

GUIDO CUSINATO

INTRODUCTION

THIS volume is based mainly on the papers presented during the 13th conference of the *Max Scheler Gesellschaft*, which took place in Verona, Italy, from 27th to 30th May, 2015, with the title «Ordo Amoris and World-Openness. Philosophy of Emotions and Process of Individuation of the Person».

At the core of the debate in this volume, there is a critical and intensive confrontation with the phenomenology of feeling by Max Scheler and its potentiality for the so-called *emotional turn*. The perception of the importance of emotions changed radically during the decade from 1987 to 1996. This was particularly due to some works that reached the general public, such as R. De Sousa (1987), A. Damasio (1994), D. Goleman (1995) and J. LeDoux (1996). Before 1987 the dominant idea was that emotions should be considered as private and internal states of consciousness. At the beginning of the twentieth century an important exception was represented by Max Scheler's phenomenology of emotions. We may attempt to sum up his position in five main points:

1. Feelings and emotions are not the final result of a cognitive process; on the contrary they are at the origin of every perceptive and cognitive process. In this sense, «every primary relationship with the world [...] is essentially and primarily not representational or perceptive, but [...] emotional»;¹

2. Feelings and emotions are not confined to a solipsistic dimension. They are what allow us to get into contact with others and make empathy possible. Through the act of feeling we are able to have a direct perception of the other person's expressivity without the need for an argument from analogy. In the other's smile we can perceive his intentions and his happiness directly (M. Scheler, *Zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Sympathiegefühle von Liebe und Hass*, 1913);

3. Feelings and emotions are not inner and private states, but they rather give shape to a precise «emotional breakthrough» (*emotioneller*

¹ «Alles primäre Verhalten zur Welt überhaupt [...] ist eben nicht ein „vorstelliges“, ein Verhalten des Wahrnehmens, sondern [...] ein emotionales [...] Verhalten» (M. Scheler, *Formalismus*, GW II, 206).

Durchbruch) into reality by which human beings place their own existences in the world. In fact, emotions draw the landscape of our experience (M. Scheler, *Zur Rehabilitierung der Tugend*, 1913);

4. In the human being feelings are not regulated automatically, but are functionalized by the *ordo amoris*, which becomes the *principium individuationis* of the person. Each *ordo amoris* matches a different perspective on world-openness (*Weltoffenheit*) (M. Scheler, *Ordo amoris*, 1916 ca.);

5. There is not an immediate feeling at the roots of ethics, but an act of feeling that takes shape in a maturation process aimed at transcending the self-referential horizon of one's own egological pole (*epoché* from egocentrism and narcissism). This act of feeling deals with the objectivity of value judgments just as the external perception deals with that of factual judgments, and is affected by phenomena of illusion just as the external perception. There isn't therefore a priority of inner perception over external perception and even feelings and emotions are affected by phenomena of illusion and deception (M. Scheler, *Die Idole der Selbsterkenntnis*, 1911). This means that, at the core of the phenomenology of feelings, there is not an exaltation of an immediate act of feeling, but rather the process of cultivation of emotions through virtue (M. Scheler, *Zur Rehabilitierung der Tugend*, 1913).

The aim of the conference was to deal with the above-mentioned issues, keeping in mind the current debates on personal identity, we-intentionality, the phenomenology of otherness and the role of embodiment. For some scholars there is also a need to emphasize the limits of classical cognitivism concerning emotions. David Hume had already proved that the problem of personal identity can no longer be understood in terms of a «rational self», but should instead start from passions, i.e. in terms of a «moral self».

Is it possible to share an emotion, and in which way does Scheler enter into the contemporary debate about collective intentionality? How is the person shaped by others and by an *ordo amoris*? What is the relevance of the emotions for the formation process of the person? Although this issue cannot exhaust the variety of questions that involve the aforementioned topics, the scholars who contributed to this volume outline the richness and complexity of Scheler's relevance for the phi-

losophy of emotions. By collecting different viewpoints that concern the international philosophical debates, we are guided by the idea of furthering a perspective on the person that is more and more detached from any abstraction of a mind from the body, of feelings from reason, of the individual from the world.