, Russia, India, China, Japan) and a number of smaller ones next to or in between them (e. g. the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire and the Muslim world). Despite national peculiarities, according to him, there is "a common European face as a field of expression of the movements of the mind, and European laws of gesture [...] which form an unconscious canon, never questioned, for all spiritual-psychic understanding within Europe" (IV 160). They contrast sharply with the facial expressions and gestures of East Asians, for example. Ethnomusicology teaches us about profound differences in hearing between Europeans, Indians, Indonesians, Japanese, of course not in the sense of physiological organ differences, but of differences in sensitivity and consciousness. Analogous differences exist with regard to color sense and color evaluation<sup>4</sup>.

#### 2.3. *Profound differences between culture-circles*

All these differences are still relatively superficial. But "the differences in ethos and the differences in the structures and categories of the cognitive spirit, as they express themselves in language and myth, in science and religion", i. e. the "differences of basic attitudes towards the world, life, God, art" (IV 162), are profound. Scheler shows this thanks to the examples of Japan, Russia and India, in detailed descriptions that we cannot go into here.

##### 2.3.1. Europe and Japan

From the analyses concerning *Japan*, Scheler draws the following conclusion:

For the most profoundly understanding among European connoisseurs of Japan, I always consider [...] those persons who say that we will—for eternity—never understand the core of the Japanese soul. These researchers alone avoid bringing what they have observed under European schemes of intuition and categories of spirit; they alone at

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<sup>4</sup> On these topics as well as on others, Scheler provides a wealth of references to research of his time, the results of which are controversial today. I limit myself to summarizing his position in a structured way.

least still preserve the boundary beyond which a keen inkling leads them, the boundary of our European spirit (IV 164).

Scheler is thus the first European philosopher (half a century before Lévi-Strauss) who clearly recognizes and seeks to overcome the problem of ethnocentric thinking, at the time of the culmination of European colonialism and imperialism<sup>5</sup>. For him, however, the way to overcome ethnocentrism lies—as already mentioned—not in relativism, but in insight into the necessity for culture-circles to cooperate within a culture of humanity.

### 2.3.2. Europe and Russia

The difference between the European and *Russian* ethos is developed by Scheler in several writings mainly as a contrast between Western and Eastern Christianity. In Russian Orthodox religiosity, gnostic solitary speculation dominates over the Western Christian ideas of community-generating deed and love, passive Byzantine devotion further dominates over Western active “tolerance” and spiritually opening “humility”.

Everywhere [in Russia] the same peculiar combination of tremendous perseverance, indolence and constancy in those seized by instinct and the lack of European industriousness, European sense of order, European diligence, European punctuality and energy of will. [...] In the moral sphere, the European cannot be amazed enough at the interplay of violence, corruption and venality of all authorities with an unprecedented [...] sense of sacrifice, indeed a peculiar love of sacrifice, often the individual’s addiction to sacrifice for his ideas. [...] The reason for this is that here the principle of disorderly, lawless violence is balanced again and again by the principle of an equally disorderly, lawless love-patriarchalism [...]. Both equally unknown to the European being! (IV 185-186.)

Yet Scheler argues later in his career that cross-cultural understanding is a necessary condition of *Ausgleich* (adjustment), an idea that is related to his earlier use of the cultural community of nations that I am analyzing here<sup>6</sup>.

### 2.3.3. Europe and India

We have already spoken about the dependence of science on ethos.

European ‘science’ [...] with all its enormous differences [...] corresponds to only one of the existing and possible ‘world views’[, namely] only to that European structure of the spirit which orders the possible phenomena of nature and soul in general according to the rank of their possible active controllability and lets the respective less controllable become dependent functions of the most controllable ones [...]. Indian thought, for example, as far-reaching and profound as it is in its kind, could never have produced this ‘science’ and its methods. For the Indian spirit possesses entirely different structural forms of seeing and thinking about the world than the European (IV 171).

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<sup>5</sup> Colonialism and imperialism which Scheler, furthermore, strongly condemns as being opposed to European welfare (IV 258-259).

<sup>6</sup> See Lang (2019).

2.3.4. Fundamental spiritual attitudes are different from stages of historical development  
It is therefore quite wrong to try to attribute differences between European and non-European mental attitudes of the kind that become apparent in these and other examples, to a difference in degree between stages of historical development – as when, for example, one equates Japan around 1900 with the European Middle Ages. “Rather, each of these types of attitude also implies a particular direction of historical development, which cannot be permanently deflected even by any type of ‘reception’” (IV 168).

### 2.4. *Europe as a cultural unity*

According to all this, Europe as a cultural entity by no means coincides with Europe, geographically defined, but—Scheler says so explicitly—with geographical *Western* Europe. He devotes long and careful analyses to what he calls the ‘problematic’ south-western border of the European spirit. In Hungary, Romania, in the Balkans, the European spirit struggles with the spirit of other culture-circles (the Slavic and the Ottoman). If one takes Scheler’s analysis at its word, it follows from the destruction of the Austrian Empire in 1918 that the European spirit has been *weakened* in all these countries since then. Accordingly, Scheler would probably have considered it a mistake to admit Romania, Bulgaria, even Greece and Hungary into the European Union. And he would have judged the admission of Turkey to be a completely absurd idea: according to him,

Ottomanism has remained untouched by the European spirit at its core. But precisely because it falls completely out of Europe, momentary purely political and military ties with the Ottomans can also be useful for building up a political form for European solidarity. For as the enemy of Russia, the common enemy of Western Europe, and as the current owner of the Dardanelles, it has [...] a common interest with Western Europe against the European East (IV 180).

Don’t these lines read like a theoretical justification for Turkish NATO membership?<sup>7</sup>

In summary, Europe’s unity is “a certain structure of spirit, a certain form of ethos, a certain way of looking at the world and of actively shaping the world”. This European spirit, which one always wants to “derive” from race, climate, milieu, etc., “is the irreducible [*unableitbar*] core in the concept of the European” (IV 182).

### 2.5. *Europe as a love community*

All human connections can be divided into two basic types: interest and purpose associations on the one hand, and love and life communities on the other. Scheler now claims and sets out to show (writing in 1915, in the midst of the First World War) that “Europe, despite the national antagonisms lying within it, still belongs on the side of life and love communities, not, like the truly ‘international’ connections, on the side of interest and purpose associations” (IV 160).

For Europe is not a [...] mechanical unity or a ‘balance’ of interest groups—but a unity of love according to its cultural essence [...], and it should also become so economically through European autarky and politically through a permanent, constantly expanding alliance of States (IV 192).

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<sup>7</sup> Scheler’s writings do not allow to judge whether an appreciation of Kemal Atatürk’s work in the interwar period would have changed his assessment of Turkey.

### 3.1. External preconditions for (re)building (up) the cultural unity of Europe

Considerations in this regard are set in the context of the reconstruction of Europe after the First World War. I propose that they be received and discussed *today* as guidelines for the future *construction* of a cultural Europe. For Scheler, the primary task is to establish a *spiritual* Europe. The replacement of a “balance of powers” by an overall political and international order as well as inner-European disarmament are necessary but by no means sufficient conditions for this (see V 405-409 / *On Eternal...* 405-409). The spirit of conciliation must guide the erection of legal institutions in accordance with it (see V 407 / *On Eternal...* 408). The idea of *continental European solidarity* must become—not as an ideal political principle, but as a real political necessity—the basic article of the policy of every European State (see V 412-414 / *On Eternal...* 412-414).

All these are *external*, minimal *preconditions*, bound to the political situation, for the (re) construction of the spiritual culture of Europe. The actual subject of Scheler’s reflections, however, are the inner positive forces capable of achieving such a construction, which are independent of the prevailing political situation: the *change of mind* of the European people. Two sets of demands are derived from this goal: (i) moral requirements, (ii) intellectual requirements.

### 3.2. Three moral requirements

First, concerning the three *moral* requirements: (1) Recognition of a *common guilt* in the *possibility* that a war could take place at all “among the European circle of humans” and, moreover, a war *of this kind*, conducted in this way (IV 262-263). (2) The consequent *common repentance* as the greatest psychological healing power. It alone “enables that kind of historical knowledge which not only describes the past, but [...] unburdens from the past and frees and strengthens our soul for a new future, a new power of action” (V 417 / *On Eternal...* 417). Construction can only be based on the belief that it is “truly possible to arrange the world differently than [it] was”. Even *before* the First World War, the European cultural community had long since been destroyed “by nationalism and subjectivism, by relativism and capitalism” (V 418 / *On Eternal...* 419). “Reconstruction” therefore does not mean “restoration” through external organizational measures, but on the contrary inner conversion and radical change of mind. This results in (3) a *will to build a community in a spirit of solidarity*, which should not be misunderstood. A European cultural community is *not* to be understood as the free movement of goods and merchandise, “exchange and cross-fertilization [...] of all *those* intellectual functions [...] in which nations [...] can ‘stand in’ at will for one another” (V 419 / *On Eternal...* 419). Interests of sensual pleasure and business do not end at the borders of the European spirit, but reach everywhere.

Rather, [...] only there does the idea of *European* cultural community begin, where the most general interests of mere international society cease in principle to have a unifying effect; only there does the demand for a moral effort of the *will* and a *change of mind* begin, where peoples in their achievements are *unrepresentable*, unique, individual in their talents [...] (V 420 / *On Eternal...* 420).

In what do the *unrepresentable* goods and values consist? In “religion, church, art, history and humanities, philosophy, higher custom and way of life” (V 420 / *On Eternal...* 421). It is only in these areas that a conscious *will* “to preserve the best of our own [culture] as well as to respect the best of the foreign, to complement each other as well as to positively fertilize each other” (V 420 / *On Eternal...* 421) can become effective. We must therefore learn to distinguish clearly between “common international interests of peoples” on the one hand and “the mutual

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co-responsibility of each people for what is *peculiarly* valuable in every other people and its free impact in the world” (V 420-421 / *On Eternal...* 421) on the other. Outwardly, these may be similar, but in terms of attitude they are as different as is conceivable.

### 3.3. *Three intellectual requirements*

Only when this threefold *moral* requirement is fulfilled can an *intellectual* effort begin to establish the true unifying forces of Europe and its culture. What do these consist of? How are they to be brought to light? How are they to be strengthened? Scheler answers: “Through education, upbringing, teaching and through new, more genuine friendships between the culture-shaping minorities” (V 421 / *On Eternal...* 421).

#### 3.3.1. Self-awareness of European man

From this follows the first intellectual requirement, which is that through a systematic knowledge of the culture-circles delimited by types of spirit “the European human being become truly conscious of himself, of his limitations as well as of his positive powers, of his unifying features and his special tasks” (V 422 / *On Eternal...* 422; see also IV 254-255).

#### 3.3.2. The three basic ferments of European culture

As preparatory work for this awareness, it is necessary to determine the unifying spiritual powers on the basis of *inner-European* history. According to Scheler, Europe’s intellectual life is animated by three “basic ferments”: (a) by ancient educational values; (b) by Christianity in its predominantly Augustinian variety, which is oriented towards action, love, and establishing a Kingdom of God in the world; (c) by the “interweaving and cross-fertilization of the arts, literatures, sciences, and techniques of the [European] nations and peoples” initiated by the Renaissance (V 422 / *On Eternal...* 423).

#### 3.3.3. Six practical demands for education and upbringing

(a) Every European nation must absolutely *preserve and revitalize* Antiquity and Christianity as the unifying foundations of all education and morality; (b) the demand “to evoke anew the urgent awareness and feeling for the *interweaving* and *interdependence* of all European national cultures, to promote it everywhere, to make it as general as possible by spreading language skills and by translations, by increased attention to cultural history, as opposed to the mere history of States and especially the history of war” (V 423 / *On Eternal...* 423). Therefore, (c) any attempt to place our education and upbringing “on an essentially *positivistic*, scientific-mathematical basis” (V 423 / *On Eternal...* 423) is to be rejected: such a positivistic educational ideal leads far beyond Europe, in that it only supports internationally representable (substitutable) educational values. On the other hand, Europe as a spiritual community is to be conveyed through the *history* of mathematics and the natural sciences as well as through epistemology and methodology, all of which lead back to Antiquity as the origin of European science. Likewise, (d) any attempt to place education and upbringing “on a predominantly *nationalistic* basis, one-sidedly devoted to the vernacular, to patriotic history, to national myth” must be rejected: such a reflectively nationalistic education “falls short of Europe” (V 423 / *On Eternal...* 423). Claiming a specifically “Latin renaissance” in the Romance countries is just as harmful as the cultural-nationalist demands in Germany for everything foreign to be eliminated from the “German soul”. As Scheler reminds us, the whole history of the German spirit is based on stimuli from outside (e. g. Luther through Paul and Augustine, Bach through the Italian and Flemish polyphonists, Kant through Rousseau and Hume, Goethe through Shakespeare and Antiquity, etc.). (e) Even the *humanistic ideal of education*, which goes back to Wilhelm von Humboldt, needs to be corrected or expanded in three important ways: (α) It

overly restricts Antiquity to the literary highlights of the classical epochs and thus isolates it on the one hand from its Asian prehistory, and on the other hand from its transitions into Hellenism and Christianity. To remedy this deficiency, it is necessary to recognize and love the values of Antiquity in the historical reality of their national limitations, and to clearly set the values of Christianity apart from them. (β) Humboldt's ideal of education is limited to the artistic-individualistic striving to shape oneself into an "ideal image of human" and completely fails to recognize the principle of solidarity as the supreme principle of all social ethics. Related to this is the fact that it fails to convey a proper concept of the State and its importance in the world and in history. To remedy this deficiency, a direct "civic education" is not as suitable as an "indirect cultivation of the sense of State and community, which highlights the political and social co-determination of even the highest fruits of the spirit in everything given in history" (V 426 / *On Eternal...* 426). (γ) The humanistic ideal of education favors the *inner* development of the personality and neglects specific action and achievement in the community as a whole. This deficiency is to be remedied by increasing the "sense of *public impact* of what is recognized as right and the constant feeling of *co-responsibility* for the nature of every public state of affairs" (V 427 / *On Eternal...* 427). Modified accordingly, ancient educational values must be the "*starting point* of higher spiritual education" in all European peoples. (f) The West can and must learn from the East. This postulate is justified by the state of development and the possibilities for development of European education, or rather the national educations within Europe: they are fully mature, i. e. they have given each other everything they could give on their own. What they still lack, despite this maturity, can only come from outside, i. e. from the Eastern spirit. Hence the demand for spreading knowledge of Russia (Russian history and culture, study of the Russian language) as well as of the non-Russian Slavic world.

#### 3.4. Three perspectives for the future

In conclusion, I will outline with Scheler three perspectives for the future that may still be considered relevant today. (a) Little can be expected from the struggle of the classes, much from the solidarity of the estates. Belief in historical materialism (according to which history is determined by an impersonal law of purely economic processes) and the participation of the working masses in the responsible and rational shaping of society are mutually exclusive; therefore the former will necessarily dwindle to the extent that the latter is realized. (b) The essential opposition is not that between so-called free competitive economy and State-regulated planned economy,

but the quite different opposition of the *spirit* of solidarity, cooperation and love-guided equity [on the one hand]—and [on the other hand] the *spirit* of mere competition, of working against each other and of mere class struggle, whether instigated from above or below, whether between individuals, whether between peoples and empires (V 444 / *On Eternal...* 444).

(c) Young people are right when, as an educational ideal, they do not strive for a performance ideal but for a personality ideal: the ideal of a person who has dignity, freedom and responsibility, and to whom all organizations as well as all utility values are subordinate. The person ideal is internally articulated: at the top is the *religious* person, subordinate to this is the human being as a *spiritual* creator, subordinate to this in turn is the human being as a *citizen*, and subordinate to this in turn is the human being as an *economic* subject in skilled productive work and in business. All of these demands and perspectives lead to the goal of a "Europe in which the rich, unique capacities of its national individualities work together in harmony and

complement each other—preserving the great traditions of the great Mediterranean culture—to build a culture of freedom, of spirit and of individuality” (IV 153).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Reyhani (2006) fruitfully confronts the conception of Europe in Scheler’s and in Jaspers’ works. Against his assessment, I hope to have shown at least (1) that Scheler, no less than Jaspers, thinks of the cultural unity of Europe mainly as a task to be realized and not as an objective givenness; and (2) that Scheler’s conception involves neither European chauvinism nor glorification of war.