

The Human Being, the Environment and the World

**An Exegetical Study of the History of Environmental Philosophy and the
Contemporary Context of London, United Kingdom**

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Abstrakt: This thesis aims, firstly, to conduct an exegetical comparative analysis of the theories of 20 th century environmental philosophers, Arne Næss, Max Scheler, and Gregory Bateson. This analysis aims to discuss whether or not there are any similarities between these thinkers in terms of which holistic constellations are considered to exist, if they are of either intrinsic or extrinsic value and why, as understood by Michael J. Zimmerman. Secondly, the thesis aims to analyse whether or not there are any similarities between the aforementioned philosophers and the contemporary London-based environmental preservation organisations, The Green Party of England and Wales, Women’s Environmental Network and Organiclea, in regards to which holistic constellations are believed to exist and to hold value, either intrinsic or extrinsic, and why. The thesis finds that Næss’s, Scheler’s and Bateson’s theories, at large, can be classified under the overall perspective of holism. The commitment to holism is expressed in three common topics of interest for these philosophers: the idea that the faculties within the human being are in collaboration; that the human being is in relationships with her surroundings that contribute to the sensation and constitution of her own self; and the existence of and participation in a world-wide metaphysical system. These findings are thereafter applied to the contemporary environmental debate taking place in London by example of the aforementioned organisations, in order to explore the possibility of similarities as detailed above. The thesis finds that the differences between the philosophers and the organisations clearly outnumber the similarities, thus it is suggested that the word “associations”, rather than “similarities”, is more appropriate in describing the connection between these relata. The reason for this preference is that it appears the organisations adhere to the overall conceptions of the human being, the environment and the world as suggested by Næss, Scheler and Bateson, but the organisations reinterpret these topics in accordance with their contemporary context and specific aims. This, in turn, affects the conceived values associated with these topics. It is noted, further, that the medium utilised and intended audience of the organisations equally affects the conceived value. As different from Næss, Scheler and Bateson, these organisations utilise an online platform with limited space, thus opportunity to embark on an extensive explanation of the reasons for their aims. Rather, the organisations seek to address and rectify the grievances of contemporary human beings in London or United Kingdom at large. As a result, the rhetoric of the organisations mainly aims to encourage activism and attract new members, which is not present in the theories of the philosophers.	
Nyckelord: environmental philosophy, value theory, Arne Næss, Max Scheler, Gregory Bateson	
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1. Introduction

The presence of individuals, organisations, groups, politicians and market forces urging the general public to hold something for true or valuable is not a new phenomenon. Messages such as these have been a central feature in most societies throughout the course of history, and might even have contributed to changes in society and attitudes of the general public. In our current society value statements are a clear feature of our existence, and the rise of social media channels allows us to instantaneously access different perspectives and arguments. We are being presented with different arguments to purchase certain products over others, pursue our dreams, travel, reduce our use of single-use plastic, become vegan – we are being told that if we choose something over the other, we become someone or something else that affects who we are and how we are considered to be by others. This is where we find ourselves today, grappling with these questions and asking “What is valuable? Why is it valuable? Do *I* believe this to be valuable for me or in its own right?”. My areas of interest, environmental philosophy and the environmental debate at large, are not immune to the occurrence of value statements of this kind, even if such value statements or conceptions of value are not explicitly articulated in philosophical theories. This thesis seeks, therefore, to analyse how values are present and expressed in the theories of chosen historical environmental philosophers and contemporary environmental preservation organisations in London.

The three philosophers subject to inquiry are Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson, who presented their theories in the 20th century. The theories of these philosophers have clear features of holism, and the inquiry undertaken seeks to answer which holistic constellations each philosopher argues to exist, to be of value – either intrinsically or extrinsically – and why. At first glance, it appears that these philosophers would have very few conceptions and ideas in common; however, in the individual study and comparative exegesis of these philosophers it became noticeable that they exhibit similar views regarding the topics of the human being, the environment and the world. These topics are relevant for the field of environmental philosophy and the thesis on the whole.

Although carrying interest and philosophical relevance in their own right, it might be assumed that a historical exegesis of the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson holds little or no relevance for us contemporary human beings, where the societal and social context and debate are clearly different from the context of these philosophers. Even so, the question aroused in

me on whether or not the arguments of these philosophers are being utilised in contemporary environmental debates. In order to answer this question, the thesis analyses the content on the websites of three contemporary environmental preservation organisations in London, where I am residing. The organisations are: The Green Party of England and Wales (henceforth referred to as The Green Party), Women’s Environmental Network (henceforth referred to as WEN) and Organiclea.

1.1 Aim and Questions of Issue

The aim of this thesis is twofold: firstly, it seeks to conduct an exegetical analysis of the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson in order to determine whether or not similarities between these philosophers can be drawn in regards to which holistic constellations are argued to exist, to be of value – either intrinsic or extrinsic – and why; secondly, the thesis seeks to answer whether or not it is possible to discern similarities between the aforementioned philosophers and contemporary environmental preservation organisations in London, the United Kingdom, in regards to the subject of valuable holistic constellations. The thesis seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Are there any similarities between the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson in regards to which holistic constellations are considered to exist and hold value?
 - 1.1 Which arguments are presented by each philosopher for the occurrence of the constellations?
 - 1.2 Why are the constellations considered valuable?
 - 1.3 Are the respective constellations perceived to hold intrinsic or extrinsic value?
2. Are there any similarities between Næss, Scheler and Bateson and the contemporary environmental preservation organisations, The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea, in terms of which holistic constellations are considered to exist, to hold value – either intrinsic or extrinsic – and why they hold this value?

1.2 Background

In this heading I will give a brief introduction to the life and theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson. The introduction serves the purpose of familiarising the reader with each philosopher and their respective backgrounds.

1.2.1 Arne Næss

Arne Dekke Eide Næss (1912 – 2009) was a Norwegian philosopher, mountaineer, and was infamously one of the founding fathers of the distinction between the Shallow and Deep Long-range Ecology Movements; the Shallow Ecology Movement attempts to resolve the environmental crisis within already established praxis without addressing the philosophical, social and political roots of the crisis itself, while the Deep Long-range Ecology Movement, on the other hand, seeks to address such aspects in order to revert the ecological crisis of the 21st century.¹ In establishing the distinction between these two movements, Næss's intention was to encourage the view that the environment is equal in value to the human being², and that the natural world consists of complex webs of relationships dependent between organism to organism.³

Alongside this distinction, Næss is also known for his work in areas such as logic, communication studies, empirical semantics, foundational studies of science and his studies on philosophers such as Spinoza, Gandhi and Wittgenstein.⁴

1.2.2 Max Scheler

Max Ferdinand Scheler (1874 – 1928) was a German metaphysician who elaborated theories within the fields of phenomenology, ethics and philosophical anthropology. Due to this varied interest and frequent modification of his point of view, Werner Stark attributes an intellectual restlessness to Scheler. Nevertheless, readers of Scheler discern three main intellectual periods and topics of interests in his intellectual life: formalism in ethics and the non-material ethics of values, the eternal in man, and philosophical anthropology. Theories belonging to the final topic were left unfinished by the time of his death.⁵

In general, it can be said that Scheler's primary scope was on the being of man himself, here and now, as a bearer of love and his actions in his personal biological, social, ethical,

¹ Næss, Arne, *Life's philosophy – Reason and Feeling in a Deeper World*. The University of Georgia Press, Athens & Georgia, 2008; p. xxv

² Ibid; p.xxvi

³ Wikipedia, 2018-12-17, *Arne Næss*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arne_N%C3%A6ss (Retrieved; 2018-11-07)

⁴ Næss, Arne (ed. Rothenberg, David), *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle – Outline of an Ecosophy*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989; p.5

⁵ Scheler, Max (ed. Stark, Werner), *The Nature of Sympathy*. Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick & London, 2009; p.ix

metaphysical and religious context. Thus, the phenomenological investigations of the transcendental ego and ontological questions of being were of little interest for Scheler.⁶

1.2.3 Gregory Bateson

Gregory Bateson (1904 – 1980) was an English academic whose areas of interest encompassed evolutionary theory, epistemology, clinical psychology, psychiatry, cultural anthropology, learning, and communication.⁷ In 1940 he contributed to the development of the theoretical perspective that cybernetics and systems theory could be applied to social and behavioural sciences.⁸

Alongside Bateson's intellectual work within these areas, it is commonly said that his overarching interest was the processes of thinking. This is conceived to be a distinct topic of interest for Bateson in its own right since it is problematic to articulate and restrict to one particular scientific field. This is exhibited in Bateson's distinct interest in how pieces of information can be combined in order to generate the so called "pattern which connects": this pattern is not restricted to one particular field of study or interest of Bateson; rather, it is a reoccurring topic in his theories, especially when he argues that the human beings ought to perceive and understand the natural world in a more complex, ecological and creative manner.⁹

1.3 Definitions

This thesis features a wide range of terms and concepts. In the presentation and analysis of the philosophers and organisations texts, these terms and concepts will be defined continuously. However, there are certain key terms and concepts that have been central to the exegetical analysis of the material, therefore requiring special attention. In this section I aim to define such key terms and concepts.

⁶ Scheler, Max (gen.ed. Wild, John, ass.ed. Edie, James M.), *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values – A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*. Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 2009, p.xiv

⁷ Bateson, Gregory (ed. Montuori, Alfonso), *Mind and Nature - A Necessary Unity*. Hampton Press Inc., Cresskill, 2002; p. xvi

⁸ Wikipedia, 2019-01-23, *Gregory Bateson*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregory_Bateson (Retrieved; 2018-11-07)

⁹ Bateson, Gregory (ed. Montuori, Alfonso), *Mind and Nature a Necessary Unity*, 2002; p.xvii - xviii

1.3.1 Holism

In the succeeding analysis, it will be discussed that Næss, Scheler, Bateson and the chosen London-based contemporary environmental preservation organisations adhere to the overall perspective of holism.

The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy defines the general characteristics of theories of holism as “any of a wide variety of theses that in one way or another affirm the equal or greater reality of the explanatory necessity of the whole of some system in relation to its parts.”¹⁰ Thus, holistic theories claim that both parts in a system, and the whole these parts generate, are relevant in explaining a phenomenon of some sort. The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy adheres to such a brief definition and further elaborates:

The view that wholes have some metaphysical, epistemic, or explanatory priority over the elements, members, individuals, or parts composing them. A whole cannot be reduced to its parts. A part cannot be understood apart from the whole to which it belongs. Knowledge of the whole is not the simple aggregation of knowledge of its parts.¹¹

In other words, even if theories of holism consider both parts and whole to hold explanatory relevance, neither the whole nor the parts can be understood or explicated in absence of the other. Additionally, the characteristics of the whole is not solely determined by the aggregation of the parts – this point is a common denominator for theories of holism. The Cambridge dictionary agrees with this description of holism and explains further that this doctrine “[...] will ordinarily be trivially true unless it is further held, in the thesis of *descriptive emergentism*, that these properties of the whole cannot be defined by properties of the parts.”¹²

The Cambridge dictionary further outlines that theories of holism hold either:

[...] (1) that the laws of the more complex cases in it are *not* deducible by way of any composition laws or laws of coexistence from the laws of the less complex cases [...], or (2) that all the variables that constitute the system interacts with each other. This denial of deducibility is known as *metaphysical* or *methodological holism*, whereas affirming the deducibility is *methodological individualism*. In a special case of explanatory holism that presupposes descriptive emergentism, holism is sometimes understood as the thesis that

¹⁰ Audi, Robert (gen.ed.) & Audi, Paul (ass.ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy – Third Edition*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2015; p. 470

¹¹ Bunnin, Nicholas & Yu, Jiyuan, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell, Hoboken, 2004; p. 309

¹² Audi, Robert (gen.ed.) & Audi, Paul (ass.ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy – Third Edition*, 2015; p. 470

with respect to some system the whole has properties that interact ‘back’ with the properties of its parts.¹³

In other words, holistic theories either refute the postulates of individualism that seek to explain the characteristics of the whole from the characteristics of their parts, or claim that such parts interact with each other in order to generate such a whole. The Blackwell dictionary adds that “on some views these wholes are prior to their parts, but on others they emerge from the interaction between parts.”¹⁴ As the following chapters will discuss, the holism that Næss, Scheler and Bateson adhere to claims that the parts in a whole interact in order to generate the relevant whole, and in the final subheading it appears as if the philosophers conceive that the whole itself interacts with the parts.

Worth bringing to the readers’ attention is that Næss, Scheler and Bateson seem to introduce yet another element to holism. In my interpretation, which will be presented in detail in the following, the philosophers claim that parts, due to their inherent composition, *essentially* interact or belong to each other, in order to generate a whole. In the initial analysis, it was suggested that the term for this perspective on holism is “radical holism”. However, upon further research into the term it became clear that the term has already been utilised in an alternative context.¹⁵ Therefore, to utilise the term “radical holism” risks creating confusion and not fully capturing the traits of the holism entailed by the philosophers. I, therefore, suggest an alternative term to describe such holism: essentiality holism. In the present context of this thesis, the term aims to describe a version of holism that holds that the parts *necessarily* belong to each other in a whole due to features in their *essence*.

1.3.2 Intrinsic Value and Extrinsic Value

The philosophical topic of intrinsic and extrinsic values has been one of the main scopes of interest for an array of thinkers. As a result, accounts vary in each outlining the nature of such values and what entities, concrete or abstract, hold one or the other value. Due to the scope and questions of issue of this thesis, it is relevant to clearly establish the meaning of both intrinsic and extrinsic values since these terms are central for the analyses. Before providing such a definition, it is worth noting that it is common in the discourse of value theory to

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Bunnin, Nicholas & Yu, Jiyuan, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, 2004; p. 309

¹⁵ In his PhD-Thesis *Holism and the Reconstitution of Everyday Life: A Framework for Transition to a Sustainable Society* Gideon Kossoff argues for the occurrence and introduction of the term “radical holism” to refer to a group of theorists who share the characteristics of rejecting the *principle of authority* as a means for generating social order, defined by Pierre- Joseph Proudhon. Secondly, their position finds its validity by referencing ‘nature’ which most of these theorists understands ‘holistically’ rather than mechanistically. 2011; p. 113-114

define what constitutes intrinsic goodness/badness and extrinsic goodness/badness. The following chapters do not elaborate these distinctions in detail, rather the analysis is based on the presumption that when it is suggested that Næss, Scheler and Bateson ascribe either intrinsic or extrinsic value to a holistic constellation, they indirectly claim that the constellation holds intrinsic or extrinsic goodness. The following definitions of intrinsic and extrinsic values are based on the distinction made by Michael J. Zimmerman.¹⁶

1.3.2.1 Intrinsic Value

Intrinsic value is defined as a value that something has “in itself”, “for its own sake”, “as such” or “in its own right”. Therefore, the intrinsic value of something, be it a feeling, object and so forth, entails that this value is not derived from an external source but the inherent composition of the something itself. In value theory this is referred to as that intrinsic value is nonderivative.¹⁷ For example, the statement “it is good to be pleased” can be said to contain intrinsic value if the mental state of being pleased does not derive its value from another mental state such as being happy. In his book, Zimmerman argues that it is solely concrete states of individuals that can be bearers of intrinsic value. The following analysis does not adhere to this monistic account of intrinsic value; rather it assumes there are several phenomena that can be bearers of intrinsic value, such as objects or relations.

1.3.2.2 Extrinsic Value

Extrinsic value, as opposed to intrinsic value, is defined as a value that something has by association to something else,¹⁸ its value is derived from something that contains intrinsic value.¹⁹ This does not result in the conclusion that extrinsic value cannot exist in the absence of something containing intrinsic value. Zimmerman refutes this conclusion and claims that extrinsic value is to be *understood* in terms of intrinsic value.²⁰

The most common example of extrinsic value is instrumental value, i.e. something is the bearer of instrumental value if it is valuable as a means to an end, which is the bearer of intrinsic value. Zimmerman notes, however, that this is not the sole form of extrinsic value.

¹⁶ It is worth noting that the tradition of intrinsic value is far more diverse than the definitions provided. For a full discussion and implications of intrinsic and extrinsic value, the reader is referred to Zimmerman, Michael J., *The Nature of Intrinsic Value*. Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Washington DC, 2001.

¹⁷ Zimmerman, Michael J., 2019-01-09, *Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Value*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/value-intrinsic-extrinsic/> (Retrieved; 2018-10-28)

¹⁸ Zimmerman, Michael J., *The Nature of Intrinsic Value*. Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Washington DC, 2001; p.251

¹⁹ In value theory, extrinsic value is also referred to as derivative value.

²⁰ Zimmerman, Michael J., 2019-01-09, *Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Value*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/value-intrinsic-extrinsic/> (Added emphasis. Retrieved; 2018-10-28)

He cites an example where, when someone receives a positive result of a health check, the result contains extrinsic value, in relation to the intrinsic value of being in good health, but the result is not the means to attain good health.²¹

1.4 Method

The method used to fulfil the aim and answer the questions of issue of this thesis is a literary study and exegesis of books written by Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson alongside a study of content present on the websites of London-based contemporary environmental preservation organisations, The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea. The exegesis aims to analyse, firstly, whether or not there are any similarities between these philosophers in terms of which holistic constellations are conceived to exist, to be of value – either intrinsic or extrinsic – and why. Secondly, the exegesis aims to investigate whether or not there are any similarities between the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson and the statements found on the aforementioned organisations' websites. Considering this, the method utilised to answer the questions of this thesis is, essentially, a comparative method. The comparison is conducted by either comparing the material available written by each philosopher with one another or to compare this material with content on the respective organisation's website.

To answer the first questions of issue, chosen books written by Næss, Scheler and Bateson have been read in their entirety, thereafter analysed with the intention of discerning similarities between these philosophers, as specified above. The books have been chosen since the content presents the main theories and most famous arguments by each philosopher.

In the process of conducting the comparative exegetical analysis of the chosen books, it became clear that it is possible to discern three topics of interest for these philosophers. The result of this analysis is reflected in three themes which constitute the structure of this thesis. They are as follows: the notion of faculties in collaboration within the human being; relationships with the environment as constituting sense of self; and the existence of and participation in a worldwide metaphysical system. These themes were not predetermined at the initial stage of the analysis, but rather they emerged as a result of comparing the written material by each philosopher with one another. Worth noting further is that these themes are by no means clearly demarcated; instead, certain concepts and ideas occurs in two or three themes.

²¹ Ibid.

In order to answer the second question of issue, content present on the respective organisation's websites have been read in their entirety. The intention with this analysis was to discern potential similarities between the topics raised and arguments utilised by Næss, Scheler and Bateson, on the one hand, and The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea, on the other. The content has been sourced from the official websites of the respective organisations, which were found after an online search utilising the online search engines, Google and Ecoasia. Even if it is not entirely clear who wrote a specific piece of information or statement on any of the organisations' websites, it is reasonable to assume that these organisations, as a whole, adhere to the statements on their websites. These statements are presented to the general public and it would be absurd for the organisation to present statements on their online platform that they do not adhere to. This assumption could, however, have been affirmed or ruled out via an interview with representatives of each organisations – this course of action was ultimately not chosen due to the scope of this thesis.

The content on each organisation's website has been structured and systematised in accordance with the three themes that emerged in the analysis of the material written by Næss, Scheler and Bateson. Thus, as different from the analysis of the books written by the philosophers, the material from the organisations' websites were structured in accordance with predetermined themes. The reason for such a conduct is purely for organisational considerations. An alternative approach considering the entirety of the content present in the books written by the philosophers, and the entirety of the content present on the organisations' websites, might have generated a different result.

1.4.1 Delimitations and Selections

In this thesis certain delimitations and selections have been considered. The essential selection concerns the choice of philosophers presented. As mentioned in the introduction, Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson argue for the existence of certain valuable holistic constellations. From this general observation, the interest rouse to investigate the potentiality of further similarities between these philosophers in terms of which type of value these holistic constellations hold and why. The intentions to conduct a joint comparison between the three philosophers are to make these resemblances prominent.

Thus, the thesis primarily seeks to investigate the potential similarities between the philosophers and the potential differences between them will not be analysed to a larger extent. The motivation behind this delimitation is that the value theoretical statements made in

their theories are clearly present from the perspective of their similarities. However, the motivations to conceive a constellation as valuable and whether or not it holds intrinsic or extrinsic value vary amongst the philosophers, hence an element of differences features in the presentation. Although, from this delimitation there is a possibility that an alternative focus on the differences or both differences and similarities between Næss, Scheler and Bateson might have resulted in an alternative perspective on the philosophers and their value theoretical commitments. This opens up for the possibility of potential future research.

Yet another delimitation considered regards the content of the thesis that have been structured around three main themes, where it is possible to discern similarities between Næss, Scheler and Bateson – faculties in collaboration within the human being, relationships with the environment as constituting sense of self, the existence of and participation in a world-wide metaphysical system. These themes have been carefully selected after analysing the material available and contributed further to an understanding of the basic value theoretical standpoints made by each philosopher. Worth noting is that the theories of the philosophers are far more extensive than these themes suggests, but they will not be fully presented in the following. The motivation behind the exclusion of certain aspect of the philosophers' theories is that it is debatable whether or not a full presentation of every aspect of the philosophers' theories would have been of relevance for the guiding questions and aim of this thesis.

The final delamination considers the analysis undertaken from the contemporary environmental preservation debates that are taking place in London. I have chosen to focus on three organisations that are active in and around London (where one of them is active both locally in London and nationwide as a recognised political party). The organisations have been selected due to either their nationwide scope (The Green Party), specific concern (WEN) or locality (Organiclea). By considering these three organisations, each with a specific scope and concern, it is my intention to provide a nuanced exemplification of how the environmental debate can be constructed from various perspectives (nationwide, topic-specific or local). The organisations have been chosen due to them having gained recognition in London or the nation of United Kingdom at large. I am aware that the nationwide and global environmental preservation debate is far more complex and exhibits a wide range of arguments and considerations; thus, to solely consider the debate currently taking place in London, through the example of these selected organisations, is but a mere fraction of the issues and concerns being voiced. It is not my intention to conduct a detailed analysis into this nationwide and global debate since such an analysis would swell beyond the scope of this

thesis. Rather, it is my intention to provide merely an example of the lines of arguments that can be relevant for contemporary environmental preservation organisations.

1.5 Structure

This thesis seeks to answer two questions regarding the possible connection between the three philosophers Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson. As mentioned above the analysis resulting in three themes were due to these thinkers sharing similar thoughts. These will be presented in chapter 2 which will be divided in three sections: the first concerns each philosopher's thoughts regarding the idea of faculties in collaboration within the human being; the second regards their common concept of the existence of relationships with the environment as constituting sense of self; and the third will present their respective views on the existence of and participation in a worldwide metaphysical system. Chapter 3 will address the question of whether or not there are any similarities between the arguments and perceptions of the aforementioned philosophers and the arguments and perceptions of selected contemporary environmental preservation organisations in London. The final chapter, chapter 4, will answer the questions of issue and further discuss the findings made in chapter 2 and 3.

2. The Human Being, the Environment and the World; a Selected Study of the History of Philosophy

This chapter is divided into three sections and has holism as its overarching theme. Each topic presents the features of the holistic constellations that Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson argue to exist. Every section contains a presentation of the philosophers' views and arguments for the existence of the holistic constellation. These statements have been analysed further in order to reach a conclusion regarding what sort of value each philosopher ascribes to the constellation. Lastly, all sections contain a brief comparison between the three philosophers.

2.1. Faculties in Collaboration within the Human Being

At the centre of Arne Næss's, Max Scheler's and Gregory Bateson's theories lie a profound critique of Western dualistic notions, such as mind as superior to body or reason as superior to emotions. Contrary to these ideals, the philosophers claim that the human being is a holistic being in the sense that both mental and bodily aspects are of value to her and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of her.

2.1.1 Reason and Feeling as Equal in Value – Arne Næss

As different from Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson, who argue that there is no dichotomy in the Cartesian sense between mind and body, Arne Næss is arguing for the internal interconnectedness of reason and feeling²² in the human being.

In arguing for this claim Næss finds inspiration in the works of Baruch Spinoza and his concept the voice of the *ratio*. The ratio is understood by Næss as an “inner voice” that communicates to the human being through feelings which assist her in making decisions that are in accordance with her nature or essence.²³ From this understanding, Næss claims: “What we need is always to unify feelings and reason in the sense of the *ratio*.”²⁴ In this initial stage of the inquiry it is worth mentioning that Næss is not on the clear how he conceives either ‘nature’ or ‘essence’. It may be interpreted as a highly individual essence, in the sense that my essence is different from yours due to a difference in priorities and ambitions, etc. On the other hand, it can be interpreted in Platonic terms that there exists an overall universal form of

²² Both reason and feeling can arguably be conceived as belonging to the cognitive life of the human being, even if Næss is not explicit on this.

²³ Næss, Arne, *Life's Philosophy: Reason and Feeling in a Deeper World*, 2008; p.10

²⁴ *Ibid*; p.12

the human being, which all human beings ought to strive towards, regardless of individual preferences. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Næss's point of departure is that reason and feelings are already unified in the sense of the ratio²⁵, as Næss understands it. Both reason and feelings, as serving difference purposes for the human being, are not considered as opposing mental faculties; they are, rather, in cooperation as they assist the human being in her decision making. It is through the idea of the ratio that Næss seeks to argue for this notion. In the following, I will present the arguments Næss provides for this overall claim.

Initially Næss states that he prefers to use the term “feelings” rather than “emotions”, since the latter is commonly understood as strong feelings rather than faint ones. For Næss, “faint but highly important feelings are almost always present”²⁶ in the life of human beings, and determine or affect her family or working life. The existence of which, for example family-mood or working-mood, leads Næss to the conclusion that even if the human being cannot express what he feels, it nonetheless remains that he feels “something”. He explains: “I interpret this something as a weak *prevailing tone* in our emotional life, be it positive or negative – a prevailing emotional tone.”²⁷ Næss explains that a weak prevailing emotional tone can be observed “when, for example, it results in a slight curling of the corners of the mouth, either upward or downward.”²⁸ I find that the evidence Næss provides here to be slightly problematic, specifically that the slight curling of the corners of the mouth might be due to the facial features of the person and not indicating the internal emotional state of affairs. Therefore, it might be argued that this is not a sound argument for the existence of such a weak prevailing tone in our emotional life. Leaving this concern to the side, I believe it is Næss's intention to express the view that feelings are present in the life of the human being even if it is not apparent that he can clearly distinguish a feeling from another, and that such feelings are noticeable in her bodily expressions, i.e. in the slight curling of the corners of the mouth.

For the sake of the continued inquiry into this topic, I will suppose the existence of a weak prevailing emotional tone. Næss considers it distinguishable from more prominent emotions that the human being feels which changes according to the current situation, for example the human being might for a brief moment feel angry or happy due to some incidents in her life.

²⁵ Ibid; p.xi

²⁶ Ibid; p.12

²⁷ Ibid; p.32. Original emphasis.

²⁸ Ibid.

Næss refers to this as an emotional tone that changes from moment to moment.²⁹ It seems that Næss perceives the emotional life of human beings as consisting of both a prevailing emotional tone and various emotional tones that fluctuate according to the context. Næss describes the relationship between these two as similar to the relationship between the layers of wax applied to a ski:

The prevailing tone is like the foundation waxing, and the tone like the succeeding layers of wax required by the particular snow conditions [...] In the same way we can say that emotional life plays on an infinitely rich variation of emotional tones, but by and large it is characterized by a single prevailing tone, which may be good or not.³⁰

Thus, the prevailing emotional tone can be interpreted as the foundation for the emotional life of a human being but, at the same time, it allows her to sense other diverse emotions. A joyful person, for example, can experience moments of sadness, envy, anger, love, and so forth, but in the absence of such “strong” emotions he will have a weak sensation of joy.

Before proceeding in this inquiry, I would like to discuss one possible restriction Næss introduces to his theory. As mentioned above, Næss claims that feelings, even of a faint character, are *almost* always present.³¹ The word ‘almost’ in this context seems to indicate that Næss claims that there are situations where feelings are absent, thus the human being can rightly say that he does not feel anything. If I may speculate, one such instance where feelings are not present might be when the human being is sleeping deeply and experiences no dreams that might trigger feelings of joy or horror. However, Næss does not explain or motivate this further, which makes it problematic to discuss this and similar examples further.

As the above paragraphs state, Næss stresses and maintains that feelings are a part of the life of human beings, and a suppression of feelings entails a suppression of the human being himself.³² However he does not clearly state how human beings might suppress feelings – does it entail a disregard of the presence of emotions, or does it mean to develop an ability to not have emotions at all? And is such a conduct possible? Næss does not discuss these questions further and in the remainder of his book he focuses on criticising the contemporary societal view that feelings are less relevant than reason. A later passage highlights this concern:

²⁹ Ibid; p.33

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid; p.12. Added emphasis.

³² Ibid.

What earns recognition in society is production, in other words, what we have ‘achieved’ in the course of a life. At the same time, much of what we appreciate within ourselves and in others is connected with something different, with emotional life in fact. The word *sensitivity*, which ought to evoke unequivocally favourable associations, is often associated by society with hypersensitivity, emotionalism, being thin-skinned, and other qualities of a negative kind. If we compare *very sensitive* with hard-bitten, many are those who will place the latter higher.³³

From this quotation Næss claims that the human being’s achievements are of relevance for society; a statement that seems evident in the sense that it can be argued that everyone achieves something in the course of one’s life which has relevance for society. In other words, it is not clear what Næss’s intention with this initial statement is: does he seek to criticise this notion or does he presuppose a value hierarchy applied to the human being’s achievement from the perspective of society? In order to reach an answer to these questions, it is relevant to take into consideration the second part of this paragraph. Here Næss claims that, firstly, the emotional life, as distinct from the human being’s achievements, is nevertheless appreciated both by the own human being and others; secondly, the word “sensitivity” ought to be equal in recognition as achievements in the context of society, although the current dominant perception in society gives rise to various less favourable associations in relation to the word “sensitivity”. Taking this quotation in its totality it seems that Næss opposes the current view in society that solely considers achievements as relevant for society; he presents the alternative view that emotional life and sensitivity, which can be considered as belonging to emotional life, ought to be perceived as equally relevant for society. Even if this seems to be Næss’s message in this quotation, it nevertheless remains that words such as “achievement” and “sensitivity” require further definition in order to establish their exact relevance both for the human being and society.

From this challenge of the contemporary societal view of considering emotional life and sensitivity as less relevant for society, Næss seeks to argue that both reason and emotions are relevant for the human being through his interpretation of Spinoza’s concept of ratio. As mentioned in the introduction, Næss interprets ratio as an inner voice or compass that communicates to the human being via feelings with the purpose of guiding her towards making a decision that is in accordance with her true nature or essence. In a later passage Næss makes his claim more explicit and provides a definition to the term “reason” and its implications:

³³ *Ibid*; p. 44-45

[...] the concept of reason that I use is such that reason is always needed when we have to judge which emotion that activates us at a particular moment. It reminds us of other emotions that ought also to be taken into account, and it judges the results the next moment or at some other time in the future.³⁴

How I interpret the above statement: when faced with a decision a multitude of feelings or strong emotions arise within the human being, and it might be problematic for him to decide which feelings are appropriate or relevant for the current situation. For instance, imagine a situation where Catherine is faced with a decision to quit her job or not; in the process of making this decision, several feelings arise within her and she finds it troublesome to organise them in order to reach a conclusion. However, through her reason (or ratio) she can organise her feelings, consider related feelings and make a decision that is in accordance with her deepest norms and priorities (which may be the interpretation of “nature” or “essence” that Næss adheres to). The ratio seems to be the faculty that allows the human being to reasonably assess the situation and compare personal priorities with one another. The old saying “the heart has its reason that reason cannot know” does not seem to apply in the theories of Næss, but rather both reason and heart – emotions – engage in a dialogue and cooperation and are of equal importance for the human being.

These paragraphs indicate that Næss perceives reason and feelings to be of value for the human being – without one or the other he would find it troublesome to make decisions. From this point of departure, Næss claims that emotional life ought to be appreciated by ourselves and others, and that the word “sensitivity” and its occurrence ought to be considered as equally relevant as someone’s achievements from the perspective of society. Through his interpretation of Spinoza’s concept of the ratio Næss claims that both reason and emotion, as mental faculties within the human being, contain distinct value and purpose that can solely be realised in cooperation, which occurs when human beings are faced with various choice-situations. In my interpretation, both reason and having an emotional life in its totality, as perceived by Næss, hold distinct intrinsic values, since they are both equally valuable in their own right. At the same time, they both seem to hold extrinsic value for the human being in the sense that both reason and emotions are equally relevant for him in order to act in the world, which might involve a pursuit and realisation of other values, i.e. the extrinsic value appears to be instrumental.

³⁴ Ibid; p.16

2.1.2 Coherency of Psychic and Bodily Processes – Max Scheler

Max Scheler argues that the human being is a holistic being via his concept of *person*. Scheler defines person, not as a human being of flesh and blood, but as:

[...] *the person is the concrete and essential unity of being of acts of different essences* which in itself (and therefore not πρὸς ἑαυτὸν) precedes all essential act-differences (especially the difference between inner and outer perception, inner and outer willing, inner and outer feeling, loving and hating, etc.)³⁵

The person, in Scheler's usage, is a concrete unitary entity within the human being and is the very foundation from where various acts, both executed and not executed, are derived from.³⁶ Person is central to understanding the nature of human action, and in order to fully understand this, according to Scheler, it is necessary that the person is a concrete entity. In a later passage he explains this further: "If an act-essence is to be concrete, its full intuitable givenness *presupposes* a reference to the essence of the *person*, who is the executor of acts."³⁷ The person is not seen as an "empty point of departure"³⁸ of acts, but a concrete being where all possible acts have their origin. If, on the other hand, the person would be an abstract entity the understanding of any act or its essence would be equally abstract.³⁹ In my understanding, the concreteness and presence of the person are of a metaphysical kind within the human being, and that it is necessary for him to know and understand his own actions, performed or not performed. As I see it, a person can be loosely likened with the cognitive processing of the human mind.

The person is, thus, not a concrete object or event in itself.⁴⁰ In Scheler's words:

The person is, among other things, the concrete subject of all acts of the essence of *inner* intuition, in which everything psychic becomes objective; and for this reason the person can *never* be an object, much less a real 'thing'. The person 'is' only as the concrete unity of acts executed by the person and only *in* the execution of these acts.⁴¹

In this quotation, Scheler seems to claim that the person is a unity. I believe that this feature of the person is central to Scheler's theories and relevant to investigate further. The following

³⁵ Scheler, Max (gen.ed. Wild, John, ass.ed. Edie, James M.), *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values – A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, 2009; p.383. Original emphasis.

³⁶ Ibid; p.382

³⁷ Ibid; p.383-384

³⁸ Ibid; p.384

³⁹ Ibid; p.384

⁴⁰ Ibid; p.482 - 483

⁴¹ Ibid; p.482. Original emphasis.

pages will address this topic and discuss how the unity of the person presuppose the unity of the human being.

As the above indicates, Scheler claims that all possible acts, executed or not, originates in the person which precedes all possible acts a human being can be thought to perform.⁴² There is, thus, a difference between executed and non-executed acts. Scheler writes:

Hence, by saying that it belongs to the nature of the differences of acts to be in a *person* and *only* in a person, we imply that the *different logical subjects* of essentially different acts (which are different only as otherwise identical subjects of such act-differences) can only *be in a form of unity* insofar as we reflect on the possible 'being' of these subjects and not merely their nature.⁴³

This quotation indicates that Scheler conceives that it is solely in the person that this difference is understood and realised. Since both executed and non-executed acts are both found in the person, it follows, according to Scheler, that the person is necessarily a unity. Other differences that are found in the person are differences mentioned in the first quotation on the previous page, differences between inner and outer perception, willing and so forth – all of which are understood and realised in the person. As I understand Scheler, there is solely one individual person that is the source of all actions in the individual human being, therefore there cannot be a difference between executed and non-executed acts, or inner and outer perception or willing and so forth.

The differences so far mentioned regard internal cognitive processes within the human being and how the person comprehends acts, but where are those actions directed at or whose source is the person stimulated if you like? Scheler explains his view:

It therefore is not necessary for the person to act *first* on his inner world and then, through this, on the outer world. The person is no nearer to one than the other, and he experiences the 'resistance' of both in equally immediate ways.⁴⁴

As this quotation indicates, the person simultaneously experiences and acts on events in the inner and outer contexts of the human being. From this Scheler claims that the 17th and 18th century philosophical problem of the interplay of mind and body has lost its metaphysical

⁴² Ibid; p.382-383

⁴³ Ibid; p.383. Original emphasis.

⁴⁴ Ibid; p.483. Original emphasis.

significance.⁴⁵ Rather, it is within the person that inner and outer perceptions are conjoined.

Scheler writes:

All possible interconnections between psychic and bodily processes are possible and understandable because they are mediated by the *uniform* and *indivisible* efficacy of the person. That is to say, for any uniform action of a person there are two forms of intuition, the inner and the outer, and in both of these the difference, sameness, and similarity of the 'actions' in question must mirror themselves.⁴⁶

As I understand Scheler, both psychic and bodily processes stimulate the person, and in order for the person to perform a coherent action it is necessary that the so-called inner and outer intuitions reflect each other. Put differently, the individual person serves as the rendezvous for these processes and intuitions. Worth noting in this context is Scheler's frequent exchange of terminology: psychic and bodily processes, inner and outer intuition, and at one point he is utilising the dichotomy inner and outer world.⁴⁷ As a result it becomes problematic to clearly deduce what Scheler intends. That note aside, I believe that Scheler claims that the apparent differences between these phenomena are of no relevance in the person. Rather, all potential phenomena are of significance in order for the person and, by extension, the human being to perform actions. If, on the other hand, there would be two separate persons in the human being, one solely moved by psychic processes and the other by bodily processes, a conflict of interest might arise within the human being which would make it problematic for him to perform any action. In other words, the idea of the person as a unitary being constitutes his overall view of the human being as a holistic being.

In his last book *The Human Place in the Cosmos*, Scheler holds the unity of psychic and bodily processes for true, thus he does not argue for it in an in-depth manner. He writes: "Psycho-physical life is *one and the same*. This unity is a fact which holds for *every* living being and, hence, for the *human* being also."⁴⁸ In the footnote to this sentence Scheler notes: "I cannot furnish here final in-depth elaboration on this theory."⁴⁹ However, in this final book, it is worth discussing one quotation:

[...] physiological and psychic processes are ontologically strictly identical (as Kant already expected they are). They are different *only in a phenomenal sense*. Nevertheless,

⁴⁵ Ibid; p.483

⁴⁶ Ibid; p.483. Original emphasis.

⁴⁷ See above

⁴⁸ Scheler, Max (ed. Frings, Manfred S.), *The Human Place in the Cosmos*. Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 2009; p.56. Original emphasis.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

they are also phenomenally strictly identical in terms of their structural laws and rhythm of processes. Both physiological and psychic processes are non-mechanical; and both are purposeful and aim at wholeness.⁵⁰

It seems that this paragraph indicates that psychic and physiological processes are the same, in an ontological sense and in a certain, but not strictly, phenomenal sense in terms of rhythm and processes. Psychic and physiological processes are, furthermore, the same from a teleological perspective (as I understand the term non-mechanical), i.e. that they have the same purpose which is aiming towards wholeness. The meaning of the term “wholeness” in this context can be understood by considering the following statement: “Both processes are two sides of *one* process of life, both in their structure and functional interplay.”⁵¹ In other words, both physiological and psychic processes are structured in the same way, and the interplay between them is constructed to contribute to the general continuation of life in its totality. Nevertheless, as Scheler mentions in this paragraph, even if these processes are ontologically and phenomenologically (structural laws, rhythm and processes) identical, a phenomenal difference is present. Neither the exact content nor an indication as to what this difference might be is not clear in this quotation or in the adjacent statement presented. To grasp the difference, I believe, require a full definition of the term phenomenal and the linguistically related term phenomenally, as Scheler understands them. The content in the above quotation states that the terms include considerations such as structural laws, rhythm and processes, but these are not further defined and the quotation does not state if the terms include additional aspects, for example origins. Lacking a full presentation of the contents of the terms phenomenal and phenomenally results in an inability to answer the question of how physiological and psychic processes are different or what relevance such difference might have.

As this brief inquiry indicates, Scheler opposes the view that psychic and bodily processes are, essentially, different. Rather, by introducing the concept of the unitary being, person, Scheler seeks to explain that these two processes are equally necessary for the human being. As mentioned above, the person is the executor of acts and is stimulated simultaneously by both inner and outer perception and these two perceptions are, therefore, conjoined within the person. If there were two, or more, persons it might lead to the human being being indecisive regarding which action to perform, and the knowledge of all the possible acts that he can

⁵⁰ Ibid; p.53. Original emphasis.

⁵¹ Ibid. Original emphasis.

choose from at a given moment would not be available to her, if some of that knowledge would be located within another person. I am drawn to the conclusion that the person holds intrinsic value for Scheler since it appears that it does not derive its value from an external source. At the same time, the person seems to hold extrinsic value for the human being since it is because of the person that he can determine which action to perform which, in turn, might assist him in pursuing other values of both extrinsic and intrinsic nature.

In relation to this, it seems important for Scheler to emphasise that the person is one unitary being, since it acts on both inner and outer perception, there cannot be a dichotomy between these perceptions or between psychic and physiological processes. It appears that the notion of the human being as a unitary being holds intrinsic value in the theories of Scheler since it does not appear to be valuable for the attainment of something else. Notions of the human being as a unitary being and the universe as being essentially characterised in terms of unity and integration are a recurring topic in Scheler's theories, which will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

2.1.3 Presence of Mind in the Whole Human Being – Gregory Bateson

Gregory Bateson, as Næss and Scheler, argues that the human being is a holistic being, and that the dichotomy between mind and body is faulty. In order to argue for this claim Bateson utilises his concept of *mind*. Mind is defined by Bateson through six criteria and in this thesis, I will solely discuss two of those criteria. The first criterion states:

In a word, I do not believe that single subatomic particles are 'minds' in my sense because I do believe that mental process is always a sequence of interactions *between* parts. The explanation of mental phenomena must always reside in the organization and interaction of multiple parts.⁵²

As this quotation states, mind and mental process cannot be ascribed to singular particles and mental processes cannot occur in absence of interaction between parts, only in interaction. At this stage a question arises: what exactly are these parts that are necessary for the occurrence of mental processes? One possible interpretation is that a part is anything found in the material world, internally of the being itself or it might be something entirely abstract. Bateson does not, however, define the exact features of this term, which results in that the following interpretations are, at times, highly speculative.

⁵² Bateson, Gregory (ed. Montuori, Alfonso), *Mind and Nature a Necessary Unity*, 2002; p.86. Original emphasis.

In spite of lacking a clear definition of the word “parts” I believe that the relevant point for Bateson at this stage is to argue that it is the *interaction* between parts that generates mental processes and defines the mind. Bateson explains further that “[...] the theory of mind presented here is holistic and, like all serious holism, is premised upon the differentiation and interaction of parts.”⁵³ Thus, the parts, though differentiated, interact with one another in order to generate a whole or mental processes in the context of Bateson’s definition of mind.

The second criteria of mind relevant for this section states that:

[...] it takes a *relationship*, either between two parts or between a part at time 1 and the same part at time 2, to activate some third component which we may call the *receiver*.
What the receiver (e.g., a sensory end organ) responds to is a *difference* or a *change*.⁵⁴

Taking into consideration the contents in this quotation, Bateson claims that it is the relationship between parts that stimulates the so-called receiver, which Bateson defines as the human sensory end organ. Here, two questions come to mind: why is it that the sensory end organs are solely triggered by differences or changes, and what are these organs’ relevance in generating mental processes?

As stated in the quotation, the sorts of relation necessary for stimulating the sensory end organ are the *difference* between the parts, not the sameness of the parts. One possible explanation for this might be that the sameness of parts might not be commonly registered in either the human sensory end organ (such as the sense of sight and touch in this context⁵⁵) or the awareness of the human being. In the words of Bateson; “The unchanging is imperceptible unless we are willing to move relative to it.”⁵⁶ As an example, imagine a vast landscape of countless trees, in which each and every tree appears the same with little or no individual features; to describe the landscape, the human being defines it as a forest. Imagine further that as the human being walks around in the forest, he sees that one species of tree distinctly different than those in the same forest – this difference is so prominent that he starts to wonder what this tree is and where it comes from. Put in Bateson’s terms, the difference

⁵³ Ibid; p.87

⁵⁴ Ibid; p.89. Original emphasis.

⁵⁵ Ibid; p.90. Bateson here claims” the sense of touch is one of the most primitive and simple of the senses [...].”
Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

between the two types of trees stimulates the sensory end organ, in this example the human sense of sight. Information is difference that makes a difference.⁵⁷

However, imagine a situation where a human being is left isolated inside a white room with nothing else than himself, surrounded by white walls, ceiling and floor. In the situation of this room, there are no apparent differences – there are solely smoothness and whiteness of the surfaces. Following the above definition of mind, as seen by Bateson, how can this situation be seen as containing the information relevant in order to stimulate the sensory end organ? Or would Bateson have to resort to the conclusion that sameness found in the walls, ceiling and floor in this example can be a source of information.

On the other hand, it can be argued that even in this smooth, white isolated room there are differences. The difference between the human being and the walls, ceiling and floor can arguably be sources of information for the sensory end organ. Similar line of thought can be applied to cases where a human being loses one or more of his sensory organs: even if this happens, there is, at least, one sensory organ available for the human being from where he can gain information and discover differences in his external world. It seems that the only case where Bateson's definition of information and claim about differences as triggering sensory end organs could be seriously challenged would be a case where the human being loses all of his sensory organs from the moment of his conception.

Differences as information can arguably be said to exist in the external sensory world and known to the human being through his senses. The relevant question here is, I believe, how are the sensory end organs of relevance in generating mental processes? The following quotation might be of guidance in answer this question:

[...] shows how our sensory system – and surely the sensory systems of all other creatures (even plants?) and the mental systems behind the senses (i.e., those parts of the mental systems inside the creatures) – can only operate with *events*, which we can call *changes*.⁵⁸

Following the contents in this paragraph, it seems that Bateson is of the view that “behind” the sensory systems of all beings – potentially excluding plants – are mental systems, located, evidently, within the being. Following this statement, it seems that Bateson does not solely locate mental systems, or mind, solely at the very summit of the being, i.e. in her head, but rather mental systems or mind can be found in the sensory end organs themselves, i.e. in the

⁵⁷ Ibid; p.212

⁵⁸ Ibid; p.90

whole being itself. I believe the answer to the above question can now be articulated in the following: when the sensory end organs are being triggered by a difference between parts, found in the external environment, the sensory end organ, say touch, registers this difference, which for Bateson is the definition of information. This information, in turn, is the content of mental processes. Since the sensory end organs hold their own mental system it can be argued, in Batesonian terms, that potentially the differences between the mental system found in the sense of touch and the mental system found in the sense of sight have the potential of being a source of information, thereby it can be said that mental processes and mind are located within the whole being. Worth mentioning in this context is that this conclusion is not articulated by Bateson himself and I reserve myself for the possibility that it might be faulty.

Following the above, I believe that Bateson can be interpreted as claiming that the sensory end organs, as being part of the body, are of relevance in order to stimulate mental processes; as Bateson later puts it; “[...] for mental processes require arrangements of matter in which to occur [...].”⁵⁹ I understand that the necessary arrangements of matter in order to stimulate mental processes are, as stated above, differences between matter that is found in the external world and that made accessible for the human being through his sensory organs (which contain their own mental systems). Mental processes, thus, cannot occur in absence of either matter or the sensory end organs of the body. In conclusion, in locating mind and mental processes in the various sensory organs of the human being and not solely in the brain per se, it can be argued that there cannot be a discrepancy between mind and body. Rather, the body as a whole, with the sensory organs, is the source of mental processes and can arguably be allocated the definition of mind, considering the discussion in the previous paragraph.

In this inquiry, I have briefly discussed that Bateson shares the common view of Scheler that the discrepancy between mind and body is faulty. Like Scheler, Bateson argues along the lines of essentiality holism by locating mind in the entirety of the body, thereby the distinction between the two ceases to exist; in Scheler’s theory the difference between mind and body cease to exist within the person. For Bateson, the body, with its sensory organs, is the receiver of information, found in the external world, giving rise to mental processes which, in turn, can be seen as located within the body in its totality.

⁵⁹ Bateson, Gregory & Bateson, Mary Catherine, *Angels Fear – Towards an Epistemology of the Sacred*. Hampton Press Inc., Cresskill, 2005; p.18

Considering this conclusion, the body and the mind as a constellation in its whole seems to hold intrinsic value in the sense that the constellation, in itself, does not seem to be valuable for the attainment of something else. Bateson does not clearly state whether or not mental processes or the body – as containing sensory end organs – hold any significance or relevance for the human being, therefore what sort of value they would hold for the human being or in their own right. The occurrence of matter and the organisation thereof seems to be of extrinsic value in the sense that it can be seen as the source of mental processes. Nevertheless, in the absence of a body and by extension mental processes, it would make sense to assume that matter would still exist and hold a value in its own right.

2.1.4 Conclusion

In this section, I have presented the view of the human being as a holistic being in the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson. Even if the philosophers share this common view, they utilise different concepts and terminology in their argumentation they ascribe intrinsic value to this unitary trait in the human being. Inspired by the teaching of Spinoza, Næss interprets the concept the voice of the *ratio* as the common ground for both feelings and reason. Scheler argues that the human being is holistic due to the activity of the *person*, an integral part of human nature, which is simultaneously stimulated by both inner and outer perception. Bateson perceives mental processes as created due to differences between parts, a source of information in the external world which is accessible to the human mind via the bodily senses. As this inquiry further indicates, the philosophers share the common conception that both mental and bodily senses, or reason and feelings, hold extrinsic value in the absence of collaboration between these faculties, but in the presence of such collaboration it can arguably be assumed that their value is intrinsic.

2.2 Relationships with the Environment as Constituting Sense of Self

An essential feature in the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson is that reality consists of constellations of relationships that necessarily include the human being, other beings and the environment. These relationships, in turn, affect the human being even if he is not aware of it in a clear sensible manner. Albeit utilising contrasting concepts and arguments in support of this claim, the philosophers unanimously state that these relationships and constellations generate a sense of the world as being a unity of intrinsic value.

2.2.1 Identification with Others as Generating Sense of Unity with Others – Arne Næss

In Arne Næss's personal philosophy, Ecosophy T, the idea of relationships as constitutional of the human's self is a prominent feature. In order to gain an understanding of this idea in Næss's theories it is worth lingering on his view of the self:

The identity of the individual, 'that I am something', is developed through interaction with a broad manifold, organic and inorganic. There is no completely isolatable I, no isolatable social unit. To distance oneself from nature and the 'natural' is to distance oneself from a part of that which the 'I' is built up of.⁶⁰

The creation of the 'I' is, thus, dependent on the context of the human being. It is the interaction between the 'I' and elements in her context that contributes to the overall sensation of the 'I'; to claim that the context, or nature, is irrelevant entails a detachment from one necessary element of oneself – "we are not outside the rest of nature and therefore cannot do with it as we please without changing ourselves."⁶¹ Thus, due to the close connection between the human 'I' and his surrounding context, human action in his context will have a corresponding reaction in his own self. I find the word "interaction" to be of interest in the above quotation: it seems to presuppose that the human being stands in relation to the substances in nature, whereupon interaction would prove otherwise problematic. It is to the nature of this interaction and supposed relationships that I will now turn to.

The interaction and relationship between the human self and his context are thought to be due to an aspect of the human self Næss introduces and calls:

[...] *ecological self*. We may be said to be in, and of, nature from the very beginning of ourselves. Society and human relationships are important, but our own self is much richer in its constitutive relationships. These relationships are not only those we have with other humans and the human community [...] but also those we have with other living beings.⁶²

As I understand it, the ecological self is an essential cognitive aspect or ability of the human being which allows him to realise that the relationships – with society, other human beings and other beings – he finds himself in are constitutive for the sense of his own self. In other words, the ecological self is essential to a human being.

⁶⁰ Næss, Arne (ed. Rothenberg, David), *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle – Outline of an Ecosophy*, 1989; p.164

⁶¹ Ibid; p.165

⁶² Næss, Arne (ed. Drengson, Alan & Devall, Bill), *The Ecology of Wisdom – Writings by Arne Næss*. Counterpoint, Berkley, 2010; p.82

A necessary requirement to attain a sensation of these relationships is that the human being is an active agent through the activity of identifying his own self with the beings in his context. As Næss puts it: “The *ecological self* of a person is that which this person identifies.”⁶³ In other words, the ecological self can be seen to be generated in the very action of the human being identifying himself with other beings. However, the concern here is whether the ecological self exists in all human beings, as a matter of fact, or comes solely through the identification with others. Where does it have its origin? Næss claims that the potentiality of ecological self lies within the human being, per definition, but it can also solely be realised in the active identification with others. Thus, I believe that Næss’s answer to my concern would be that the origin of ecological self is both in the human being and his identification.

However, I am bound to ask what the content of identification is. Næss explains that:

A process of identification is created by the very fact of your feeling something of yourself in something else [...] We human beings have a special quality in that we can also easily identify with other kinds of living creatures. Through this type of identification, we recognize something of ourselves in the other creature, or something of the other creature in ourselves. It gives an extended understanding of ourselves.⁶⁴

A few concepts in this quotation ought to be discussed further. First of all, as this quotation indicates, the human being has “a special quality” that allows him to identify himself with other beings by recognising something of himself in something else, or something of the other being in the own self. Næss does not establish which ability this “special quality” is – it might be related to the cognitive ability that allows us to distinguish family from strangers, or it might be related to the cognitive ability to recognise another being as a threat or not. Whatever the specific ability, it is worth noting that Næss implies that it is solely human beings that has this ability.

It seems that identification, as understood by Næss, requires the presence of an intimate relationship between the parties involved – relationships that are the content of the human being’s ecological self. In other words, the ecological self is constituted of the relationships a human being has with other human beings and non-human beings, relationships that are due to the human being’s identification with other beings which, in turn, generate a further understanding of the own self. I interpret “extended understanding” as the human being

⁶³ Ibid; p.83

⁶⁴ Næss, Arne, *Life’s philosophy – Reason and Feeling in a Deeper World*, 2008; p.113 - 114

realising that he has common features with other beings, which might serve as a new source of self-knowledge.

Second of all, Næss seems to claim that observation is important in cases of identification – or, more specifically, the realisation of the similarities of a human feature in another being. Næss does not clearly establish what the distinct human features are, which can be felt to exist in another being. I believe that it is not his intention either. Rather, the relevant point is that the content of identification is the sensation of a common feature between the human being and the other being. Should such a sensation not be present, I find it doubtful that identification would occur; quite the opposite, I believe the absence of such a sensation might result in alienation from other beings. It appears that in order for this sensation to occur it requires both an awareness of features within the own being and the ability to compare these features with another being and, thereby, locate the similarities between the own self and the other being. I hope the following example serves to illustrate this point: Charles throws a ball to a dog, who starts to play with it; by observing the dog, Charles realises the dog is happy. Charles realises further that he is also capable of feeling happy, a feeling that he has experienced before. Charles, therefore, identifies himself with the dog in that he realises that they are both capable of being happy. As Næss states, cases of identification are not restricted to encompass solely identification between human beings, but also other beings, as this example illustrates. However, I assume instances of identification are not always straightforward, especially when the being does not possess any direct means of communicating their own internal feelings, e.g. a plant. However Næss argues for a common feature that can rightly be ascribed to all beings which allows identification to occur with the most unlikely of beings, such as plants:

The meaning of life, and the joy we experience in living, is enhanced through increased self-realization, that is, through the fulfilment of potentials that each of us has, but that are never the same for any two living beings. Whatever the differences between beings, increased self-realization implies a broadening and deepening of the self. Because of an inescapable process of identification with others, with increasing maturity, the self is widened and deepened. We ‘see ourselves in others’.⁶⁵

Before proceeding in the analysis of this quotation it is worth asking if, since all beings experience joy in living and the ability for self-realisation, a sense of self can be ascribed to

⁶⁵ Næss, Arne (ed. Drengson, Alan & Devall, Bill), *The Ecology of Wisdom – Writings by Arne Næss*, 2010; p.82

other beings other than the human being. The response to this question is found in another paragraph:

Animals and plants have interests in the sense of ways of realizing inherent potentialities, which we can study only by interacting with these beings.⁶⁶

Thus, it seems that a sense of self is not ascribed to other beings. Rather, other beings contain potentialities relevant for their species which they have an interest to realise, for example the sunflower has the potential to grow tall and blossom and the fruit fly has the potential to find nutrients and reproduce. I believe that this is the content of self-realisation for other beings, even if they do not share the same sense of self as the human being. In an equal manner, the broadening and deepening of the self is equally species-dependent, such as the case of the sunflower's broadening of its "self" might entail in order to reach full development to flower and the production of seeds.

Furthermore, as this quotation states, it is the human being that can analyse this interest in other beings by interacting with them, and I interpret this interaction to be the human being's identification with other being. Following this ability Næss claims that "we must therefore assume *a kind of responsibility for our conduct towards others.*"⁶⁷ The origin of human being's responsibility towards other beings seems to be in his ability to see his own self in others; such perception might result in him being reluctant to inflict harm on other beings. In an equal manner he perceives the other beings' need for self-realisation. The content of this responsibility seems to be that the human being is responsible of respecting others' need for self-realisation and even performs actions that are furthering this need, which also seems to be the meaning of the "maturation" of the own self:

The greater our comprehension of our togetherness with other beings, the greater the identification, and the greater care we will take [...] We seek what is best for ourselves, but through the extension of the self, our 'own' best is also that of others.⁶⁸

A maturation of the self, as mentioned in the last quotation on p. 28, involves locating an aspect of the own self in others and thereby realising a relationship between the own self and other beings – a sensation that is sensed more acutely as the frequency of the identification with other beings increases. As a consequence, the pursuit of one's own self-interest is

⁶⁶ Ibid; p.86

⁶⁷ Næss, Arne (ed. Rothenberg, David), *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle – Outline of an Ecosophy*, 1989; p. 170. Original emphasis.

⁶⁸ Ibid; p.175

equally a pursuit of the interest of other beings, which I believe to be the interest of self-realisation. Næss affirms this in another passage:

A leading hypothesis of ecosophy T is that our self-fulfilment depends on theirs, because we have the capacity of seeing all living creatures as a part of the world we share.⁶⁹

In other words, the human being's ability to identify himself with other beings results in the realisation that all beings are integrated members of the same world, a membership that, I believe, to be equal in status for all beings. My reason for assuming this is Næss's usage of the word "share", which seems to indicate that all beings have a right to be a part of the world. The world of living beings, as understood by Næss, is necessarily a unity of beings, a unity that is created due to relationships between human beings and other beings. Thus, the human beings' role in the world cannot be underestimated since they are "the first kind of living beings we know of who have the potential to live in community with all other living beings."⁷⁰

The usage of the word "potential" is of interest in this context. By introducing this word, it appears that Næss introduces the possibility that relations and the sense of connection with others do not exist as a matter of fact but require action, in one form or the other, from the human being. In other words, the "community with all other living beings", as exemplifying Næss's overall commitment to holism, is not an essentiality holism notion, in the sense that the holism entailed does not exist *a priori*. Furthermore, usage of the word "potential", as referring to an ability of the human being, denotes that this ability is inherent to the essence of the human being; these relationships, in turn, are constitutional of the sense of himself (as discussed above) and the sense of "community with all other living beings". However, if following Næss's postulates, does this result in the claim that in the absence of the human being the sense of community would be lost? I believe that this would, probably, be the case, at least according to Næss. One can argue, therefore, that Næss does not discuss the potentiality of relationships or patterns of interaction between species independent of the human being; perhaps, such interactions can be rightly said to generate a sense of community? All in all, I find the usage of the word "community" to be slightly vague in this context and needs further clarification.

⁶⁹ Næss, Arne, *Life's philosophy – Reason and Feeling in a Deeper World*, 2008; p.115

⁷⁰ Næss, Arne (ed. Drengson, Alan & Devall, Bill), *The Ecology of Wisdom – Writings by Arne Næss*, 2010; p.96

Before presenting a brief summary of Næss's views regarding this topic, I am bound to ask if identifying the own self with another being results in a declining sense of the distinction between the own and the other being. Næss claims that this is not the case:

[...] 'the others' do not lose their individuality [...] When the human being A identifies with B, and the wider self of A comes to compromise B, B is not supposed to reject the individuality of B.⁷¹

How it come to be that "the others" do not lose their sense of individuality is not explained by Næss. It seems natural to assume, following the idea of identification, that this would indeed be the case. On the other hand, it can be argued that the human being's ability to identify himself with other beings allows him to realise both the other being as a distinct being, in its own right, and himself as a distinct being. Should this not be the case, it seems that identification loses its meaning in the sense that it would not be entirely clear which aspect is being identified with what aspect. It appears that, even in the experience of the own self-realisation is dependent on the self-realisation of others, the selves remain distinct, since the content of self-realisation (as discussed above) is species-dependent.

In these paragraphs I have presented Arne Næss's view of the human self and the constitutive nature of instances of identification and relationships with other beings in the world; it is through identifying himself with others that the sense of the own self is constituted. As I understand Næss, this inherent potential of the human being is due to one aspect of the overall notion of the human self, called the ecological self. It appears that this notion is of value for Næss, since it serves the purpose of supporting the idea that the abilities to identify with others and sense a relationship with other beings have their grounds in the human being. I believe that the ecological self and the important act of identifying oneself with others hold intrinsic value in the theories of Næss. I base this conclusion on the statement that the ecological self – and thereby the ability for identification with others – belong necessarily to the nature of the human being. At the same time, it can be said that acts of identification hold a certain extrinsic value since they allow the human being to realise that he is in community with other beings – a notion that seems to hold intrinsic value. It appears that the sense of relationship and identification with other beings results in a view of the world of living beings as a world where each and every being and their interests to realise their inherent potentials contains value in its own right. Therefore, the human beings, in relation with other equally

⁷¹ Næss, Arne (ed. Rothenberg, David), *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle – Outline of an Ecosophy*, 1989; p.198

valuable beings, belong to the one same world. This world, while seemingly not to be valuable for the attainment of anything else, has an inherent value in its own right – intrinsic value – and is characterised by a sense of unity of beings.

2.2.2 Essential sensation of Community with Others – Max Scheler

Even Max Scheler argues that the human beings and non-human beings cannot be fully understood without taking into account their environment. Scheler establishes in *Formalism*:

In order to have a correct foundation of the science of biology (and especially physiology), one must always begin with the *basic relation of an organism to its environment*. This relation *constitutes* the essence of a life-process. It consists in the *dynamic variations* that are the condition of changes in an organism *as well as* of changes in the environment. Such changes are therefore always conditioned *simultaneously* by the variations in processes ‘between’ organism and environment. Hence an ‘environment’ belongs to any unit of life, just as an ‘organism’ does.⁷²

I find Scheler’s claim interesting that, in the study of any organism in order to gain a proper understanding of any being, it is necessary that the analysis has as its point of departure the relationship between the organism and its environment. This initial statement and claim that the relation “*constitutes* the essence of a life-process” points to that Scheler is of the view that the relationship between organism and environment is rather profound. In my interpretation, relationship between organism and environment is the nucleus of the continuation and development of the organism (as I understand the word “process” in this context) and change in environment equals a simultaneous change in the organism. Following the statements in this quotation it seems that the nature of the relationship is conceived as a unity: not a relationship of relating A with B, but a relationship where A is B and vice versa. Taken in its totality, this “unit of life” has, therefore, both organism and environment.

Taking this initial postulate as my point of departure, I will now present associated topics of interest for Scheler. One such topic is, evidently, an inquiry into the human being and the relationships he is experiencing with fellow human beings. As with most concepts in Scheler’s theories, the sensation of being in a relationship with other human beings originates in person “[...]so also in every execution of an act is the person given to himself in self-experience as a *member of a community of persons which encompasses him*.”⁷³

⁷² Scheler, Max (gen.ed. Wild, John, ass.ed. Edie, James M.), *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values – A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, 2009; p.154-155. Original emphasis.

⁷³ Ibid; p.519. Original emphasis.

In other words, when the person performs acts, not only does it experience all the possible acts a person can be thought to perform, but also the sensation of being a member of a community of other human beings. Scheler terms this concept the *collective person*:

We must designate as *collective persons* the various *centers of experiencing* [Er-lebens] in this endless totality of living with one another, insofar as these centers fully correspond to the definitions of the person which we gave earlier.⁷⁴

This quotation presents the basic definition of the “collective person”. In my understanding, this form of person is a centre (in Scheler’s word) of individual persons experiencing together: this could be a community of human beings, a sense of national belonging, a sense of sharing a common faith, etc. The collective person seems to be the shared sense of being united under a common cause or goal, a sense of belonging together that presupposes that the human being is, inherently, a social being. Scheler explains further:

An imaginary Robinson Crusoe endowed with cognitive-theoretical faculties would also coexperience his *being a member of a social unit* in his experiencing the *lack* of fulfilment of acts of act-types constituting a person in general.⁷⁵

As Scheler states in this quotation, a completely isolated person would experience a sensation of lacking a community with other fellow human beings, thereby sensing that he is, indeed, a member of a social unity. The reason for this sensation is that the human being is constituted as such as to have an inherent notion of a community with other human beings. A similar idea can be found in the theories of Næss in the notion of the ecological self, where the relationship with other beings is realised. One thing ought to be addressed in this context: to evoke the tale of Robinson Crusoe to prove this point seems slightly problematic, in my view, since this fictional character had experienced a sense of community with others prior to his isolation – it is therefore clear that he would experience the lack of a community. However, imagine a person who is being cast from human community prior to him gaining a memorable experience of being part of a community: would this person equally sense that he is lacking something? To follow Scheler’s example, would the fictional character Mowgli sense that he is lacking a belonging to a collective person? In other words, the example Scheler provides falls short, in my view, since it is based on prior experience of a human community – I would rather find it interesting to discuss whether or not a person without prior experience of community could sense the lack of something in his existence. This concern aside, Scheler

⁷⁴ Ibid; p.520. Original emphasis.

⁷⁵ Ibid; p.521. Original emphasis.

further states that the sensation of belonging to a collective person is ingrained in the individual person:

The world of the individual, the *individual world*, is the content of all experiencing in singularizing acts and acts of experiencing-for-oneself. This is the *singular world*, which has as its concrete subject on the act side of the *individual person*. Hence an individual person *and* a collective person ‘belong’ to every *finite* person. Both factors are essentially necessary sides of a concrete whole of person and world. Thus individual and collective persons can be related to each other *within* every possible concrete finite person, and the relation of one to the other is experienceable.⁷⁶

Thus, every individual has an individual person, which was discussed in the previous subheading, which experiences the events of the singular individual, thereby generating a singular individual “world” – or perhaps “perspective” as the slightly more comprehensible word. Scheler seems to claim in this quotation that, in the same manner as an individual world can be ascribed to the person, so can a sensation of collective person be ascribed to him. Both of these persons belong to the individual human being as stated in this quotation and contribute to unity of the human being, in my understanding. Thus, it belongs to the very nature of the human being to have a sensation of both the own person and collective person:

The knowledge that each person does not exist only for his own sake, but is also a *member* of an immeasurable whole composed of spiritual beings, is not something we learn by chance but is implanted in the very nature of the mind.⁷⁷

This quotation seems to answer the concern raised above: even Mowgli would have a sensation of a membership in a collective person. It appears that the sensation of social belonging lies in the very biology of the human being: it is a feature of his very nature to be a social being and find himself in a community with other human beings, even in the absence of actual community – one can liken this essential feature of the human nature with the claim that it is essential for human beings to have a sense of person. Though one concern comes to mind here and I will return to the fictional character of Mowgli to illustrate: how does it come to be that a human being brought up in complete isolation would experience a sense of community with other human beings if he has never experienced the existence of other human beings? Would it not make sense to assume that this human being would either form a community with other beings or not a community at all, instead of continuing his existence in

⁷⁶ Ibid; p.522. Original emphasis.

⁷⁷ Scheler, Max (ed. McAleer, Graham), *On the Eternal in Man*. Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick & London; 2010; p.267. Original emphasis.

complete social isolation? Bearing in mind the first quotation discussed on p.32 I will leave the latter option aside and focus on the former alternative. In this scenario it might be the case that Mowgli perceives himself as being an integrated member of the community of other beings in the jungle and thereby not sensing a lack of community with other human beings. Although, it might be that over time, Mowgli would realise that his physique and different appearance distinguish him from the community that he finds himself in and result in the sensation that he does not belong as a full member in this community. Rather, the experience of being a full member of a community seems to be dependent on equality in physiological and psychological capacities; the human being can solely be truly a member of the community entailed in the collective person with other human beings. In other words, even if it might be possible to be in a community with other beings, I believe that Scheler claims that this community is not the same as the sense of community experienced in the collective person.

So far it is clear that the collective person is a community of individual persons and that the two are related. However:

The collective person with its world is *not fully* experienced in *any* of its member-persons; it is given as something going beyond the member-persons in terms of duration, content, and range of effectiveness. Indeed, it belongs to the essence of all collective persons to have member-persons who are *also* individual persons; but the collective person's existence, with its strict continuity as a collective person, is not connected with the existence of the same individual persons.⁷⁸

It is not entirely clear what it entails to experience the collective person in full or even which being could do so. This question aside, the claim in this quotation seems to be that the existence of the collective person is dependent on the presence of individual persons but not on specific persons; the collective person will continue its existence in the event that those specific persons are replaced. However, one must ask if the content and general composition of the collective person are altered as other individual persons find themselves in constellation with one another, thereby generating a communal collective person. Scheler does not address this question. The reason behind this not being a noteworthy concern for Scheler might be that his primary aim is to establish that collective persons necessarily exist, and that the notion

⁷⁸ Scheler, Max (gen.ed. Wild, John, ass.ed. Edie, James M.), *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values – A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, 2009; p.523. Original emphasis.

thereof is integrated in the human beings' mind. Therefore, its continuity is assured through the continued existence of new human beings.

At this point I hope it is clear that the collective person is a community of individual persons; a sensation that is inherent in the human mind and, therefore, not dependent on the presence of actual persons. I now turn to discuss the form of interaction that takes place between individual persons in the collective person:

A social unit is constituted in *that* kind of coexperiencing of reliving (cofeeling, costriving, cothinking, cojudging, etc.) which reveals some '*understanding*' of the members of this unit [...] It is in this immediate experience and understanding, in which [...] there is *no division* of any kind between the experience of self and that of the other or between bodily expression and experience in the comprehension of member *A* and that of member *B*, that the basic social unit which I call the *life-community* [...] is constituted.⁷⁹

In their immediate experience of being members in the collective person, there is no distinction between the experiences of the own self and the experiences belonging to the other person; experiences are understood as an all-encompassing experience of the community, or life-community in Scheler's words. Although, to gain a proper understanding of the experiences of the other:

[...] presupposes a clear *distinction* between 'self-experience' and 'understanding' and, consequently between the self-experienced and the understood (with primary retention of one's own judgments), as well as the primary experienced attribution of these contents to two *different* single men.⁸⁰

To realise that the experience of the own person is distinct and different from the experience of the other person seems to be of importance for Scheler when relating to others. In my interpretation, if the parties involved fail to realise the distinction between the selves it would be problematic to sense which traits or experiences belong to whom. Furthermore, in my view, the realisation of the distinction between oneself and others can contribute to a more accurate response towards another individual person. For example: if Jonathan is feeling sad, Jamie can accurately respond to Jonathan's feeling in the spontaneous sensation that he and Jonathan are two distinct persons. If Jamie were to not realise this, he might confuse Jonathan's feeling of sadness with his own emotional state and it would be problematic for him to respond in an accurate manner to Jonathan's sadness. The example here mentioned can

⁷⁹ Ibid; p.526. Original emphasis.

⁸⁰ Ibid; p.528. Original emphasis.

rightly be described as an occurrence of Jamie showing Jonathan sympathy or pity. Scheler defines these instances of communication between human beings as *fellow-feeling*:

*All fellow-feeling involves intentional reference of the feeling of joy or sorrow to the other person's experience [...]. That is, my commiseration and his suffering are phenomenologically two different facts [...].*⁸¹

To feel sympathy for another human being, therefore, entails a recognition of the feeling in the other human being as having this feeling, and that the feeling of sympathy aroused in the own individual is purely a response to that feeling. Thus, the concept of fellow-feeling highlights ways human beings can relate to one another. As Scheler puts it:

The sole significance of fellow-feeling as a datum for metaphysics can therefore lie only in its disposing us to realize, that independently existing persons in mutual relation to one another are by nature *predisposed for a communal mode of life* and are teleologically adapted to one another (regardless of whether and how far they actually live together). It is this natural predisposition which is intuitively grasped in fellow-feeling as a harmonious fulfilment of human worth, and there attains conscious expression.⁸²

As I understand this quotation, the occurrence of fellow-feeling supports the above notion of the collective person, in the sense that the act of fellow-feeling can solely occur between human beings that are in relation to one another. Scheler seems to indicate that, in the same manner that the human beings inherently are members of a collective person, so are they inherently capable of acts of fellow-feeling. Should they not be in a community with one another, fellow-feeling would be pointless since there would be no other human beings that this feeling would be directed towards; it is in the very act of fellow-feeling that the human being intuitively realises that they are members in a community with other human beings. I find it interesting that Scheler sees these two notions to be equally inherent in the nature of the human being. The question then arises as to whether or not it is necessary for the human being to exhibit fellow-feeling to other human beings in order to realise that he is in a community with other human beings in the collective person. Perhaps the sensation of being in a community with others would still be realised in absence of acts of fellow-feeling? The content in this quotation seems to indicate that it is in fellow-feeling that the community of human beings is materialised and brought to the consciousness of the human being. What the

⁸¹ Scheler, Max (ed. Stark, Werner), *The Nature of Sympathy*, 2009; p.13. Original emphasis.

⁸² *Ibid*; p.66. Original emphasis.

quotation does not state, however, is whether this is the sole source of this realisation or if there might be other means to attain the same realisation of collective person.

As stated above, in fellow-feeling the human being realises that there is a distinction between the feelings belonging to the various human beings involved. Yet, there are other means to emotionally relate to others; one of them is identification with others where this sense of differentiation between feelings ceases to be:

The true *sense of emotional unity*, the act of identifying one's own self with that of another, is only a heightened form, a limiting case as it were, of infection.⁸³ It represents a limit in that here it is not only the separate process of feeling in another that is unconsciously taken as one's own, but his self (in all its basic attitudes), that is identified with one's own self.⁸⁴

In identification, as this quotation states, attributes in other selves are believed to be attributes of the own self. It is, therefore, not the same phenomenon as fellow-feeling where the selves and the emotions involved remain necessarily distinct throughout the experience. Although emotional identification might not be appropriate when aiming to exhibit sympathy towards another human being, its significance for the understanding of other beings cannot be disregarded. Scheler writes:

[...] to be aware of *any* organism as alive, [...] minimum of undifferentiated identification is necessary; we shall see how the simplest vicarious emotion, the most elementary fellow-feeling and over and above these the capacity for understanding between minds, are built up on the basis of the primitive givenness of 'the other'; and by that time the capacity for a specialized identification with the particular dynamic pattern of another creature's lifestream will seem altogether less peculiar.⁸⁵

To identify oneself with another organism is a requirement to realise that it is alive. As simple or primitive as this act might be, it seems that Scheler claims that this capacity is the very basis for being able to exhibit fellow-feeling with the adjacent understanding between the minds and others. Failing to identify oneself with others in this manner seems to entail an incapacity to exhibit relevant feelings associated with sympathy. As I understand Scheler, by identifying oneself with another organism is, in his usage of the term, to allow oneself to become completely immersed in the other and thereby experiencing the world as the other

⁸³ Emotional infection occurs when one human being (A) fails to realise the distinction between one person's (B) sorrow and A's feeling sympathy towards B. Rather A feels the sorrow himself and has thereby been infected with the emotion. See Scheler, Max (ed. Stark, Werner), *The Nature of Sympathy*, 2009;14 – 18 for a full account.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*; p.18. Original emphasis.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*; p.31. Original emphasis.

experiences it; at its basic level is the experience of being alive, which in itself can arguably be a sensation known to each and every organism. Furthermore, having mastered the basic identification with another being, thereby determining if it is dead or alive, allows acts of identification to extend to other features and other organisms, for example its experience of being scared or calm. In other words, the act of identifying oneself with another organism constitutes a valuable source of knowledge about it. As Scheler put it, identification:

[...] at the organic level, and only by learning on the intellectual plane, to *understand* the form and pattern of other ways of life, can we hope for a gradual *smoothing-out* of the private idiosyncrasies and limitations besetting each of us like a horse in blinkers.⁸⁶

Comprehensive understanding of another organism requires both an act of identification with said organism whilst utilising one's cognitive ability to learn about the specific organism's internal composition and the reason it has for acting in certain ways in its external environment. I believe that the other point Scheler aims to make is that this understanding involves a realisation that the internal composition and workings of the specific organism – conceivably the human being – is not the sole way of being in the world; rather there are other organisms in the world with their own individual way of being. Put differently, I interpret the second part of this quotation as a subtle challenge to the view that one organism is superior to other organisms.

More specifically, Scheler seems to firmly challenge the view that the specific organism superior to other organisms is the human being:

We must dissociate ourselves, firmly and unreservedly, from the gross error of regarding the sense of unity with the universe as merely an 'emphatic' projection of specifically human emotions into animals, plants or inanimate objects [...] On the contrary, it is man the microcosmos, an actual embodiment of the reality of existence in *all* its forms, who is himself *cosmomorphic*, and as such the possessor of sources of *insight* into all that is comprised in the nature of the cosmos.⁸⁷

Thus, to claim that the human being is projecting his own interest onto other organisms when identifying with them is an erroneous view; instead it is due to the cognitive capacity of the human being that he has the ability to identify himself with the other organism in a manner that acknowledges the species-specific trait of said organism. I understand the ability that the human being possesses in order to conduct identification in this manner is the ability to

⁸⁶ Ibid; p.32. Original emphasis.

⁸⁷ Ibid; p.105. Original emphasis.

distance himself from his own traits and become fully immersed in the traits of the other organism – that I believe is the content of the definition of the human being as cosmomorphic.

As a concluding statement I will linger on Scheler's statement, "sense of unity with the universe" (see above quotation). As I understand this statement, taking into account the discussion about identification and the previous discussion, the sense of unity with the universe is attained in the identification with another organism. It is worth remembering that identification, as being a method of human socialising, is defined to occur when the distinction between the singular selves ceases to be; the organisms involved in this act can be perceived as two organisms in unity. As discussed above, the singular act of identifying oneself with another organism or exhibiting fellow-feeling towards another human being results in further identification with other organisms. I believe that this is the very meaning of the statement "sense of unity with the universe", a sense that does not have as its priority the human interests or desires but acknowledges equally the unique composition of the organisms inherent in the universe. Thus, the usage of the term universe leads to associations that the unity entailed is something more extensive than the immediate situation of identification with another organism.

The sensation of being in unity with the universe is a skill that requires cultivation and that originates in the identification:

[...] among *men in respect of their mutual status as individual centres of life*. For it seems to be more or less a rule (of which we have as yet no further understanding) that the actual realization of the capacity for cosmic identification cannot take place directly in relation to external Nature, but is mediated indirectly [...]. Man's point of entry into identification with the life of the cosmos lies where that life is nearest and in closest affinity to his own, namely, *in another man*.⁸⁸

Identification with the universe, as this quotation states, is not a straightforward process: due to apparent differences in internal compositions and means of expression, to mention a few. To fully master the ability to rightly identify with other organisms, the human being identifies himself with other members of his species, i.e. other human beings. It might also be that such course of action is the most natural for the human being due to their communal membership in the collective person, where the recognition of the existence of other human beings is known. I interpret Scheler's notion of the collective person (centres of experiencing, see

⁸⁸ Ibid; p.108. Original emphasis.

above) as allowing the human being to recognise other human beings as “individual centres of life”. In the absence of such a centre it would be problematic to engage, and therefore identify, with fellow human beings and, by extension, other organisms – the sense of unity with the universe would be lost.

As the discussions in the above paragraphs state, Scheler argues that individual human beings are inherently in community with each other due to their membership in the collective person. This membership is not dependent on the actual proximity of other human beings, but rather, as I interpret Scheler, exists in the human mind as a concept. As members in collective persons the human beings exhibit acts of fellow-feeling towards, and identification with, other human beings – acts of identification that, in themselves, have the potentiality of generating understanding and knowledge about other organisms in the universe. These acts, in turn, allow the human being to acquire a sense of unity with the universe. Briefly returning to the first paragraph of my inquiry, where Scheler establishes that the study of any organism necessarily requires a study into the environment of the organism since these two notions constitute the essence of a life-process: I believe that an essential part of a human being’s environment is, indeed, other organisms. Thus, I am assuming that organisms in relation with the human being are constitutional of the human self, or person as Scheler might define it, and in an equal manner the human being as present in the environment of other organisms is constitutional of the organism itself.

Taking these notions in their totality, I interpret Scheler as ascribing intrinsic value to the inherent occurrence of person and collective person in the human being. However, the notions appear to hold extrinsic value to a certain extent, in the sense that it is due to the presence of person and collective person that the human being realise that he is in a unity with the universe, which appears to hold intrinsic value. Acts of fellow-feeling can arguably be seen as holding both intrinsic and extrinsic value: intrinsic in the sense that it belongs necessarily to the human being to perform acts of fellow-feeling towards other human beings, and extrinsic since such acts allow the human being to realise his belonging in the collective person. Acts of identification, however, appear to hold extrinsic value since their values are to be understood in relation to the notions of fellow-feeling, collective person and sense of unity with the universe. Even if Scheler claims that such notions cannot be properly grasped and understood, in the absence of identification its value remains extrinsic since the value is derived from these notions.

2.2.3 The Inadequacy in the Common Definition of “self” – Gregory Bateson

Gregory Bateson equally argues that organisms are in relationship with the environment. Bateson argues differently from Næss and Scheler in the claim that the “self” cannot be clearly demarcated. He writes:

In principle, if we desire to explain or understand the mental aspect of any biological event, we must take into account the system - that is, the network of *closed* circuits, within which that biological event is determined. But when we seek to explain the behaviour of a man or any other organism, this ‘system’ will usually *not* have the same limits as the ‘self’ – as this term is commonly (and variously) understood.⁸⁹

The understanding of a singular biological event, as this quotation indicates, is based on the presence of surrounding, perhaps equally singular biological events relating to each other in a system. Such a biological event might be the ice caps melting: to fully understand this event it is necessary to consider the dynamics of increased temperature in the atmosphere and the decrease of the ozone layer, to mention a few. These singular aspects as being their own closed circuits constitute together in relation to the overall biological event of the ice caps melting. Worth discussing further is Bateson’s claim, in this quotation, that biological events, such as the ice caps melting, have a mental aspect. I believe that, if following Bateson’s definition of mind earlier and considering his background in cybernetics, the mental aspect in biological events must consist of parts in interaction with one another (1st requirement of mind).

To understand the behaviour of an organism, the same line of argument seems to hold. In order to fully understand my act of reading Bateson and writing a thesis it is necessary to consider the presence of myself, a laptop and the contents of a book in relation to one another as constituting a system. As Bateson sees it, such a system cannot be ascribed the common definition of “self”. Rather, I believe that Bateson conceives this common understanding of “self” to be far too narrow to properly grasp the inherent workings in this and similar examples. One cause for concern in relation to this quotation is that Bateson does not explicitly articulate the common definition of the “self” that he opposes – it appears he believes there to be an established consensus regarding the nature and understanding of the self. If Bateson believes there is such a consensus, which he opposes, I believe that to articulate this view would provide further clarity to the arguments Bateson outlines against it.

⁸⁹ Bateson, Gregory, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 2000; p.317. Original emphasis.

Furthermore, I find it problematic to introduce the word “usually” in this quotation since it seems to indicate that this is not always the case, or rather it opens up the possibility of instances where certain behaviour of an organism can rightly be located solely in the “self”, as this term is commonly understood. Bateson does not provide an example of such behaviour or explains this further.

Even if Bateson does not answer these concerns, he argues further that the self cannot be solely located within the boundaries of the organism:

If you ask somebody about the localization and boundaries of the self, these confusions are immediately displayed. Or consider a blind man with a stick. Where does the blind man’s self begin? [...] These questions are nonsense, because the stick is a pathway along which differences are transmitted under transformation, so that to draw a delimiting line *across* this pathway is to cut off a part of the systemic circuit which determines the blind man’s locomotion.⁹⁰

I believe the underlying idea of this statement is the view found in cybernetics and systems theory, where the world consists of closed cybernetic circuits that, in relation to one another, generate a cybernetic system. Bateson’s intention with this example, I believe, is to argue that the blind man and the stick, as two closed cybernetic circuits relate to one another in order to constitute the overall system which is the blind man’s self. The statement that the contents in a cybernetic system constitute the blind man’s self is based on the usage of the word “pathway” in this quotation, a word that I understand to indicate a path between two, or more, locations, thereby connecting them. The locations in the above example can arguably be the blind man, the stick and the external environment; although the stick might be the pathway itself. Regardless of the classifications of these features, Bateson seems to argue that their presence and constellation contribute to the overall sensation of the blind man’s self. As Bateson puts it: “‘Inside’ and ‘outside’ are not appropriate metaphors for inclusion and exclusion when we are speaking of the self.”⁹¹

I believe an initial definition of “self”, as perceived by Bateson, can now be reached. The self is a system containing various elements, such as the human being and various artefacts (defined as closed circuits in the latter quotation) whose specific relation to one another generates an overall system that can be described as a sensation of the own self. The human being, as an organism, seems to be considered, therefore, as yet another feature in a system

⁹⁰ Ibid; p.318. Original emphasis.

⁹¹ Bateson, Gregory (ed. Montuori, Alfonso), *Mind and Nature a Necessary Unity*, 2002; p.123

with other organisms. The same seems to apply in the understanding of any organism even if Bateson does not articulate whether or not other organisms can be ascribed a sensation of self. Returning, for a moment, to my example of my act of writing a thesis, where my own self can be defined as a system containing me, the laptop and the contents of the book in relation. Imagine that I would stop with this act and engage in yet another activity, such as cooking dinner: has my own self changed since I am no longer in contact with either the laptop or the contents of the book – but rather with the various utensils and ingredients in the pantry? Or am I still the same “self” as I was when engaged in the previous activity? Bateson does not clearly articulate an answer to this inquiry. Following the line of thought initiated above, it can be argued that I am the same organism, but the sensation of my own self has altered slightly due to the presence of different features, whose relation determines the overall sensation of the self. The answer to whether or not my own self has changed in accordance with the alternative situation of cooking dinner appears to be “yes” and “no”: yes in the sense that the context is different and thereby determining that the overall system can be seen as constructing the sensation of self; and no in the sense that I am still the same organism. It appears that Bateson’s account of the self conceives that every single element in the surroundings has the potential to generate an overall system, which is the very sensation of the self or sensation of the own organism. I understand that sensations of these kinds are dependent on the relation between the contents in the systems, i.e. the relation between myself, the laptop and the contents of the book or my relation with the utensils and ingredients in the pantry. Nevertheless, it remains that Bateson does not firmly establish the possibility for fluctuations in the sensation of the own organism or self nor the exact content of such a sensation and I believe that this allows for further questioning and critique of this theory.

The above discussion indicates that Bateson attaches little or no relevance, in the act of thinking, to singular features, such as the individual human being or the laptop. Rather, it is these features in relation within a system that hold such relevance. Bateson claims:

What ‘thinks’ and engages in ‘trial and error’ is the man *plus* the computer *plus* the environment. And the lines between man, computer, and environment are purely artificial, fictitious lines. They are lines *across* the pathways along which information or difference is

transmitted. They are not boundaries of the thinking system. What thinks is the total system which engages in trial and error, which is man plus environment.⁹²

As I understand this quotation, mental processes – thinking – are located within the system as a whole and not solely in the human being. Rather, it is the human being in relation to the computer and the environment that “thinks”. I base this statement on the reoccurrence of the word “pathways” and the introduction of the word “lines”; one possible interpretation of the purpose of the “pathways” and “lines” within the system, which was first articulated in conjunction with the previous paragraph, is to create a relationship or a connection between these parts where information or differences can be conveyed. Should such a connection not be present, I believe it would be problematic for information or differences to be transmitted. Therefore, to separate the mind from the system itself and locating it to within the human being, thereby distinguishing it from the other features within the system, is erroneous. However, this quotation does not address how the conveyance of information or differences is done: is there information present in one part of the system that is made intelligible for another part in the system – and what specific feature in these parts allows for information to be transmitted between these parts? Bateson does not provide an answer to these questions – the content of this quotation does not appear to be of guidance in reaching an overall conclusion either. What I believe can be said, however, is that the nature of the information transmitted – following the definition of information as being differences, as referenced in the previous section – is that it is exclusively differences between the parts in the system. In other words, it is the difference between the man and the computer that is the information being transmitted. It might be the case that such a difference cannot be realised in the absence of a connection, or a relationship, between the man and the computer, thus the occurrence of “pathways” or “lines” between these two. Within the system, the relation between the man and the computer comes to be, which is a source of knowledge; it is the man, the computer and the environment in relation that generate a system engaging in the act of thinking. I believe this to be very core message in this quotation.

From the above discussion, I hope it is clear that the individual organisms are conceived to be in a connection or relation, of one form or another, with the features in its environment – an overall connection or relation that Bateson terms “system”. Before reaching an overall conclusion, I find it worth discussion the following quotation:

⁹² Bateson, Gregory, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 2000; p.491. Original emphasis.

The flexible environment must also be included along with the flexible organism because, as I have already said, the organism which destroys its environment destroys itself. The unit of survival is a flexible organism-in-its-environment.⁹³

The claim in this quotation bears resemblance to Scheler's view that the study of any organism necessitates a study into the environment of the organism, and that an amendment in either the organism or the environment results in an amendment in the other. As different from Scheler however, Bateson seems to argue that the unit of survival refers to the unit of the organism whereas Scheler determines the unity of survival to entail both the organism and the environment. Nevertheless, the continued survival of the organism requires it to be flexible. I believe that the requirement of flexibility is in accordance with Bateson's reluctance to restrict the sensation of the human self and the own organism as solely something internal; rather, the self – and arguably the organism – is defined and understood by the reference to its position in various systems containing relevant information (differences) for the system itself. As the organism finds itself in a variety of systems throughout the course of its life cycle (either writing a thesis or cooking dinner) new information is present, which I understand to be what Bateson implies to with the statement "flexible environment". Should the organism not be flexible and to a certain extent receptive to the occurrence of new information, it would be problematic if it could perform the actions necessary for its continued survival, i.e. I would not be able to cook the dinner *in order to* gain the necessary nutrients to continue writing my thesis. A trivial example perhaps, but it is my intention to illustrate the point I believe Bateson seeks to make: that the organism and the environment can arguably be seen to be in a relation with one another.

I find, however, the one concern with this quotation to be that Bateson does not establish what entails when an organism "destroys its environment", or if each and every organism has the capacity to do such a thing – it would not be the wishful conduct of the organism to destroy its environment since that would result in the destruction of the own organism, which can arguably be a state of non-existence that no organism strives towards.

Before proceeding to a summary and a conclusion regarding Bateson's view on this matter, it is worth noting that the above exegesis might arguably contain certain concepts that yet remain unclear and not fully elaborated. Nevertheless, my intentions have been to provide

⁹³ *Ibid*; p.457

interpretations on the material in order to shed some light on the message Bateson seeks to convey, which I believe now can be expressed.

The human being's, and any other organism's, constitution is due to its position within systems where other organisms and objects are present. The information present in these systems is defined as essentially being differences, a statement based on Bateson's definition of mind and mental processes made in the previous section. Due to the positioning of human beings and organisms in systems, Bateson argues that the self cannot be solely located exclusively within the boundaries of the organism; rather, the sensation of self, or perhaps even the sensation of the own organism, is due to its position within systems which necessarily contain the presence of other organisms and features. Through the pathways within the system, it can be argued that there is a relation between the organism and the content in the system which contributes to the overall sensation of the own organism. The system is characterised by information (differences) that is being transmitted between the parts in the system; it would be problematic should there not be a connection or relation between these parts. It is, however, worth noting two things that distinguish Bateson's account from that of Næss's and Scheler's: firstly, they do not seem to insist that the self cannot be clearly demarcated, but rather the self (or person) is argued to clearly belong to the human being; secondly, Bateson does not seem to argue for the possibility or the act of coming to realisation that the sensation of the own organism is dependent on its position in a system, and thus influenced by the presence of other organisms and features. In the theories of Næss the human being is coming to this realisation through the act of identification, and in Scheler's theories it is equally in the act of fellow-feeling and identification that relationships are known. One possible reason for these differences might be due to the philosophers' different backgrounds: Næss as coming from a positivistic tradition, Scheler from a continental whilst Bateson from a cybernetic and systems theoretical perspective.

I interpret Bateson as ascribing intrinsic value to these systems since it appears that they are not valuable for the attainment of something else – it is the system, not the isolated organisms, that holds this value.

2.2.4 Conclusion

The topic of inquiry in this section has been the idea that the human beings – and other organisms – are in relationships with other organisms in their environment as featured in the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson. As in the previous section the

philosophers utilise different concepts in order to argue for this notion and explain different means of how the human being can come to the realisation of these relationships. Næss introduces the concept of the so-called ecological self in order to argue that the capacity for identification with other organisms is inherent within the nature of the human being; through the act of identification with other beings, the human being realises that every being has an inherent need for self-realisation. Scheler argues along similar lines in that the presence of the own individual person allows the human being to acquire a sensation of a community with other persons – through acts of both fellow-feeling and identification with others, the human being comes to realise that he is in a relationship with other human beings, organisms and his environment. Gregory Bateson argues for the notion that the human being's and other organism's constitution is due to their position in various systems that necessarily contain other organisms and entities; the system itself contains pathways or lines where information or differences are being transmitted between the parts in the system, such as the own organism, other organisms and objects, which, arguably, contribute to the overall sensation of the own organism. Albeit utilising different notions, the philosophers all argue that the human being has an essential capacity to be in a relationship with his surroundings which contribute to his overall constitution. These relationships, as being an expression of integration between parts, in turn generate a sensation of a whole (in the sense of belonging to one world, or collective person or as a part in a system) which is argued to hold intrinsic value.

2.3 The Existence of and Participation in a World-Wide Metaphysical System

This final section considers Arne Næss's, Max Scheler's and Gregory Bateson's common idea regarding the existence of a large metaphysical system that encompasses the world. Due to its existence the world is necessarily a unity, a central notion in the philosophers' theories as the previous section indicates. Therefore, some of the arguments presented previously are also reoccurring in this section. Worth bringing to the reader's attention are that the statements the philosophers express in conjunction with this topic are highly speculative and carry resemblances to religious postulates. As a result, the philosophers do not, at times, explain their underlying arguments or reasons for holding a view for true which make it problematic to agree with certain claims made.

2.3.1 Sense of Participation in and Continuation of a Greater Self is due to Identification with Others – Arne Næss

In the previous section, Arne Næss made clear of his belief that identification is of prime importance for human beings to realise their position in a vast network of relationships. However, through the process of identification the human beings further realise their position and participation in a larger system – the *greater Self*.

The greater Self and the self are distinct but related, according to Næss. He defines the two as:

The self with a small *s* is the so-called social self. When people ask, ‘What are you?’ the answer is usually what you are within society. But there is something that deserves the name ‘the great Self’. That embraces everything which you identify. To identify in this way gives emotional reactions in the domain of sympathy and empathy. A process of identification is created by the very fact of your feeling something of yourself in something else.⁹⁴

As this quotation indicates, Næss ascribes a sense of two selves to the human being: one allows him to identify his role in society, and the other Self refers to everything he can identify himself with. Both selves seem to be equally accessible to him: the former through his activities in society and the latter through identification with others, thus wider in its scope than the self since it includes other beings.

In this initial quotation Næss is not explicitly determining the features of the great Self. Rather, the self here entailed is referred vaguely to as “something”⁹⁵ which “embraces everything which you identify”. Thus, I believe that Næss does not conceive this self to belong to a transcendent or metaphysical being, but arguably to refer to a sense of belonging with other beings – I base this interpretation on Næss’s insistence that it is through acts of identification that this self is known. However, it remains that the usage of the term “self” in referring to this idea might give rise to certain misconceptions and concerns.

One cause for concern in this quotation is that Næss is mentioning that the identification, which gives the human a sense of the greater Self, stimulates empathy and sympathy within him which result in a feeling of self-recognition in something else. The reason for my concern is that the identification seems one-sided, in the sense that it is solely the human being that

⁹⁴ Næss, Arne, *Life’s philosophy – Reason and Feeling in a Deeper World* 2008; p.113 - 114

⁹⁵ Næss refers speculatively to this “something” as perhaps being “ [...] that part of God that lives in all that is living – the principle of creation?” (Næss, Arne, *Life’s philosophy – Reason and Feeling in a Deeper World*, 2008; p.114). Due to Næss speculative tone and not answering the question I found it doubtful that he would adhere to the religious postulate of a monotheistic god implicit in this question.

has a sense of the greater Self – it is he that identifies and feels sympathy and empathy toward other beings and objects in the world, not the other way around. It is the human being who gets the sense of the greater Self through this process and this process of identification indicates that he feels something of himself “in something else”. All in all, it seems that this notion is solely relevant for the human being; other beings do not have this aspect in their being, as they seem to solely function as the receiver of the human being’s identification and to serve as a means to an end for him, which is to get an experience of the greater Self.

The process of identification is, thus, of relevance for the human being to attain a sense of the greater Self. Næss claims that: “From the identification process stems unity, and since the unity is of a gestalt character, the wholeness is attained.”⁹⁶ Through identification, human beings (due to the discussion in the previous paragraph, I assume that Næss implies solely human beings) perceive the world (and even the universe?) as a unity. Næss further states:

So we are more than our egos, and are not fragments, hardly small and powerless. By identifying with greater wholes, we partake in the creation and maintenance of this whole. *We thereby share in its greatness.*⁹⁷

As this quotation indicates Næss seems to be of the opinion that the narrow ego is of little importance: it is rather in the act of identification that he creates, participates and maintains greater wholes which is of higher value. It remains that human beings ought to broaden their sense of self in order to connect more intimately with the greater Self.⁹⁸ As I understand Næss, this is done through identifying oneself with others and thereby localising oneself, to a certain extent, in something else. A process that can arguably be seen as a highly personal experience, and result in an equally personal realisation that every human and non-human beings are members of a world-wide community which further results in that “new dimensions of satisfaction are revealed.”⁹⁹ It is, however, not entirely clear what Næss entails with the term “satisfaction”, or why it comes to be that human beings feel satisfied. It might entail a psychological assurance that one is not alone, a feeling that might soothe a troubled mind or involve a sense of being at one with the universe. Whatever the intention behind this statement from Næss it remains clear that the greater Self, or greater wholes, is created through the identification process of individual selves. The human selves appear to be seen as active agents in the creation and continuation of this whole. Therefore, as I understand Næss

⁹⁶ Næss, Arne (ed. Rothenberg, David), *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle – Outline of an Ecosophy*, 1989; p.173

⁹⁷ Ibid. Original emphasis.

⁹⁸ Ibid; p.86

⁹⁹ Ibid; p.173-174

the individual selves are the *élan vital* and source of the whole, or the greater Self. Therefore, even if, as the above quotation indicates, the individual narrow egos, or selves, are of little importance compared to the greater whole, they nevertheless play an important role that cannot be ignored.

Like any other self, the great Self goes through a process of development, i.e. Self-realisation. Næss explains Self-realisation as:

It is conceived as a process, but also as an ultimate goal, in a rather special usage of 'ultimate'. It is logically ultimate in a systematic exposition of Ecosophy T. The term includes personal and community self-realisation, but is conceived also to refer to an unfolding of reality as a totality.¹⁰⁰

As different from self-realisation, which entails the individual self-realisation, Self-realisation encompasses personal, community and the overall development of reality; in my interpretation, this is due to the various individual's participation in the greater Self. Together, the individual selves form a community, in which they participate in the greater Self and contribute to its Self-realisation. However, the content of the Self-realisation is due to the self-realisation of the individual and community, so it seems that self- and Self-realisation is an interlocking process where all selves realise and develop themselves and each other, via identification with each other.

Nevertheless, the claim that Self-realisation entails an "unfolding of reality as a totality" is not entirely clear, in my view. Does it mean the historic continuation of society? Or development in the biosphere? Or something else entirely? The usage of the word "totality" indicates that it is the continuous development of all of the above. As mentioned above, the great Self is constituted on everything that the human being can identify himself with; as new human beings and other beings (and even landscapes) are born and the old die, there are new connections of identifications to be made. In other words, the world is in a constant flux – each generation of new human beings identify themselves with their current context of other beings and landscapes, thereby generating their sense of the great Self. It therefore seems that the notion of the great Self is not a fixed dogmatic notion, but one that develops as new influences and beings develop through time. What remains to be answered is then: is there an ultimate end to Self-realisation? From this brief discussion it appears that there is not. Rather,

¹⁰⁰ Ibid; p.84

the meaning of “goal” in the above paragraph is that it is a norm and ideal in Næss personal philosophy that ought to be strived towards.

In these paragraphs I have briefly discussed Næss’s theories of the great Self, its constitution and implications for beings. It appears that the great Self, as generating a sense of the world of beings in a unity, contains intrinsic value, in the sense that it appears not to be valuable for the attainment of something else. It is the sensation of belonging to a world-wide community that is of value for the human being, and it can be argued that Næss suggests the loss of this sensation would have a negative effect of the own self-realisation. This is based on the statement that the own self-realisation is dependent on the self-realisation of others and a disconnectedness from other beings, entailing an inability to identify with others and thereby the possibility to attain own self-realisation, i.e. the sense of world-wide community would be lost. However, this is a topic Næss has not discuss here. The human beings and acts of identification, in turn, appear to hold extrinsic value in relation to the great Self, since it is through acts of identification its existence is known by the human being.

2.3.2 Solidarity as Necessary in Realising the Existence of Universal Unity and vice versa – Max Scheler

Max Scheler, similar to Næss, argues for the existence of a larger system that encompasses all of reality that is necessarily a unity. Should it not be a unity it would be nonsensical to make assumptions of such a system. Scheler’s theories contain resemblances to Næss’s in his claim that it is through the workings of sympathy this unity is generated. Scheler defines these workings as the *principle of solidarity*:

Every false so-called individualism, with its erroneous and pernicious consequences, is excluded in my ethics by the theory of the original *corresponsibility* of every person for the moral salvation of the *whole of all realms of persons*. (principle of solidarity).¹⁰¹

As this quotation indicates, the principle of solidarity states that every person is responsible for other persons’ “moral salvation”. It is, however, at this stage not clear what this form of salvation would entail. The usage of “salvation” seems to indicate that persons, both individual and collective, have a need to be saved from an unknown threat, be it internal or external. Whatever the nature of this threat (or if it is a threat at all) might be, it remains clear that Scheler asserts that persons are not isolated entities, but rather in a relationship with and responsible for others. In other words, this communal sense of responsibility is due to the

¹⁰¹ Scheler, Max (gen.ed. Wild, John, ass.ed. Edie, James M.), *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values – A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, 2009; p. xxiv. Original emphasis.

individual person's membership in the collective person. Scheler explains the implications of this membership further:

In the life-community the bearer of *all* responsibility is the reality of the community, and the individual is *coresponsible* for the life-community; in the collective person every individual person *and* the collective person are *self-responsible* (=responsible for oneself), and at the same time every individual is also *coresponsible* for the collective person (and for every individual "in" it), just as the collective person is *coresponsible* for *each* of its members.¹⁰²

This quotation enforces the notion that while all persons are responsible for each other and the collective person where the persons are members, they are also responsible for the own self. In other words, responsibility for oneself and others are fundamental for a membership in the collective person who also holds this sense of double-responsibility. As I interpret Scheler, this sense of responsibility is a dynamic process where the own actions, welfare and continuation and the collective's actions, welfare and continuation interact and are altered as the collective continues its existence – a dynamic that most can relate to as being, or having been, members of various collectives.

From this, Scheler argues that through establishing the principle of solidarity he can safely assume: "The total moral world...becomes *one encompassing whole* through the validity of this principle."¹⁰³ As I understand Scheler, solidarity would be insignificant without the presence of other persons and relationships between them, a topic that was discussed in detail in the previous section. However, it is worth asking if solidarity would be possible without such a relationship or the presence of other persons. In regards to the latter I assume that even if one can exhibit solidarity in isolation, it can only be done towards the own person and the traditional meaning of solidarity would be lost. In regards to the former, I find my answer not to be as straightforwardly given. The assumption Scheler bases this statement on relies on his claim in the previous section that persons are necessarily in a relationship with other persons – it is inherent in the nature of being human. It appears that the act of solidarity and the sense of relationship require the presence of a certain feeling, or feelings, perhaps a feeling of recognition, resentment, love, etc. Imagine, therefore, a person incapable of any emotion (call her Jane): would Jane be equally incapable of sensing a relationship and thereby failing to exhibit solidarity with other human beings? I believe she would and, if following Scheler's

¹⁰² Ibid; p.533-534

¹⁰³ Ibid; p.534

definition, Jane would not have a sense of the collective person and the unity with others it constitutes. However, it might be the case that other persons would be capable of exhibiting solidarity toward Jane, but it would not be registered in her as solidarity. In other words, Scheler's principle of solidarity, which articulates that every person is responsible for both the own person and others, seems to rely on the presence of relationships between persons – and it is not always the case that such a relationship has any value for the individual human being. However, I am aware that my critique is based on the assumption that relationships presuppose feeling and I reserve myself for the possibility that this is not the case.

Returning to the principle of solidarity, Scheler asserts that his prime motivation to establish this principle is to “place all care for the community and its form in the living *center of the individual person...*”¹⁰⁴ It seems, thus, that Scheler finds the principle of solidarity easily understandable for the individual person since its point of departure is the own person, which, one might assume, is effortlessly understood by the own person. In other words, Scheler is not imposing an abstract rule or principle of conduct that every person ought to follow, which persons can distance themselves from should they not find it relevant for their own interests. Rather, it seems that Scheler argues that the own interest is necessarily the same interest of the community, and in the act of exhibiting care and solidarity for oneself the person ultimately exhibits the same care and solidarity for the community.

In order to get a further understanding of the implications of the principle of solidarity, it is worth lingering on the distinction between *microcosmos* and *macrocosmos*.

A Microcosmos is defined as:

Hence there is an *individual world* corresponding to every individual person. [...] Every world is at the same time a concrete world, but only as the *world of a person*.¹⁰⁵

In this individual personal world, the person and the human being experience and understand himself and the objects therein. Microcosmos can, in other words, be understood as a person's perspective of the world.

Macrocosmos, on the other hand, is an idea that Scheler investigates and writes about in hypothetical terms. He speculatively states:

¹⁰⁴ Ibid; p.xxiv. Original emphasis.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid; p.393. Original emphasis.

If to every 'person' there corresponds a 'world', and to every 'world', a 'person', we must ask [...] whether the 'idea' of *one identical real world*, surpassing the a priori essential structure that binds 'all possible worlds', has phenomenal fulfilment, or whether we must stay on the level of a plurality of personal worlds. [...] Let us call this idea of one identical real world the idea of the *macrocosmos*, [...].¹⁰⁶

Even if Scheler writes about the existence of the macrocosmos in speculative terms, he seems to hold its existence for certain. One indication that Scheler holds this view is that he does not explore the alternative possibility: that there is a plurality of personal worlds (even if this seems to be the case following the definition of microcosmos). I believe that by exploring the idea of the macrocosmos, Scheler seeks to make the point that the individual microcosmoses stand in a relationship with one another, a relationship that generates a unitary world, which, in turn, is a claim that Scheler holds, as presented previously. Thus, I assume that Scheler holds that a macrocosmos exist.

From the existence of a macrocosmos it logically follows:

And the personal correlate of the macrocosmos would be an idea of an infinite and perfect person of spirit [...]. But this 'person' would have to be concrete simply to fulfill the essential condition of a reality. Thus the *idea of God* is *cogiven* with the unity and identity and singularity of the world on the basis of an interconnection of complexes.¹⁰⁷

In this quotation Scheler claims that it is necessary that there is a person who experiences in and relates himself to this macrocosmos; a person who can rightly be said to have the macrocosmos as its personal world. However, one must ask for what reason is it necessary that there must be a person correlating to this cosmos. One might argue that the existence of the macrocosmos would not change its features should this not be the case; rather, the individual personal worlds would be encompassed by the macrocosmos regardless of the existence of an infinite person. However, recalling the definition of person in the first section where person was defined as being a metaphysical concrete unity within the human being and point of departure for all possible acts a human being can be thought to perform, I believe that Scheler claims that in the same manner as the differences between acts, inner and outer perception, willing, feeling, loving, hating and so forth cease to exist in the individual person, the difference between own microcosmos and other microcosmoses equally ceases to exist. The purpose of the infinite person would be to simultaneously experience the existence of all

¹⁰⁶ Ibid; p.396

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

these microcosmoses as a unity, and such an experience would lead to the experience of the existence of an all-encompassing macrocosmos – an experience that would be problematic, if not impossible, for a singular person. In short, the idea of an infinite person can be seen as yet another reason for the view of the world as a unity.

The reason for the necessary existence of the infinite person that I have discussed here is later affirmed by Scheler when he states that the individual and collective person:

[...], both have a *common* ethical subordination to the idea of an infinite person in whom the division between individual persons and collective persons, necessary for finite persons, *ceases to be*. Therefore the Godhead [...] It can be conceived only as *the* [...] infinite person.¹⁰⁸

As Scheler states in this quotation, both the collective person and individual person (as member of collective person) are part of this infinite person and as a result there is no discrimination between the two. I understand that both the individual and collective persons constitute microcosmoses; the individual person as having a personal microcosmos was discussed above, and in the same manner I believe a collective person, as a collection of individual persons, equally has a microcosmos in the sense Scheler entails. It seems that the macrocosmos encompasses all of reality, an extension that goes beyond the scope of the collective person. Furthermore, individual and collective persons are perishable: individual people die, collective persons and communities fluctuate or die out over time, but this does not appear to be the case for the infinite person (as the very word infinite entails). Therefore, I find it doubtful that any collective person could function as the correlate of the macrocosmos.

As has been discussed previously, especially in conjunction with the two last quotations, Scheler conceives the world as being a unity, and I believe that the principle of solidarity is of relevance here. It appears that through exhibiting solidarity and the sensation of being responsible for and towards one another, the individual and collective persons realise that they constitute a unity with each other in the infinite person, whom they are also responsible for. Considering the infinite person as one receiver of solidarity and an agent for whom individual and collective persons are responsible, the content of the principle of solidarity is slightly amended:

It changes from a principle of *representable* solidarity into one of *unrepresentable* solidarity [...] What would have occurred if I, as a spiritual individual, had grasped,

¹⁰⁸ Ibid; p.525

willed, and realized the ‘*good-in-itself-for-me*’ in a *superior* manner? The principle of solidarity is thus not *precluded* by the proposition that there is, in addition to the universally valid good-in-itself, an individually valid good-in-itself. On the contrary, this proposition raises the principle to the *highest* level that it can possibly attain.¹⁰⁹

In other words, and as I understand Scheler, in the infinite person, the individual and collective persons realise that there is no relevant distinction between them and that there is no essential distinction between the good-in-itself for the individual and the universal good-in-itself. Rather, the sense of unity results in the realisation that the singular individual and the collective persons are responsible for the “moral salvation” (to use the terms in the first quotation) of the universe at large. Put differently: the participation in and realisation of this unity allow the principle of solidarity to transform from a principle directed to a singular, specific, person or community to a principle that does not have these features, but rather encompasses the whole world of human beings.

It seems that the infinite person, like any other person, is a metaphysical being and represents the common principle where both individual and collective persons can unite, find belonging and realise that there is no distinction between individual salvation and the salvation of all. I believe this is the core message of the principle of solidarity. In other words, the existence of the infinite person allows the purpose of the principle of solidarity to be realised.

However, it can be asked which ability is required in order for the individual and collective person to experience unity in the infinite person. Scheler explains that it:

[...], is the inner necessity that *just when* the human being became aware of the world, of himself, and obtained his ability to objectify things, including his psycho-physical nature – the specific marks of spirit¹¹⁰ – he became a ‘human being’, and by necessity also has to grasp the most formal *idea of a trans-worldly and infinite and absolute Being*.¹¹¹

As I interpret this quotation, it is the human being’s ability to objectify his environment that results in the realisation that he is in a unity with the infinite person. It appears that in the ability to objectify entities, the human being realises the existence of the own person, an entity

¹⁰⁹ Ibid; p.534

¹¹⁰ Spirit, as understood by Scheler, is solely ascribed to the human being and is the capacity that allows her to objectify her own environment, amongst other features. However, spirit has no energy of its own. Rather, the source of its energy is the animalistic trait of impulsion (can be likened with internal drives that assures the continued survival of the organism). In order for the human being to function in the world it is necessary that impulsion and spirit interpenetrates each other. Scheler, Max (ed. Frings, Manfred S.), *The Human Place in the Cosmos*, 2009; p.xvii

¹¹¹ Ibid; p.62-63

in its own right, and the existence of objects and entities that do not belong to the own person. It further allows the individual person to equally realise the existence of the infinite person and the unity it generates – which is of importance when exhibiting solidarity towards others, as it was discussed previously. It appears, thus, that to exhibit solidarity and realise the responsibility associated with solidarity it is necessary that the own person has the ability to recognise his environment as distinct from the own person. It appears, thus, that the recognition of the participation in the infinite being, in addition to the collective person and the universal unity, have their origins in the individual person, which seems to have an inherent disposition to realise these notions.

Scheler elaborates further on this relationship:

For me, the *fundamental relation the human being has to the Ground of Being* consists in this Ground *grasping itself and realising itself* in the human being who is, because he has both spirit and life, a part of the Ground's own spirit and compulsion.¹¹²

In other words, the Ground of Being, as a bearer of impotent spirit, finds the understanding of itself in the human being, an organism that is somewhat different from the Ground of Being but nonetheless shares necessary traits with it – namely spirit and life, spirit and compulsion/impulsion. As I understand Scheler, the purpose of the human being, as being part of the Ground's own spirit and compulsion – or impulsion – is to further the interpenetration of these traits in the Ground of Being. The human being's part in the Ground of Being is due to his possession of both spirit and life.¹¹³ It seems that due to being a bearer of spirit, the human being gains an awareness of the infinite absolute Being (or the Ground of Being), which in turn realises itself in the human being, that both of these beings are in an intimate relationship to one another. Put differently, the human being realises the existence of the Ground of Being, which in turn realises itself in the human being. It appears that the individual human being is the source of the realisation of the Ground of Being (or infinite Being) and the unity of the world.

As discussed in the above paragraphs Scheler views the universe as being a unity through the principle of solidarity; through the inherent dynamics of this principle the individual and collective person realise their relationship of responsibility to the infinite person, which equally realises its relationship of responsibility to the individual and collective person. It

¹¹² Ibid; p.65

¹¹³ I understand the term "life" to entail impulsion.

appears that both the idea of a universal unity of solidarity between persons and the principle of solidarity both contain high value in the theories of Scheler. In my interpretation, these notions, even if they are distinct, realise their own intrinsic value by reference to the other notion; without the universal unity of persons, solidarity would be problematic – and it is through the mechanism of the principle of solidarity that the universal unity is realised. Furthermore, Scheler makes the point that the sense of the universal unity of persons has the individual human being as its point of departure and I am drawn to the conclusion that he, as an individual, is of extrinsic value in this sense.

As a final note, I find it slightly unsettling that Scheler does not seem to take into account the presence of other beings: it seems that the universal unity he has in mind solely concerns the human being. A concern that is not present in the theories of Bateson, which will be discussed in the following.

2.3.3 Presence of Mind in the Biosphere – Gregory Bateson

In order to reach a conclusion regarding Bateson's view of a larger system encompassing reality, it is worth recalling Bateson's insistence that the construction of the self is dependent on its position within a cybernetic system which contains other features. The two following quotations are found in a chapter of *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, where Bateson analyses the theology of the organisation Alcoholic Anonymous from the perspective of cybernetics and systems theory. Like this organisation, cybernetics and systems theory argue that the self:

[...] as ordinarily understood is only a small part of a much larger trial-and-error system which does the thinking, acting and deciding. This system includes all the informational path-ways which are relevant at any given moment to any given decision. The 'self' is a false reification of an improperly delimited part of this much larger field of interlocking processes.¹¹⁴

In the terms of Alcoholic Anonymous, this conception of the self is summarised in the category "There is a Power greater than the self". This notion and its implications were discussed in detail in the previous section and I will not recapitulate the full discussion here. However, what is worth discussing from this quotation is the occurrence of the concept of "much larger field". This concept can arguably refer to the occurrence of the cybernetic system which the human being find himself in, say, when writing a thesis or cooking dinner, as discussed previously. Or it might refer to a "larger" cybernetic system expanding beyond

¹¹⁴ Bateson, Gregory, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 2000; p.331

the immediate situation of these singular cybernetic system. In the context of *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* Bateson seems to assume the former interpretation. He further explains and introduces a topic of inquiry that becomes relevant in the book *Angels Fear: Towards an Epistemology of the Sacred*:

Cybernetically speaking, 'my' relation to any larger system around me and including other things and persons will be different from 'your' relation to some similar system around you. The relation 'part of' must necessarily and logically always be complementary but the meaning of the phrase 'part of' will be different for every person.¹¹⁵

The statement in this quotation is arguably in line with the discussion made in the previous section, in the sense that to be part of a large system is a highly personal experience, and its features cannot be articulated in detail other than it is a relationship of a complementary nature. In conjunction with this quotation, however, Bateson later defines the nature of the relationship as: "It is 'God as *you* understand him to be'."¹¹⁶ As I understand the usage of the term "God" he refers here to the Christian version, which emphasises that the relation between human beings and this thought being is essentially personal with clear features of communication. Applied to the above quotation I understand the relationship between the individual person and the larger system to be equally personal and communicative in character. Furthermore, by introducing the term "God" in this context possibly indicates that the dimensions of the larger system are significantly wider than the immediate cybernetic system relevant for one situation such as writing a thesis.

This topic will be addressed once the following question has been issued: is Bateson arguing for the existence of one single large system or several large systems? As I understand Bateson it seems that he argues for the latter, bearing in mind the discussion in the previous section where it was mentioned that Bateson claims that the world consists of various cybernetic systems. One possible interpretation of the term "large system" might be the occurrence of such cybernetic systems. Though the reference to "large systems", as opposed to "cybernetic systems", indicates that this interpretation is faulty – rather, it points to the occurrence of a system (or systems) of a different kind. In order to reach a conclusion regarding these systems (or this system), I will turn to some statements found in *Angels Fear: Towards an Epistemology of the Sacred*. Initially Bateson states in an introductory quote to one chapter:

¹¹⁵ Ibid; 332

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

What has been said so far can be read as argument or evidence for the reality of very large mental systems, systems of ecological size and larger, within which the mentality of the single human being is a subsystem.¹¹⁷

In this quotation Bateson explicitly uses the plural form, giving an indication of the dimensions of these systems and stating further, once more, that the human mind is an integrated part of these systems. Furthermore, it is stated that one of the attributes of these systems is that they are mental, which seems to be coherent with the definition of mind and mental processes outlined in the first section. It is not clear from this quotation, or from anywhere else in Bateson's writings, what system could possibly be larger than a system of ecological size. One possible interpretation could be that such a larger system would be two systems (or more) of ecological size in relation to one another, which would generate a larger whole.

In order to address this issue further, I will turn to yet another passage where Bateson is establishing the purpose for his analysis of this topic. Bateson seeks to investigate:

[...] the communicational regularities in the biosphere, assuming that in doing so, I shall also be investigating interwoven regularities in a system so pervasive and so determinant that we may even apply the word 'god' to it. The regularities we discover – including regularities and necessities of communication and logic – form a unity in which we make our home. They might be seen as the peculiarities of the god whom we might call Eco.¹¹⁸

Firstly, let me note that Bateson is here using the singular form of the word "system", as opposed to the plural form earlier. The usage of this word indicates that Bateson has in mind one large unitary mental system which, in my understanding, consists of relations and interconnected consistencies between large mental systems of ecological size. The unitary mental system described here contains such persuasive consistencies that it results in religious connotations, according to Bateson.

Secondly, I find the usage of the word "home" to be of interest. As I interpret this part of the quotation Bateson seeks to establish two things: that the consistencies in the system are aligned to generate a unity, and that this unity, "our home", is the world and the system itself the ecosystem. My reasons for making this interpretation are not solely because of Bateson's naming of "the god" as "Eco" but also, if one studies the workings of the ecosystem after, for

¹¹⁷ Bateson, Gregory & Bateson, Mary Catherine, *Angels Fear – Towards an Epistemology of the Sacred*, 2005; p.135

¹¹⁸ Ibid; p.142

example, a forest fire where the ashes from the fire contribute to the regrowth of the new flora and fauna. This is only one example of how the ecosystem, as a whole, restores minor damage that has occurred in it. In other words, the ecosystem as a whole seems to inherently contain mechanisms to alter itself should a change occur in one part or the other of the system. Where the consistencies of logic and communications have their origins are not explained by Bateson – it seems that his main concern is merely to describe the features of a system that is already in place.

The study of these interconnecting consistencies in the ecosystem leads Bateson to the conclusion, which is worth reciting, that the ecosystem – and any large mental system – can rightly be defined as bearers of mind. However, applied to the ecosystem, Bateson finds it right to use the term Mind:

It means, you see, that I now localize something which I am calling ‘Mind’ immanent in the large biological system – the ecosystem. Or, if I draw the system boundaries at a different level, then mind is immanent in the total evolutionary structure.¹¹⁹

In order to analyse the nature of Mind in the ecosystem it is worth recalling the definition of mind made earlier: mind contains mental processes which occur due to interaction or differentiation between parts – this is the short, but key, definition of mind discussed earlier. As I understand Bateson, mental processes in the ecosystem might be expressed in phenomena such as the interaction between various organisms and beings, an interaction that has been ongoing for a significant amount of time resulting in a balance within the system itself, where no part is dominant over the other. Nevertheless, the question can be asked if it is correct to assume that the ecosystem has a mind. Does it think? I could see how it can be argued that the ecosystem is solely dead matter that solely exists, or not exist, and can, possibly, by extension be conceived as being able for use by other beings, such as the human being. In fact, by solely observing the ecosystem, it is a natural conclusion to draw. However, I believe that the idea of human supremacy over the ecosystem is the view that Bateson seeks to oppose when ascribing a sense of Mind to the ecosystem. One of the reasons for Bateson’s view is that the ecosystem adapts, not being fixed in circumstances that were relevant generations ago; species of all sorts and landscapes adapt according to their surroundings in order to maintain their own existence. It is clear that the ecosystem contains consistencies, evidently, as the progression of the seasons show every year, that are communicative in

¹¹⁹ Bateson, Gregory, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 2000; p.466

essence, as Bateson points out. The communication aspect seems to include cases of communication, such as when migratory birds realise when the time is right to move south or when the vegetation realise that the right circumstances occur to sprout. The right time is, of course, dependent on the circumstances; even if these consistencies are within the system, they are by no means rigid. Rather, several aspects – temperature, humidity and so forth – in relation to one another comprise the overall sense of “right time”.

When Bateson states in the above quotation that, in the case of drawing the system boundaries on a different level, the mind would then be present in the whole evolutionary structure. I believe he is referring to the mind that is present in single cybernetic circuits and in the human being:

The individual mind is immanent but not only in the body. It is immanent also in pathways and messages outside the body; and there is a larger Mind of which the individual mind is only a subsystem. This larger Mind is comparable to God and is perhaps what some people mean by ‘God’, but it is still immanent in the total interconnected social system and planetary ecology.¹²⁰

As I understand Bateson from this quotation, he states that the human mind is not solely limited to the human body but belonging necessarily in the wider context of the ecosystem. As was discussed earlier, the human being is not in isolation from his surroundings; rather, he continuously finds himself as an integral part of various cybernetic systems. The human being, in this sense, can be seen as one constitutional feature, or a cybernetic system, in his own right that influences – and is influenced by – the composition of the ecosystem and contributes to its current attributes and continued development.

The idea of dying changes its meaning then, according to Bateson:

But if mind is immanent not only in those pathways of information which are located inside the body but also in external pathways, then death takes on a different aspect. The individual nexus of pathways which I call ‘me’ is no longer so precious because that nexus is only part of a larger mind.¹²¹

What I understand Bateson from this quotation is that he is seeking to provide the human being with an understanding that he is an integral part of something larger than himself, and that the individual human ego is not too important in the grand scheme of things – an

¹²⁰ Ibid; p.467

¹²¹ Ibid; p. 471

interesting and, some might argue, disheartening thought. However, I believe it is Bateson's aim to challenge contemporary conceptions of the own self, or even humanity at large, as being the nucleus of the ecosystem; quite the contrary, individual human egos and the human race are, though a necessary feature of the system, whose relevance cannot be overexaggerated. It is the system that holds relevant value – a system and a value that will continue its existence long after the individual person's passing.

Following this and the above paragraphs it appears the large mental systems are bearers of intrinsic value in the theories of Bateson, since it seems that they do not have value in relation to something else, for example the human being. As discussed in the above paragraphs, the presence of large mental systems is yet another way for Bateson to elucidate that the world is necessarily a unity, a notion which is of prime importance for Bateson, as the previous section indicates. The human being and other organisms, though valuable in themselves, generate and uphold these systems in relation to and as being only an integrated feature and member in the large mental systems. Thus, their value appears to be extrinsic.

What is worth noting is that Bateson seeks merely to describe the world how he perceives it to rightly be in its essence, without making any prominent normative judgments. However, Bateson's description and attribution of Mind to the ecosystem might be considered a normative valuation of the ecosystem, and that he argues for a change in the conception of the ecosystem as dead matter with the sole purpose of being exploited by humankind.

2.3.4 Conclusion

This section has presented the notion of the existence and implications for the human being of a large metaphysical system in the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson. It remains clear that the philosophers' theories, relating to this topic, bear resemblances to the argumentation provided for the existence of constitutional relationships; hence it is equally argued here that there is a relationship between the human being and this large system. The philosophers utilise various terminology in order to present their ideas (as is the case in the previous sections). Næss names the large system the greater Self to indicate that there is no relevant difference between the individual self and the large system in terms of self-realisation and the adjacent process of identification. Scheler introduces the principle of solidarity which through its inherent dynamics results in a sense of a universal unity of individual, collective and infinite person, a unity that in turn validates the content in the principle of solidarity. Lastly, Bateson argues for the existence of a large Mental system that contains consistencies

of logic and communication which encompasses the totality of reality. The human being, like any other being, is the nucleus of the upholding and continuation of this system. Differences in terminology aside, it remains that the philosophers share the view that the existence of the large metaphysical system, and the unity it generates, is of intrinsic value.

3. Addressing the Concern of the Human Being, the Environment and the World in the Contemporary Context of London, United Kingdom

This chapter seeks to explore whether or not the topics raised by Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson bear any similarities to the topics discussed in contemporary environmental preservation organisations in London, UK. The following inquiry also seeks to explore the potentiality for similarities between the aforementioned philosophers and the chosen organisations in terms of which holistic constellation is believed to exist and whether or not it holds intrinsic or extrinsic value. The organisations subject to inquiry is The Green Party, WEN and the organisation Organiclea. The organisations have been chosen because they have achieved a status of recognition within the wider society of London or the United Kingdom and because each organisation represents a specific scope for their concern: national (The Green Party), specific (WEN) or local (Organiclea).

The common factor for these three organisations is the claim that the human being has a relationship of dependency with the environment. Even if this topic was discussed by Næss, Scheler and Bateson, it remains that this and other similarities between the statements presented by these philosophers and the organisations are somewhat unclear. This element of uncertainty will be discussed in the following. The organisations utilise a different medium, an online platform, and different means to present their aim to the general public, therefore they do not embark on an extensive philosophical exploration of any of the topics. As a result, I want to make the reader aware of the fact that the potential connections between the organisations and the philosophers can more rightly be described as associations rather than similarities.

Worth noting further is that organisations' websites contain opinions and commitments relating to other areas not discussed by the philosophers, thus the quotations presented are a mere fraction of the content present on the website. The quotations featured in the presentations have been chosen due to the associations between the content and theoretical standpoints of the philosophers.

3.1 The Human Being as Dependent on the Environment – The Green Party

The Green Party, as the name suggests, is an established political party in the United Kingdom with both a centralised head office and local branches across the United Kingdom. Founded in 1990, The Green Party seeks to lobby for issues ranging from environmentalism

to the need of introducing a higher National Living Wage in the UK.¹²² The political policy programme of The Green Party consists of 10 pillars which “[...] set out what Greens are in politics to do: to end the system that keeps hurting the environment and all of us who rely on it – and to build a better alternative.”¹²³

In the first pillar entitled “Save the environment” The Green Party states that: “We live on an amazing planet, rich in resources and able to sustain an incredible diversity of life. But we cannot take for granted that it will always be this way.”¹²⁴ The message in this quotation is twofold: on the one hand, The Green Party expresses that the planet itself contains a manifold of resources and ability to sustain the beings that inhabit it; on the other hand, the party issues a warning that this will not always be the case. It can be argued that the basis for this statement is the regularities and workings of the biosphere itself: the changing of the seasons; the growth of new flora and fauna after a forest fire; and the presence of nutrients for each and every species, which is the very study of the science of ecology. Notable is that the party conceives and describes the workings of the planet in value-loaded words such as “amazing” and “incredible”, and it can be argued that The Green Party places a high value on the planet itself and the ability it holds in itself to sustain the diversity of life. It is not yet, however, clear if such a value is intrinsic or extrinsic in kind or how the planet described would cease to be.

The Green Party further expresses in the third pillar of their party programme entitled “Protect our Animals”:

We don't think it's right to exploit the other species we share this planet with and are prepared to take on the vested interests that fuel animal cruelty.¹²⁵

First of all, note the presence of the possessive word “our” in the title to this pillar. Describing the animals in this manner gives rise to two associations: firstly, that they are in need of protection but lacking agency to protect themselves and, secondly, that they are being owned by someone or something, thereby giving rise to associations that animals exist for the purpose of someone or something else. That being said, the content in this quotation alongside the title of this pillar indicates that the human beings, as a species, have the ability and,

¹²² Wikipedia, 2018-11-16, *Green Party of England and Wales*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_Party_of_England_and_Wales (Retrieved 2018-11-26)

¹²³ Green Party, *Our Political Programme*; p.3, <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/images/national-site/political-programme-web-v1.2.pdf> (Retrieved 2018-11-12)

¹²⁴ *Ibid*; p.5

¹²⁵ *Ibid*; p.9

perhaps, even an obligation to exhibit care and protection of the other species with whom they inhabit this planet. This commitment can arguably be seen as being in accordance with the insistence from especially Næss that human beings and other beings inhabit the world together, and that the human being has the ability to acknowledge the interests of other beings. The Green Party insists, therefore, that it is not desirable to exploit other species for human interests. Nonetheless, I find that there is a discrepancy between the first and second parts of the quotation. The first part refers specifically to species, whereas the second part, outlining the course of action of The Green Party, solely involves terminating activities of animal cruelty, thereby disregarding the potential interest and relevance of other species that are neither human nor can be classified under the category of animals. I believe that Næss and Bateson would not agree on such a discrimination of species: Næss would argue that each being has a need for self-realisation that ought to be respected by the human being, and Bateson would argue that each and every being, as part of a cybernetic system, are of equal importance in the creation and upholding of a system. It remains, however, that the animals – and arguably other species – as inhabitants of the planet with interests of their own appear to hold value for The Green Party – a value that urges the human being to protect, at least, animals. Whether or not the protection is due to the value of the animals and perhaps other species hold in themselves or for something else is not entirely clear in this context.

The Green Party, as different from WEN and Organiclea, has a clearly articulated philosophical basis for their party. In the introduction to the webpage The Green Party states:

A system based on inequality and exploitation is threatening the future of the planet on which we depend, and encouraging reckless and environmentally damaging consumerism. A world based on cooperation and democracy would prioritise the many, not the few, and would not risk the planet's future with environmental destruction and unsustainable consumption.¹²⁶

In this introductory statement, The Green Party emphasises their main worry for the current state and future of the planet and indicates that the human being is dependent on the planet. As basic as this statement appears, it remains that The Green Party seems to be in agreement with Næss, Scheler and Bateson that the human being does not stand outside of the environment, and thereby is not allowed to perform whichever action he sees fit. However it is yet not clear whether or not the notions of the system of inequality, exploitation and the

¹²⁶ The Green Party of England and Wales, *Philosophical Basis of the Green Party*, <https://policy.greenparty.org.uk/philosophical-basis.html> (Retrieved 2018-11-29)

desired world of cooperation and democracy are solely of relevance for the human being or include the interest of other beings.

In yet another paragraph, The Green Party elaborates on the relationship between the human being and the environment:

PB102 Like all creatures, humankind depends upon a healthy natural environment for its survival. Yet it is human activity, more than anything else, which is threatening the environment and, ultimately, threatening the future of life on Earth as we currently know it.¹²⁷

In this paragraph, the idea that the human being is an integrated part of the environment has taken one step further in stating that the continued survival of the human being is dependent on the continued survival of the planet. In a later passage, The Green Party states that they conceive the characteristics of the relationship to be: “[...] interdependence within it, not control over it. Like all forms of life, we take from others and give back in return. We should ensure that human activities contribute to, rather than destroy, the richness of life.”¹²⁸ This thought is present in the theories of Scheler and, to a certain extent, Bateson in the claim that the unity of survival is the human being and the environment, and it might be that a similar line of argument is present in this quotation. Moreover, note that in the above quotation The Green Party likens the human being with other beings, thereby indicating that the dependency of survival applies to all beings, human and non-human alike. This thought bears resemblance to the conclusive thesis of Næss, Scheler and Bateson that all beings in the world are equal in the sense that they are inhabitants of the world and dependent on it for their continued survival. Worth noting further is that The Green Party allocates a responsibility to the human being for the current unsustainable state of the planet and for holding the sole responsibility for the looming threat of extinction of all beings – a claim that is not explicitly articulated in the theories of the philosophers other than their criticism of Western dualistic notions.

Although it is possible to discern certain similarities in ways of perceiving the world between The Green Party and the postulates of Næss, Scheler and Bateson, there is one fundamental difference between the party and the philosophers that is worth discussing. As opposed to the philosophers, The Green Party seems to attach priority to human interest and fulfilment over the interest and fulfilment of other beings:

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

PB108 As human beings, we all have the potential to live co-operatively and harmoniously with each other, and with reverence and respect for the complex web of life of which we are a part. Yet it has become increasingly obvious that this potential cannot be realised while basic human needs remain largely unmet.¹²⁹

As this quotation states initially, the human being has the potential to lead a life in relationship with other beings and exhibit respect for the interest and concern of others and the “web of life which we are a part”. The Green Party further claims that they are committed “[...] to creating a society in which individuals, through their ability to satisfy their basic needs more fully, are then able better to contribute to future sustainability.”¹³⁰ Considering the former quotation, the usage of words here gives rise to associations to the insistence of Næss that the human being is unique in the sense that he has the potential to live in community with other beings. On the contrary, this statement can be interpreted as that The Green Party introduces a distinction between the interests and needs of the human being and other beings, and places a higher priority on the needs of the human being – I believe Næss would probably find this doubtful due to his claim that, through the workings of identification, the human being realises that there exists no such distinction. It can be argued that even Bateson would refute such a claim since it relies on traditional demarcation of the human self.

On the other hand, the interpretation of these statements might not be as problematic or extreme as the first interpretation indicates: The Green Party might be of the opinion that the human being has interests that hold more relevance for them as an organisation – after all, their primarily audience is potential human voters. Thus, it is rational for them to hold and present the view that they are primarily concerned with assuring the wellbeing of human beings. Such an outlook does not necessarily result in a complete disregard of the interest of non-human being either. Considering the content in the second quotation, it appears that The Green Party assumes a correlation between the satisfaction of basic human needs and the ability to contribute to future sustainability, which might entail, among others, a care and respect for the interest of other non-human beings and the environment at large. In other words, the distinction might not be as clear-cut as the previous interpretation assumes.

In this context, I find it relevant to raise a critique towards Næss’s account. Potential conflicts of interest between human and non-human interests might arise and his account will not provide any further guidance in how to solve such conflicts, since it is based on the

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

assumption that there is no distinction in interest, and thus a conflict of interest cannot occur. The account presented here by The Green Party avoids such conflicts by assuming a distinction between human and non-human interest, whilst also assuming that the human being's interests require special recognition and respect from other human beings.

A final quotation and philosophical basis of The Green Party worth considering states the following:

The diversity of species living on this planet is a manifestation of its ecological complexity. This diversity sustains and strengthens all ecosystems so that they are able to withstand shocks to their functioning, such as earthquake or disease. The Green Party recognises the limits of humanity's powers to observe and understand natural processes and therefore recognises the necessity for protecting biodiversity for its own sake. The maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity is demonstrably beneficial to all life on earth, not just humans.¹³¹

The content in this quotation bears resemblances to the interpretations made in conjunction with Bateson's statements regarding the regularities in the biosphere. The Green Party seems to be in agreement with Bateson that there is a worldwide system in the biosphere that allows the biosphere itself to rectify changes or damages that occur within the system itself; the system itself responds to these changes or damages in order to assure its continued existence. Furthermore, present in this quotation is an encouragement of actions to protect the biodiversity for its own sake, i.e. its intrinsic value. However, biodiversity can, in this statement, be seen to hold extrinsic value due to the claim that all beings, human and non-human alike, would benefit from the continued existence of the biodiversity.

3.1.2 Summary and Additional Remarks

In the above paragraphs I have briefly presented basic postulates and commitments found in The Green Party. Worth bearing in mind is that the content presented and analysed here is a mere fraction of the overall political agenda of the party. The content presented have been chosen due to its associations with the theories and arguments of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson.

It appears that The Green Party, like these philosophers, adheres to the overall perspective of holism in the sense that they argue for the existence of a relationship between the beings and the environment and for the presence of a system in the biosphere, which requires respect

¹³¹ Ibid.

from the human being. The Green Party, like the philosophers, seems to allocate intrinsic value to the biodiversity inherent in the biosphere, which is indicated by the statement that biodiversity ought to be protected for its own sake. The relationship of interdependence The Green Party considers to be present between the beings and their environment appears to hold value, even if it is unclear whether the value is extrinsic or intrinsic in kind.

It was discussed that as different from Næss and to a certain extent Bateson, The Green Party claims that even though the human being has the potential to lead a life in community with others and exhibit respect for the interest and desires of other non-human beings, it remains that such care and respect can reach its full potential only after basic human needs have been satiated. This statement can be interpreted, on the one hand, as The Green Party assuming that the human being has distinct interests and desires which take precedence over the potential interests and desires of other non-human beings; on the other hand, this statement can be interpreted as that such distinction does not exist due to The Green Party seemingly assuming a correlation between the satisfaction of basic human needs and the higher likelihood of human beings leading a life with an increased element of sustainability, which might include an increased recognition and respect for non-human beings' interests. Thus, the distinction might not be as clear-cut as the previous interpretation indicates. It was also discussed that it is relevant for The Green Party to place and express priority for human beings' interests since their primary audience is potential human voters.

3.2 Feminism and Environmentalism as Integrated Concerns – WEN

Founded in 1988, WEN argues that women have predominantly been excluded from environmental political and corporate decision making. Therefore, WEN argues for the inclusion of women in all stages and aspects of these decision-making processes and defines their feministic outlook as environmental with the motivation: “the fight for gender equality is inextricably linked to environmental justice. These two goals can only be achieved together.”¹³² This statement describes one out of four core values that constitute the foundation of WEN. The value cited is labelled “feminist” whilst the remaining three values are “environmental”, “participatory” and “socially responsible”. In the following I will analyse these core values and other statements from WEN with the intention of answering the question of whether or not the organisation adheres to or discusses topics similar to Arne Næss's, Max Scheler's and Gregory Bateson's.

¹³² WEN, *Our Values*, <https://www.wen.org.uk/our-values/> (Retrieved 2018-11-12)

In conjunction with the value “environmental” WEN claims that:

We believe that human behaviour towards the earth's resources needs to change from that of commoditisation, towards understanding that each decision we make has a knock-on effect elsewhere. All too often our consumer actions are disconnected from their impact on the natural world, and it has become far too easy to ignore the consequences.¹³³

Like The Green Party, WEN argues that the contemporary conception that human action does not having any repercussions in the state of the natural world is faulty. Opposing this, WEN argues for an understanding that any human action, indeed, has consequences. This initial statement indicates that WEN, as with the philosophers, adheres to a perspective that the human being is not isolated from the environment, but rather finds himself and acts in relation to others and the environment. As this inquiry progresses, this outlook appears to be central for WEN since it is being emphasised numerous times in the content analysed. In the statements adjacent to the remaining pillars titled “participatory” and “socially responsible”, for example, it is stated in conjunction with the former that: “We believe that competition and individualism are tools that are used to maintain current systems of inequality, and prevent the possibility of creating new ways of seeing the world and relating to one another.”¹³⁴ Lastly, adjacent to the latter pillar, it is stated: “All of our actions have consequences, and our actions as an organisation have far-reaching effects on people and planet.”¹³⁵ In other words, these statements indicate that WEN adheres to a perspective that the human being is an integrated part of the environment where his actions and composition have an effect on it – a central notion in the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson, even if they would also argue that the environment itself affects the constitution of the human being.

The constitutional character of the relationship between human being and the environment was a common idea in the ideas of the philosophers. Does WEN adhere to this conception? In order to answer this question, I will linger on a brief description to one of the workshops hosted by the organisation. The title of the workshop is Vitamin Green Workshop and its description entices potential attendees to “relax and re-connect with nature” in one of their “social and horticultural sessions.”¹³⁶ I find the occurrence of the word “re-connect” to be of interest: the usage of this word indicates that WEN conceives there to have been a relationship – or connection – between the human being and nature previously but not currently, and by

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ WEN, *Book a Workshop*, <https://www.wen.org.uk/our-workshops-1/> (Retrieved 2018-11-19)

participating in this workshop the connection with nature is once more established. Should there be an essential relationship between the human being and nature (or the environment), as the philosophers would argue, it would not be feasible to disregard or terminate the relationship in the sense indicated by the word “re-connect”. In other words, although WEN can rightly be said to adhere to the claim in the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson of a relationship (or connection) between the human being and the environment (or nature) the organisation does not seem to adhere to the claim that this relationship is constitutive to the nature of being human.

Part of WEN’s aim is to initiate projects in the London borough of Tower Hamlets with the purpose of promoting mental health amongst its residences. The guiding perspective of these projects is grouped under the overall heading “Green Care”, whose aim and purpose are expressed in the following statement:

There is a growing acceptance that nature can play a role in positive mental health. Nature-based mental health interventions have been shown to promote general mental wellbeing, reduce depression, anxiety and stress, improve confidence, and promote social contact as well as a sense of calm.¹³⁷

The content in this quotation indicates, once more, that WEN conceives that there is a relationship between the human being and the environment – I base this conclusion on the idea that activities conducted in nature have an effect on the human being. Should a relationship be absent, I assume it would be problematic to experience any human internal alterations in one form or another, i.e. improvement in mental health. However, even if it can be argued that WEN adheres to such a perspective on the human being and the environment (or nature as is the term used by the organisation) it appears that the organisation conceives the environment to be beneficial and hold value *for* the human being, in the sense that its occurrence has the potentiality of promoting mental health. Thus, it can be argued that WEN conceives the environment to hold extrinsic value in relation to the human being. Næss, Scheler and Bateson claim, on the other hand, that the relationship between the human being and the environment and the unity it generates holds intrinsic value. In the content analysed, WEN does not discuss the topic of a unitary universe.

¹³⁷ WEN, *Green Care – Feeling Better Inside by going Outside*, <https://www.wen.org.uk/nature-health-and-wellbeing/> (Retrieved 2018-19-11)

Present in this quotation, moreover, seems to be a statement bearing resemblances to the claims made by Scheler and Bateson, that there exists no discrepancy between mind and body, though Scheler and Bateson assume that the relationship between mind and body is a relationship of identity, where bodily and mental processes are identical to one another and conjoined, in identity, within the human being. WEN, on the other hand, seems to assume a relationship of causality in the sense that bodily activities affect the mind. I base this interpretation on the claim made in the above quotation that performance of bodily activities in nature will result in a significant improvement in human mental health: one could argue that such an improvement would not be possible should there be a discrepancy between the mind and the body.

Featuring on WEN's blog is an interview with one of their co-directors, Julia Minnear. Minnear touches on a range of topics and motivations that are relevant for her as a WEN representative. Worth noting is that the statements made by Minnear might not be representative for all members of the organisation. Therefore, the following analysis should be interpreted as an attempt to gain an understanding of the underlying sentiments and motivations of one member of the organisation, even if such sentiments and motivations are not representative for all members or the organisation as a whole.

Minnear claims that she is in agreement with WEN that there is a relationship between the human beings and the environment. She claims: "We believe that healthy people and a healthy planet go hand-in-hand."¹³⁸ In this statement, moreover, it seems that the nature of the relationship appears to be a relationship of interdependency: should the people be healthy, then the environment would be healthy, and one can assume that the opposite would also be the case. As argued, Næss, Scheler and Bateson hold a similar conception of such a relationship of interdependency, but they are evidently utilising alternative means to express this notion and further elaborate adjacent topics and arguments in support of this claim – topics and arguments not present on WEN's website.

In the three following quotations, Minnear elaborates further on the supposed relationship between the human being and the environment. Minnear states firstly:

¹³⁸ WEN, *Meet Julia Minnear, Co-Director*, 09-11-2018, <https://www.wen.org.uk/blog/2018/3/meet-julia-minnear-co-director-wen> (Retrieved 2018-11-20)

Our relationship to nature is multi-layered. On the most basic level, we depend on natural resources for our survival. It's easy to feel insulated from that reality, embedded as we are in the West in a deeply consumerist society. But everything around us can be traced back to a natural resource.¹³⁹

As this statement indicates, Minnear claims that the human being essentially depends on the resources within the environment for his survival, a claim that Næss, Scheler and Bateson would agree upon. Although, recurrent in this statement is the underlying conception discussed above that the environment and the resources it contains are beneficial *for* the human being. This is elaborated in the following quotation:

On another level, I believe that nature is fundamental to human well-being. The positive impact of green spaces on our mental health is increasingly well documented [...] But we can all benefit by spending more time in natural settings. Standing in front of a 200-year old oak tree can make our human problems seem very insignificant! [...] In that sense nature can offer us a kind of wisdom that's hard to find anywhere else. From there we begin to see the importance of protecting our natural spaces, and of creating new ones.¹⁴⁰

In this quotation Minnear claims, referring to WEN initiative, Green Care, that performing activities in nature will promote human wellbeing, i.e. its value appears to be considered extrinsic. A later statement from Minnear can also be interpreted along these lines: “I believe the next big step towards a sustainable society is in recognising the fundamental link between human health and the environment.”¹⁴¹ Even if this statement is an interesting conclusion, Minnear does not elaborate this topic further. Despite the lack of such analysis, it appears that the message in these two quotations is that the human being, or more specifically human health, is in a relationship with the environment and, in my interpretation, the environment holds extrinsic value in relation to the occurrence and furthering of human health. How it comes to be that such a realisation would further the development of a sustainable society, I am not entirely certain of.

Leaving this discussion aside, I focus on yet another aspect of the supposed relationship between the human being and nature. In the quotation Minnear claims that nature has the potentiality of providing human beings with a knowledge that could result in a realisation of the importance of protecting nature and, furthermore, provide the human beings with

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

incentives to create natural spaces. Even though Minnear expresses the results of such knowledge or “wisdom”, the aspects of it or how it comes to be remain unclear. To consider the indicated claim that such knowledge is attainable from an alternative source complicates matters further. Perhaps it is not Minnear’s intention to elaborate further on such knowledge or its alternative source; rather, I believe that the message Minnear seeks to convey is that nature or the environment is a source of knowledge relevant for the human being and it would not be wishful to ignore the potential for knowledge it holds or disregard its importance. In conclusion, as I understand Minnear, she claims that nature holds value and ought to be protected, a value that appears to be considered extrinsic in nature, bearing in mind the previous discussion of the Green Care initiative and the recurrent statement that nature is beneficial for the human being.

Minnear concludes the discussion with the following statement:

Thirdly, the deep ecologists would argue that nature has an intrinsic value! That means it's important in and of itself, and not simply because it benefits human beings. In reality, it's hard to make this argument as you get into all kinds of philosophical knots. But anyone that's observed a community of birds, insects or plants for long enough has experienced a sense of wonder at the way nature goes about her business, regardless of us know-it-all humans!¹⁴²

In this statement, Minnear mentions the Deep Long-range Ecological movement – coined by Næss in the 1970s – which indicates that the term has attained recognition in contemporary society. However, adjacent comments can be interpreted as that she is reluctant to associate herself with the postulates made by the movement with the motivation that the arguments the movements present are problematic, since it runs the risk of getting “into all kinds of philosophical knots”. On the other hand, not being able to engage in a conversation with Minnear about these philosophical topics, it is problematic to reach such a conclusion; perhaps her intention with this statement is not to disregard the relevance of the field of philosophy and its contributions, and it might not be, either, to engage in an extensive philosophical essay on the topic of human relationships with their surroundings – such an essay might not be deemed relevant or of interest to the potential readers of this interview.

Nevertheless, I am not entirely certain on how to interpret the adjacent comment of Minnear: is she in fact claiming that the community of birds, insects or plants holds intrinsic value – or

¹⁴² Ibid.

is she claiming that this community holds a different value? A value, perhaps, that has not been discussed within the discipline of philosophy? Not knowing the motivation behind this statement makes it problematic to reach a conclusion on Minnear considering this community to hold intrinsic or extrinsic value, even if it seems she is of the opinion that it holds a value in one form or another. What I find worth noting however is that Minnear, in her comment, indicates that nature, or the environment, contains certain workings – or regularities and patterns of communication, to utilise the terms of Bateson – that allow it to continue its existence in the absence of “us know-it-all humans”. Although, this statement does not necessarily result in conclusive agreement with the conclusions made by Bateson, it nevertheless indicates that she acknowledges, to the very least, that nature has the ability to continue its existence independent of human presence or intervention. This is a thought familiar to Bateson even if, as noted previously, he seems to solely describe the workings of the biosphere without evoking any normative judgments or rules of conduct.

In accordance with WEN’s overall commitment to feminism, Minnear concludes the interview with the following statement:

A sustainable future depends on women following their passion for environmental issues, in whichever direction they feel most deeply drawn. Academics, activists, cooks, full-time mothers, students... we need everyone!¹⁴³

To express that passions are of relevance for the assurance of a sustainable future contains certain resemblances to statements made by Næss in regards to the importance of emotions for the human being, his actions and decisions. I base this conclusion on the assumption that the word “passion” can be classified under the overall category of emotions – though, as different from Næss, Minnear does not mention the importance of reason or the potential collaboration between these faculties in order to encourage human action or decision categorically, and not solely actions directed at the creation of a sustainable future.

Before reaching an overall conclusion regarding WEN’s potential resemblance to the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson I find it worth noting that, in this quotation, Minnear does not discuss whether or not the presence and action of men are of relevance to assure a sustainable future. The claim in the above statement that “we need everyone!” is, somewhat, dubious in

¹⁴³ Ibid.

the sense that it is not clear if the word “everyone” refers to all women or to human kind as a species, regardless of gender.

3.2.2 Summary and Additional Remarks

In the above paragraphs I have briefly analysed statements of WEN, with the intention of exploring whether or not there are any similarities between the claims made by the organisation and Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson.

As the above discussion indicates, WEN, like Næss, Scheler and Bateson, claims that there is a relationship between the human being and the environment. As discussed in the previous chapter, the philosophers argue that these relationships are constitutive of the nature of the human being, whereas WEN seems to argue that even though a relationship is present, it does not hold these features; instead, WEN seems to claim that the relationship between human beings and the environment – or nature as is the term the organisation utilises – is a relationship of human dependency on the environment. The environment appears to exist for the benefit of the human being, in the sense that it has the potential of promoting human health, i.e. its value appears to be extrinsic. This conclusion differs from the conclusion reached by Næss and Scheler, who emphasise that due to the necessary presence of the relationships in order to generate this whole, the relationships can be seen to hold both intrinsic and extrinsic value. This idea is not present in the content on WEN’s website. Thus, even if WEN acknowledges the relevance of the relationship between the human being and the environment like the philosophers do, it appears that the value WEN attaches to these relationships and the adjacent conclusions reached differ from the value and conclusions made by the philosophers.

Furthermore, WEN seems to be in accordance with Scheler and Bateson in the claim that there is no discrepancy between the human mind and body, but WEN seems to assume a relationship of causality whereas Scheler and Bateson assume that mental and bodily functions are identical within the human being.

3.3 Human Relationships with the Environment and Respect for the Internal Intricacies of the Ecosystem – Organiclea

Organiclea is the name of an organisation and community garden located on the edge of Epping Forest in the valley of The River Lea, East London. The organisation launched in 2001 with the intention of promoting “that more food can and should be grown locally, in

London – and that it’s better to work with others than alone.”¹⁴⁴ The guiding vision of the organisation is expressed in the following statement:

Our vision is of a socially and environmentally just food system where the means of production and distribution, including access to land, seed and water are controlled not by markets or corporations but by the people themselves. We are working to create just production and trading systems that provide a fair income to food producers and guarantee the rights of communities to access healthy and nutritious food produced using ecologically sound and sustainable methods, a food system existing in a wider context of social justice.¹⁴⁵

With this vision as my point of departure, the following analysis seeks to discuss whether or not adjacent guiding principles and statements found on Organiclea’s official website bear resemblances to ideas discussed in the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson.

The gardening practices of Organiclea revolve around the principles of permaculture.¹⁴⁶ At Organiclea’s website the organisation provides their interpretation of the practice:

[...] However, permaculture has gone beyond its roots to become a worldwide movement encompassing all aspects of how we as human beings can live harmoniously in relation to each other and the earth and its finite resources. It seeks to create sustainable human habitats by following nature’s patterns. This is a ‘design system’ looking at how elements are placed in relation to each other with the aim of creating a self-sustaining, low input-high output, non-exploiting whole.¹⁴⁷

Having considered this quotation and the remaining content on Organiclea’s website, it is possible to discern two recurring ideas. Firstly, as the content in this quotation indicates, permaculture is central for Organiclea and, in their aim to implement these principles in their activities, considers there to be a potentiality for human beings to develop relationships with both other human beings and the environment – an idea that is present in the theories of the philosophers as discussed previously. Secondly, the claim that the overall aim of permaculture, and arguably the activities of Organiclea, is “to create sustainable human habitats by following nature’s patterns”, indicating a recognition of intricacies within the

¹⁴⁴ Organiclea, *Our History*, <https://www.organiclea.org.uk/about/history/> (Retrieved 2018-11-20)

¹⁴⁵ Organiclea, *Our Vision*, <https://www.organiclea.org.uk/about/vision/> (Retrieved 2018-11-17)

¹⁴⁶ Organiclea, *Permaculture*, <https://www.organiclea.org.uk/about/ethics/permaculture/> (Retrieved 2018-11-12)

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

ecosystem itself, a thought present in Bateson's notion that the ecosystem contains regularities and patterns of communication. These two ideas reoccur and overlap throughout the content analysed on Organiclea's website and the following analysis is, therefore, structured around these two central ideas. Furthermore, as was discussed in conjunction with the analysis of the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson, the overarching theme that resulted in the various conclusions made can arguably be seen as belonging to the idea of either essentiality holism or weak holism. The final sentence in this quotation indicates that Organiclea adopts a form of weak holism in its activities, since it claims that the indicated "whole" can be created, which would not be the case should it have adopted a perspective of essentiality holism.

Continuing the inquiry, I will provide one example on how the two ideas of human relations between one another and the environment and the presence of an overall metaphysical system overlap in the approach of Organiclea. Consider the following statement:

In people as in plants, we know everything has value and we celebrate diversity. And just as no element of an ecosystem exists on its own, we believe that in the community, as on the land, the web of connections and relationships between all elements is what keeps the system healthy and balanced.¹⁴⁸

As indicated in this statement, Organiclea considers all beings, plants and humans, and the diversity of beings to be valuable. However, it is not clear whether or not one being holds a higher value in relation to another being. That minor note aside, it appears that Organiclea's point in this statement is that individual beings, or elements in the system, do not exist on their own but rather, through relations with one another, generate a system which is further maintained and kept balanced due to the continued existence of these relationships. Thus, in the statement it is possible to discern the point made by Næss, Scheler and Bateson that beings are in relation with one another in their environment and with the environment itself, i.e. beings are not clearly demarked unities, separated from other elements. Furthermore, the second point made above bears resemblances to Bateson's idea that it is the relations between parts that generate and maintain the system itself. This idea appears also in the content analysed in relation to The Green Party and the same point can, therefore, be made here; although it can be argued that this perspective bears resemblances to the mentioned claim of Bateson, it cannot solely be accredited to him since he seems to solely describe the intricacies

¹⁴⁸ Organiclea, *People and Community*, <https://www.organiclea.org.uk/about/ethics/people-and-community/> (Retrieved 2018-11-20)

of the ecosystem, absent of normative judgments, as is the case with this quotation on Organiclea’s website. What I believe can be said, however, is that Organiclea considers all beings and the diversity of beings to hold value. This point is further illustrated in the statement that Organiclea operates with the aim of “maintenance of biodiversity and respect for wildlife”,¹⁴⁹ which indicates that the organisation believes that they have a responsibility for their conduct toward the biodiversity and other beings. However, it is not entirely clear what the nature of this value is or why it comes to be that this value can be attached to other beings and biodiversity.

In order to reach a possible conclusion to this concern, I will analyse the contents present on a blog, titled Grower’s Blog, as featured on Organiclea’s website. The posts are written by one of the founding members of the organisation – though the name of the author remains unknown. Worth noting, therefore, is that the statements made on this blog might not be representative of all members of the organisation, as was the case in the analysis of the interview with WEN co-director Julia Minnear. As above, the following analysis aims solely to gain an understanding of the underlying sentiments and motivations of one member of the organisation. Moreover, even if the statements analysed are not part of a coherent theory relating to the nature or relevance of the assumed relationships, they nonetheless can be interpreted as containing, at the very least, indication of an idea relating to this and other concerns.

The author states firstly in conjunction with a description of a gardening activity:

After all that, you begin to have a relationship with these odd bits of wood stuck in the ground. They promise to stay true and I have promised to adorn them with pear blossom. Mind, you can never be sure how relationships are going to pan out.¹⁵⁰

In my interpretation, the relevant point within this quotation is the claim that the assumed relationship between the human being – in this case the gardener – and the features in the environment – “these odd bits of wood” – even if the intention is to achieve a certain outcome – “staying true’ or ‘adorn them with pear blossom” – it is not always the case that this outcome will occur. The statement herein points to, in my interpretation, that the relationships are considered to be dynamic in kind, with a wide range of potential outcomes. This provides

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Organiclea, *Hard Play*, 20-02-2010; <https://organiclea.wordpress.com/2010/02/20/hard-play/> (Retrieved 2018-11-20)

us with the first clue of how the author, as a representative for Organiclea, conceives the relationships with others and the environment.

Yet another indication of the nature of the relationships between human beings and the environment can be found in the following statement:

[...] the realisation that we are, after all, capable of forming mutually beneficial relationships with each other, and with the natural world, that can cause you to sigh out loud.¹⁵¹

First of all, in this quotation the author characterises the nature of the presumed relationships as being mutually beneficial. However, even if it is stated that the mutually beneficial relationships are between other human beings or between human beings and the natural world (environment), the term “mutually beneficial” can be interpreted in two senses: the first interpretation would be that the benefit belongs to the parties involved in the relationship, thereby the relationship is beneficial *for* the parties involved, i.e. it holds extrinsic value; the second interpretation would be that the benefit belongs to the parties involved and for the relationship itself, thereby the relationship is beneficial both *for* the other parties and *for* itself; i.e. its value remains extrinsic in kind. These interpretations are based on the understanding of the term “beneficial” as entailing that the benefit is for something else or for itself, not in itself.

Second of all, note the occurrence of the word “capable” in this quotation. The usage of this word indicates that the author of the blog post conceives the human being (perhaps even other beings) to have the capacity to realise such relationships. It may be questioned, however, as to whether this is an inherent capacity of the human being – as was the conclusive claim of Næss, Scheler and Bateson – or a capacity that has to be acquired. The answer to this concern is not found in this statement or anywhere else in the content considered.

Lastly, the assumed result of realising the capability for these mutually beneficial relationships is seen to be “to sigh out loud”. I consider this statement to be slightly dubious, since it is unclear whether the occurrence of a loud sigh is a sign of relief, distress or any other emotions that affect the potential desirability of these relationships. However, it can be said that the definition of these relationships as mutually beneficial points to that they are, in fact, something that is desirable for the parties involved.

¹⁵¹ Organiclea, *Transglobal Underground*, 01-04-2010; <https://organiclea.wordpress.com/2010/04/01/transglobal-underground/> (Retrieved 2018-11-20)

So far in our investigation it can be said that the relationships are considered, by the author, to hold extrinsic value, to be dynamic and mutually beneficial, and that the human being has a capacity of forming relationships both with other human beings and the environment. Considering now a final quotation where an additional aspect of these relationships is introduced:

For, like peasants, gardeners and those who are on a level with their grower the world over, our solidaristic relationship with the land, its plants, animals and people, gives our simple vegetables a significance, a wholeness, that can neither be bought nor seized. A significance, a wholeness, the lack of which leaves a gnawing hunger in the gut, that can neither be named nor sated.¹⁵²

To define the relationships as “solidaristic” brings forth associations to the previous definition of the relationships as being mutually beneficial. In my interpretation, solidarity implies, at the very least, association with something, whether it be a cause, group, protest, and so forth. Thus, to define the relationships in terms of solidarity implies that the author considers them to have an element of association, which is not a surprising conclusion at all since association is arguably essential for a relationship to occur. However, the claim that due to the “solidaristic” character of these relationships the vegetables produced at the site contain the feature of “significance” or “wholeness”, whose absence – definition of “lack” – indicates the author has something in mind to add to in his definition of the “solidaristic” in relationship. One possible interpretation can arguably be that “solidaristic” entails not only association with the land, its plants, animals and people, but also a sense of sharing a common interest, goal, ambition and so forth, thus bringing about a sense of unity between these aspects in the relationship. Perhaps, this is the intention of ascribing “significance” and/or “wholeness” to the vegetables produced at the farm.

However, worth noting is that, even though the relationships are additionally defined as “solidaristic”, it is problematic to discuss whether or not the value is altered or if the previously made conclusion of the relationships as bearers of extrinsic value remains. This is due to the lack of a clear definition and implication of the word itself and the associated terms “significance” and “wholeness”. Nevertheless, I believe that the relationships are considered to result in something of value that is being added to the produce of Organiclea, a value that is not present in the produce from other farms. Thus, perhaps, the value of the relationships

¹⁵² Organiclea, *Of Brassicas and Kings*, 21-06-2015; <https://organiclea.wordpress.com/2015/06/21/of-brassicas-and-kings/> (Retrieved 2018-11-20)

remains extrinsic since their value is derived from this additional value of the produce, which, if considering the content in this quotation, holds intrinsic value due to it containing elements defined as “significance” and/or “wholeness”.

Yet another topic present on the Grower’s Blog is the idea that the ecosystem contains certain intricacies. How such intricacies are conceived to relate to the human beings and the activities at Organiclea is illustrated in the following quotations.

The author states firstly that: “Sooner or later, events confirm that, however much we try to regiment our affairs, we are ultimately subject to the laws, or rather patterns, of nature.”¹⁵³ In other words, nature is considered to contain certain intricacies which, in spite of human attempts to bypass them, eventually affect her and her actions. In my interpretation, the depiction of nature in this quotation gives rise to associations to the idea of a wider system in place, i.e. the ecosystem, even if the author does not utilise this specific term. Even if the content in this quotation is in accordance with already known postulates found in the field of ecology, I find it interesting that the underlying sentiment appears to be that even if the human being is a part of nature, or ecosystem, he has no sense of agency in relation to the intricacies therein – it is the ecosystem itself that holds such agency. This thought was not clearly articulated in the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson, who would rather emphasise the point of the human beings being an integrated part of and upholding such a system, a thought that does not seem to be present in this statement.

Further examples of this outlook on nature, or the ecosystem, can be found in the two following statements. Firstly, it is claimed that “[...] everything else in the garden, and in life, will unfold in its own sweet way [...]”.¹⁵⁴ Secondly, the author states:

On our courses we advise [...] to live out the sort of ‘stewardship’ role that the human species might [...] undertake on this planet. This is a matter of self-interest, not denial, as encouraging the sustained existence of a complex, balanced ecosystem in the garden allows us to sit back and let the native fauna do so much of the work of pest management and nutrient cycling.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Organiclea, *Sarvari Potato More*, 24-09-2013; <https://organiclea.wordpress.com/2013/09/24/sarvari-potato-more> (Retrieved 2018-11-22)

¹⁵⁴ Organiclea, *I’m so Excited*, 24-03-2010; <https://organiclea.wordpress.com/2010/03/24/im-so-excited> (Retrieved 2018-11-20)

¹⁵⁵ Organiclea, *The Fall & The Wild*, 24-09-2017; <https://organiclea.wordpress.com/2017/09/24/the-fall-the-wild> (Retrieved 2018-11-20)

The sentiment in these two statements contain resemblances with the message in the previous quotation: that nature, or the ecosystem, in itself contains intricacies and, as in these quotations, these intricacies allow the ecosystem to sustain itself. Worth noting in the former statement is the presence of the adjective “sweet” which gives rise to associations that the author attaches a positive value of some sort to these intricacies. The second thought present in these statements, as in the above quotation, is that it appears that the author attaches a sense of agency to the ecosystem itself to “unfold” or “do so much of the work”. However, in the latter quotation the reader gets an indication of the role of the human being in relation to the ecosystem: he assumes the role of the steward. I interpret this term to indicate that he has the responsibility to care for the ecosystem and assure its continued existence, a depiction that seems to be inconsistent with the view of nature or the ecosystem as containing its own intricacies and agency to “unfold” on its own accord, independent of human interference. However, I am aware that this might not be the interpretation preferred by Organiclea, who might promote an alternative interpretation that does not result in such inconsistencies.

Considering the above, it appears that the author, as a representative of Organiclea, conceives the ecosystem to contain in itself the intricacies and means to sustain itself. The role of the human being in relation to the ecosystem is the role of the steward, which indicates that he has a responsibility to maintain the ecosystem. Bearing in mind the discussion relating to the idea that the human being is in a relationship with his environment, I believe it can be said that the author considers the human being to be part of the ecosystem described, as was also insisted by Næss, Scheler and Bateson. It is however unclear if the author considers the presence of the ecosystem to be generating an overarching whole, or if it holds intrinsic or extrinsic value and how it comes to be so.

3.3.1 Summary and Additional Remarks

In the above paragraphs I have presented and interpreted statements from the organisation Organiclea and the author of the blog featured on the organisation’s website, with the intention of discussing potential similarities between the views of the organisation and the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson.

As discussed above, Organiclea adheres to the conception of these philosophers that the human being is in a relationship with the beings in his environment. The above discussions led to the conclusion that the relationships, as conceived by Organiclea, hold the following traits: they are dynamic, solidaristic and mutually beneficial, which indicate that they hold

extrinsic value since their value lies in them being beneficial *for* something else. It was further discussed that Organiclea considers the human being to be capable of forming relationships of this kind, even if it is unclear whether or not this capacity is inherent to the nature of the human being as in the claims made by Næss, Scheler and Bateson. Absent in the content analysed associated with Organiclea is a discussion of whether or not the assumed relationships between the human being and other beings result in the sensation of belonging to a whole. This point was widely discussed in conjunction with the theories of Næss and Scheler, and the analysis resulted in the conclusion that due to the necessary presence of the relationships in order to generate this whole, the relationships and the act of identification can be seen to hold both intrinsic and extrinsic value. Since this is not the case in the content analysed in the present context, a similar conclusion cannot be reached regarding the potential conception held by Organiclea of this feature of the assumed relationships. Thus, although Organiclea is in accordance with the philosophers of the existence of relationships between the human being and the features in the environment, it appears that their results, implications and adjacent conclusions in terms of value differ from the conclusions and implications discussed by Næss, Scheler and Bateson.

Yet another topic that bears resemblances to the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson is the presence of a metaphysical system, and in the context of Organiclea this system is the ecosystem. As discussed above, this system is conceived, on the one hand, to contain internal intricacies to sustain itself regardless of human interference; on the other hand, the role of the human being is considered to be that of a steward, thereby indicating that he has a responsibility towards the creation and maintenance of the system. Due to the lack of further content relating to this topic, it is problematic to reach a conclusion in regards to the type of value Organiclea attaches to the presence of the ecosystem.

3.4 Concluding Remarks

The intention with this chapter has been to explore whether or not the London-based organisations The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea raise topics and conceive holistic constellations as being bearers of intrinsic or extrinsic value similar to those of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson.

First and foremost, I would like to raise the issue that the choice of wording in outlining the question for this chapter has proven to be problematic. The choice of the word “similarities” appears, upon reflection, not to be suitable for the present purpose. Even though it is possible

to discern similarities between the topics discussed by the organisations and Næss, Scheler and Bateson I find, in retrospect, it to be far too strong to describe the connection between the topics discussed by the organisations and the philosophers. Perhaps a more suitable word would be “association” to describe such a connection. The reason for my preference to utilise the latter over the former is based on the interpretation that the word “similarities” indicates a discernible connection between the content in the philosophers’ theories and the content on the organisations’ websites, whereas the word “association” does not appear to hold these traits. Rather, I find the usage of this word to more accurately describe the connection present between the topics raised by the organisations and Næss, Scheler and Bateson. This preference is based on the above analysis where it can be said, with some certainty, that the organisations do indeed present postulates that fall under one theme or the other presented in chapter two, but the similarity between the organisations’ postulates and the postulates of the philosophers cannot be overexaggerated. It appears that The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea adhere to the same basic conception of the human being, the environment and the world as put forward by Næss, Scheler and Bateson. Worth noting, however, is that there exist differences between the organisations, thus they cannot be conceived as a unanimous organisation – for example when WEN does not mention whether or not they consider there to exist a worldwide metaphysical system as mentioned by The Green Party and Organiclea. Worth noting further is that the organisations differ from the philosophers in their interpretations and conclusions of the topics presented. Thus, the differences clearly outnumber the similarities.

I believe that the only potential similarity between Næss, Scheler and Bateson and the organisations in terms of value lies in the claim made by The Green Party that the worldwide metaphysical system, i.e. the ecosystem, as a whole holds intrinsic value. The difference, on the other hand, worth mentioning between Næss, Scheler and Bateson and WEN and Organiclea is that these organisations appear to attach extrinsic value to the occurrence of relationships between the human being and the beings in his environment. The same conclusion was not reached in regards to the content analysed in relation to The Green Party, due to lack of further content relating to the topic of human relations with the environment. The lack of content was a reoccurring feature in the analysis of all three organisations, thus I reserve myself that there might be alternative conclusions and interpretations of the content presented.

The lack of content might be due to the difference in medium. The medium used when conducting a comparative analysis of the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson was extensive literary works written by the respective philosopher, where a range of content was present in support of the conclusions reached. This was not the case in the comparative analysis between the organisations and the philosophers, where the medium was solely content present on the various organisations' websites. The content on the websites is limited for various reasons: perhaps the organisations seek to present the core message and areas of concern to the audience without embarking on an extensive philosophical exploration of their topics of interest. Moreover, content presented on an online medium does not necessarily involve similar requirements of accuracy as is the case with a literary work that has been peer-reviewed and potentially debated and edited at great length prior to publishing.

The difference in the intended audience might contribute to the occurrence of differences between the accounts presented by Næss, Scheler and Bateson, on the one hand, and The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea, on the other hand. It is problematic to speculate regarding the specific characteristics of the audience intended by the philosophers, but I believe it can be said, with some certainty, that the literary works are predominantly intended for readers who have some knowledge or interest in philosophy and regardless of, I believe, if these readers belong to a specific time, society or region. Considering the intended audience for the organisations it appears that it is, first of all, intended for contemporary human beings, nationwide or local, to United Kingdom or City of London. Thus, the content is generated and directed at addressing issues that concern these local human beings. Furthermore, these organisations seem to have as a primary focus to encourage change in one way or another, either politically (The Green Party), feministically (WEN) or locally (Organiclea). As a result, it appears that the organisations' rhetoric seeks to encourage the audience to become members and interact with the organisations in order to bring about such a change. This aspect is not present in the account of the philosophers, in the sense that they are not encouraging the readers to "join them" in an organisation that seeks to live in accordance with their teachings. All this considered, I find it interesting that the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson, formulated some time ago, resonate in the aims and motivations of these analysed organisations of today.

As a final observation I find it relevant to point out that, though it can be said that The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea are lacking clear explicated philosophical postulates in the sense of philosophical theories such as it is in the theories presented by Næss, Scheler and Bateson,

it remains that the organisations present, at the very least, values that are guiding the organisations at large. Considering the website of The Green Party, their values are listed in their political programme in the form of the 10 pillars that constitute the basis of the party; WEN presents the reader with four core values that are guiding the organisation; and Organiclea's website features a section dedicated to outlining the ethics and visions of the organisation. Thus, even if the organisations do not elaborate in full the reasons for holding something valuable or whether this something holds intrinsic or extrinsic value, it remains that values are present in the undertakings and motivations of the organisations. In conclusion, what can be said is that in the analysis of exploring potential similarities between the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson and The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea, the similarities, or rather associations, are to be found in the topics addressed and the holistic constellations considered to exist, but not necessarily in the conception regarding the value the constellations hold. Rather, conception of the value attached to the constellations depend, most likely, on what the individual organisation considers relevant for both the present context and themselves in terms of specific aims and the human beings they seek to address – which might be to address and rectify the devastating consequences of climate change that are facing us today.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this final chapter is twofold: firstly, it seeks to answer the questions of issue addressed in this thesis; secondly, the chapter will further explore prospective applications and relevance of the findings for the wider society and the potential for further research.

4.1 The Human Being, The Environment and The World – Topics Relevant in the Past and Present

4.1.1 Discussed Similarities between the Theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson

The first question of issue that has been addressed in this thesis sought to explore the potentiality of similarities between the theories of Arne Næss, Max Scheler and Gregory Bateson in terms of what holistic constellations are considered to exist and to be of value (either intrinsic or extrinsic).

The analysis resulted in three topics where it is possible to discern similarities, as indicated in the first question. The three topics are as follows: the idea that human faculties are in collaboration within the human being; the occurrence of human relationships with the environment that are constituting the sense of self; and the existence of and participation in a worldwide metaphysical system.

In regards to the idea that the internal faculties of the human being are in collaboration with one another, Næss, Scheler and Bateson argue – contrary to Western dualistic notions – that there are no principal distinctions between human faculties such as mind and body or reason and emotion – rather, these faculties collaborate within the human being. As was discussed in conjunction with this topic, Næss utilises Spinoza's term *ratio* to argue that in a choice situation, the ratio allows the human being to take into consideration both reason and emotions in order to reach a decision that is in accordance with his deepest norms and priorities. As different from Næss, Scheler and Bateson argue that there cannot be a distinction between the human mind and body, thereby not discussing the potential relevance of emotions or feelings. Scheler introduces his concept of *person*, a metaphysical entity within the human being that is necessary for the human being to perform any actions. The person is, essentially, one unitary being, otherwise human action would be impossible. Therefore, there can be no distinction between inner and outer perception or psychic and bodily processes. Bateson, on the other hand, argues for the importance of sensory end organs (as registering

differences in the sensory world) in generating mental processes. Mind, therefore, can be located in the entirety of the human being and there cannot be a distinction between mind and body.

Albeit sharing the common view of the occurrence of faculties in collaboration within the human being, Næss, Scheler and Bateson utilise different concepts and argumentation in support of this claim. The analysis further resulted in the conclusion that these thinkers are in unison regarding the individual human faculties holding extrinsic value. The collaboration between these faculties results in that these faculties are a unity which holds intrinsic value.

The second topic presented, where it is possible to discern similarities between Næss, Scheler and Bateson, is the claim that the human being is necessarily in a relationship with beings and entities in his environment. These relationships contribute to the constitution and understanding of the human being's self. Næss introduces the notion of the *ecological self*, defined as an inherent capacity of the human being that allows him to identify himself with beings and features in his surroundings, which contributes to the constitution of the own self. In the same sense that a person necessarily belongs to a human being, Scheler argues that the human being is essentially in a community with other human beings, known as the *collective person*. By performing acts of both fellow-feeling and identification towards other human and non-human beings, the individual human being gets a sensation of being in a relationship with these other beings and his environment (which essentially belong to any organism). Bateson challenges the definition of the human self as solely being present within the boundaries of the human being; quite the contrary, Bateson argues that the human being's constitution, like any organism, depends on his position in various systems which contain other organisms and entities. The system itself contains pathways or lines between the parts in the system where information – defined as differences – is transmitted. These lines or pathways were interpreted as relationships.

The above analysis resulted in the conclusion that Næss, Scheler and Bateson claim that the very essence of the human being is to be in relationships with beings and features in his surroundings, which determine the constitution of the own self. One difference presented regards that Scheler and Næss allocate intrinsic and extrinsic value to acts of fellow-feeling and identification. These notions were not discussed by Bateson. That difference aside, the analysis resulted in the conclusion that a common idea for these philosophers is that the

relationships discussed result in a conception of the world, or even the universe, as being a unity or a whole, which is a bearer of intrinsic value.

Thus, the third topic analysed considers Næss's, Scheler's and Bateson's common idea of the existence and characteristics of this unity or whole, above referred to as a worldwide metaphysical system. The human and non-human beings are necessarily part of and upholding this wider system. Næss utilises the term the *greater Self* to refer to this whole, thereby indicating that there is no distinction between this Self and the human self in terms of self-realisation and identification. In the previous section, it was discussed that other organisms are what the human being identify himself with and they are, thus, also part of and upholding this great Self. As a result, the world is necessarily an all-encompassing unity and whole. Scheler presents and defines *the principle of solidarity* in order to argue for the universal community of individual, collective and infinite person. This universal community generates an all-encompassing unity which, in itself, validates the principle of solidarity. Worth noting, however, is that Scheler seems to claim that it is solely human beings that are part of this community. Bateson, lastly, argues for the occurrence of a large Mental system, or systems, in the biosphere that contains consistencies of logic and communication which encompass the whole of reality, including human and non-human beings. The beings in the world necessarily uphold and assure the continuation of this system.

The analysis resulted in the conclusion that Næss, Scheler and Bateson attach intrinsic value to the occurrence of unity or whole that the worldwide (or universal as Scheler suggests) metaphysical system generates. These thinkers are, further, unanimous in stating that the beings – human, non-human or both – in the world participate in and uphold this system.

4.1.2 Discussed Similarities between Næss, Scheler and Bateson and The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea

The second question of issue addressed in this thesis explores the possibility of potential similarities between the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson and the organisations The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea, in terms of arguments utilised and beliefs that certain holistic constellations exist and hold either intrinsic or extrinsic value. It was noted that the word “similarities” were not accurate in the description of the potential connection entailed between these thinkers and the organisations. Rather, I find the word “associations” to be more appropriate in the description and understanding of the connection between the topics discussed by Næss, Scheler and Bateson, on the one hand, and The Green Party, WEN and

Organiclea, on the other. The reason for the preference of the word “associations” rather than “similarities” is that although the organisations can rightly be said to agree that the holistic constellations discussed in chapter 2 exist, it remains that they differ from the philosophers in their conceptions, implications, results of these constellations and the value (or no value at all) ascribed to them.

In general, it can be said that The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea are in agreement with the philosophers on that the human beings are in relationships of dependency with the beings and entities in the environment. However, the organisations do not claim that these relationships are due to an inherent capacity of the human being, or that the relationships constitute the human self. The organisations seem to argue that it is wishful that the human beings engage in such relationships. This insistence was not a clear feature in the theories of Næss, Scheler and Bateson. To present the findings in more detail I will now summarise the conclusions reached after the analysis of the content present on the websites of The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea.

The Green Party seems to be in accordance with Næss, Scheler and Bateson that there exists a worldwide metaphysical system in the biosphere that is encompassing all beings. The presence of this system results in that the world is a whole unit. This unitary, holistic world appears to hold intrinsic value for The Green Party. The organisation is also in accordance with the philosophers that there are relationships between the human being and his environment. It was not clear whether or not these relationships necessarily result in that the world is a unity or if these relationships hold intrinsic or extrinsic value.

The idea that the human being has relationships with the environment seems also to be held by the organisation WEN. It was discussed that WEN appears to attach extrinsic value to these relationships, since the environment has the potentiality of promoting human wellbeing. The notion of enhancing human wellbeing seems central for the organisation and it was discussed that in this particular aim, it is possible to discern associations between WEN and Scheler’s and Bateson’s claim that there is no discrepancy between human mind and body. However, the difference exists between WEN and Scheler and Bateson in the sense that these thinkers seem to base this conclusion on the idea that mental and bodily activities are identical in kind; WEN, on the other hand, seems to be of the view that it is a relationship of causality between the body and mind, in the sense that alterations or activities in the body affect the mental state of the human being. It is not clear whether or not WEN reaches the same

conclusion as Scheler and Bateson that the human being is an integrated holistic being or whether or not bodily and/or mental processes are bearers of intrinsic or extrinsic value.

The organisation Organiclea, as The Green Party and WEN believes that the human being has relationships with the environment. As different from The Green Party and WEN, Organiclea claims that the human being has a capacity to form such relationships, but it was not clear if the organisation considers this to be due to an inherent capacity of the human being. It was discussed that Organiclea considers the relationships between the human being and the environment to be of extrinsic value since they are characterised, among other traits, as being mutually beneficial for the parties involved. Organiclea further claims that there is a worldwide metaphysical system, presumably the ecosystem itself, that the human being and other beings are part of. However, it was not clear from the content on the organisation's website whether or not it views this system to hold intrinsic or extrinsic value.

I believe the answer to the question of issue relating to this particular area of interest for the thesis can now be formulated in the following: the similarities, or rather associations, present between Næss, Scheler and Bateson, on the one hand, and The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea, on the other, indicates that these organisations and the philosophers adhere to the same grounds in their conceptions of the human being, the environment and the world. However, they differ in their interpretations, implications, results, and notions of value of these conceptions. In terms of value, The Green Party, like Næss, Scheler and Bateson, allocates intrinsic value to the worldwide metaphysical system they believe to exist in the world. WEN and Organiclea, as different from the philosophers, imply that the assumed relationships between the human being and the environment are of extrinsic value. The potential similarity in terms of value between Næss, Scheler and Bateson and the organisations appears, thus, to solely be in the idea of The Green Party – that the ecosystem, as a system in its whole, holds intrinsic value.

4.2 Final Remarks and Suggested Further Research

In the course of submitting this thesis, I have become aware that the topics discussed and addressed by Næss, Scheler and Bateson remain relevant even in this very day and age. This is not solely reflected in the content on the websites of The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea, but also in the discussions in other disciplines and organisations. There has been an increasing number of chefs, such as Dan Barber, who seeks to educate diners on the origins of their food in the natural world, thereby raising awareness of human connection to and

dependency on a healthy environment. Biologists such as Rachel Carson, whose revolutionary book problematises the extensive usage of pesticides in industrialised farming during the first half of the last century, gave rise to a global environmental movement whose legacy resonates in contemporary society. In London, a group of psychotherapists urge their clients to engage in green spaces to improve mental wellbeing. I believe that this is but a mere fraction of organisations and individuals that are seeking to challenge the status quo, which is argued to contain practices and conceptions that are no longer sustainable. Contrary to these practices and conceptions it is argued, broadly speaking, that human beings ought to take action based on care for the environment and other beings, in one way or another, and to realise that the ecosystem requires respect and protection. Without further support, other than a brief observation of the debate taking place in London, the element of activism and the pressing need thereof appear to be one unifying factor of the accounts presented today in my context of London. Such call for activism is not clearly featured in the texts written by Næss, Scheler and Bateson.

Even so, as I read through the texts of contemporary organisations and listen to various talks, I am fascinated by the associations I see between the topics of the human being, the environment and the world, as seen by organisations active in contemporary society and as expressed in the texts of Næss, Scheler and Bateson. It appears that the topics discussed in this thesis remain relevant in the contemporary environmental debate, but they are not being simply copied from the theories of these philosophers or from texts and theories relevant decades ago. Rather, the topics are being reinterpreted to better capture the current state and relevance of the human beings, the environment and the world currently, where the full extent of the environmental crisis is starting to be known. This realisation was absent in the historical context of Næss, Scheler and Bateson. Perhaps, it is precisely in the realisation of the full extent of the environmental crisis and the awareness that time is running out that there has been an increase in calls for activism, as presented and motivated by various organisations and individuals.

The varying accounts represented by organisations and individuals in this contemporary context are, as expected, highly diverse. The mere fraction of the nationwide debate taking place in the United Kingdom (as the second part of the thesis sought to analyse) gives an indication that different organisations seek to address their concern for these issues from various perspectives. It is safe to assume that an analysis of all organisations featuring in the United Kingdom or the world would have generated a different result. However, I believe that

organisations and individuals not analysed in detailed in this thesis still base their activities and motivate their aims from a basis of what they consider valuable and why. Alongside these questions are issues relating to what the organisations – or for that matter individuals – see themselves to be or how they want to present themselves to others. Even if such considerations are not clearly articulated, I believe they are, nevertheless, present. I find that, should such considerations of these questions not be present, it would be problematic to motivate the aims of either an organisation or an individual. In my interpretation, questions encompassed by these wide topics relate to the philosophical discipline of value theory.

The nature of the medium utilised by various organisations and individuals in contemporary society has changed dramatically since Næss, Scheler, Bateson, and thinkers of their time. In contemporary society there has been an increase in the usage of online platforms in order for organisations and individuals to present their beliefs and concerns. As the conclusion of chapter 3 mentions, online mediums do not entirely require the arguments and the conclusions presented to follow the stringent rules of philosophical validity, and it is rare that online authors have the time and place to present any explicated philosophical theory; rather, the aim seems to be, at least in the case of The Green Party, WEN and Organiclea, to convince the audience to become members of the organisation. Nevertheless, even though not fully presented, these organisations seem to have a clear notion of what they consider valuable, what they seek to achieve (even if it is not always clear why it is so) and, more importantly, *how* the organisations will achieve this goal. These organisations appear to be based on two notions: they have established the values or ethics of the organisation, and they present how they act in order to attain predetermined goals of the organisation that, they believe, reflect these values. I believe that any organisation or individual, environmental or non-environmental, could clearly benefit from considering what it considers valuable, and how these values can be attained in the activities of the organisation or individual. A consideration of values, I find, remains relevant for anyone that conducts any activity in the world we live in by providing a motivation and reason for our actions.

Worth addressing is the question of how environmental organisations and individuals in contemporary society intend to achieve their aims, with particular emphasis on activism as one of the primary means – and, furthermore, whether or not these organisations and individuals could, in order to achieve their aims, benefit from being affiliated with a philosophical theory.

On the one hand, one could argue that such organisations or individuals ought to focus on constructing their own framework with the aim of addressing a specific political issue at hand; all the whilst without adhering to an overall philosophical theory, since it might be considered irrelevant – it might even be the case that affiliations to one philosophical theory result in the organisation or movement becoming stringent and inflexible. On the other hand, affiliation to one philosophical theory or the other as the basis for action has the ability to provide the organisation or individual with a clear framework, context, depth and understanding – both for the organisation itself and its potential members – of the aims and purposes of their actions. I am aware that this question requires further analysis and explication but for the time being, I am drawn to the conclusion that, even though affiliation to a philosophical theory has the risk of resulting in stagnation or inflexibility, it is beneficial for an organisation or individual in the sense that it can provide an understanding and context to their aims and activities.

As discussed in the above paragraphs, the contemporary debate addressing environmental issues in London, the United Kingdom and the world at large contains a diversity of contributions from various organisations and individuals, all of whom seek to address the looming threat of environmental degradation from their respective standpoint. A topic for further research could be to conduct an analysis, similar to that undertaken in the second question of issue in this thesis, of these accounts on a national and global scale in order to gain insights into their grievances, values, arguments and suggested alternatives. The questions that could be addressed in such a research project would be, amongst others, to identify a common denominator in these varying accounts and analyse further the implications of said denominator or the lack thereof. Yet another question relevant for such a research project would be to discuss further whether these organisations could benefit from adhering to a philosophical theory or not, and why.

A further topic of interest for further research would be the contemporary environmental debate taking place in London. One reason for the interest in this topic is, in 2019, London has been announced to become the first city in the world to be allocated the status of National Park City. The aim of such a research project would be to analyse the arguments and reasons, pro and contra, for London to receive this status, with the additional aim of investigating the outcome, both expected and realised, of this nomination.

Related to these two areas of interest for further research would be a research project that considers the historical, societal and political factors – both nationwide and worldwide – that facilitated the contexts which precipitated certain environmental movements or political parties. The aim of this research project would be to gain an understanding of the background and context of these movements or political parties, thereby gaining an insight into issues that might motivate the public to take action.

Finally, in recent years a new model has been suggested in discussing the topics of the environmental crisis and climate change. This model criticises the current economic model and discourse of discussion, in that it is based on a capitalistic model that assumes there is an infinite supply of resources. This capitalistic model will, therefore, not solve the environmental crisis since resources are, in fact, finite. Opposing this, the suggested model claims that there is a need for a new economic framework that is based on a circular, rather than linear, model and the idea that resources are finite. The aim of this research topic could be to consider in detail the grievances this new model brings forth, to discuss whether or not the arguments are valid, and to analyse if the suggested model provides a better alternative to the criticised model in addressing such grievances. A related topic could further be to discuss the relevance of language in determining human beings' cognition relating to the environmental crisis, and explore the potentiality of the need for an alternative language, inspired by the suggested new economic model, in solving the environmental crisis.

5. Människan, Miljön och Världen; En Exegetisk Studie av Miljöfilosofins Historia samt den Nuvarande Kontexten i London, Storbritannien.

Denna avhandling syftar till att undersöka huruvida det föreligger några likheter mellan 1900-tals miljöfilosoferna Arne Næss, Max Scheler och Gregory Bateson. Mitt fokus i avhandlingen är att diskutera vilka holistiska konstellationer som dessa filosofer anser existera samt om och varför dessa konstellationer har intriniskt eller extrinsiskt värde, så som dessa termer förstås av Michael J. Zimmerman. Vidare kommer jag undersöka om det är möjligt att skönja likheter mellan dessa filosofer, i enlighet med ovannämnda aspekter, och moderna miljöorganisationer som är verksamma i nutidens London. Dessa organisationer är The Green Party of England and Wales (The Green Party), Women's Environmental Network (WEN) och Organiclea. Således är syftet tvådelat med det övergripande huvudsyftet att diskutera hur föreställningar om värde kan ta sig i uttryck i filosofiska texter och hos organisationer utanför den filosofiska disciplinen för att diskutera om dessa organisationer har ett värdeteoretiskt ramverk som kan liknas vid ett filosofiskt ställningstagande.

Metoden för att uppfylla syftet och besvara frågeställningarna är att utföra en exegetisk jämförande analys av dels texter skrivna av ovannämnda filosofer, dels studera material på respektive organisations webbplats. Böcker skrivna av Næss, Scheler och Bateson har lästs i sin helhet och därefter analyserats med syfte att finna likheter mellan dessa filosofer i enlighet med ovannämnda aspekter. I denna analys kom jag fram till att även om de aktuella filosoferna tillhör distinkta filosofiska traditioner och bakgrunder kan det sägas att deras teorier faller under det övergripande filosofiska förhållningsättet holism. Detta kommer i uttryck och presenteras i tre olika teman, som utgör avhandlingens struktur. De är följande: föreställningen att det inte föreligger dualism mellan olika fakulteter inom människan, idén att människan befinner sig i ett förhållande till varelser och ting i hennes omgivning som bidrar till förnimmelsen och konstruerandet av det egna självet samt ställningstagandet att det existerar ett världsomspännande metafysiskt system som människan och andra varelser deltar i och upprätthåller. Dessa tre teman korresponderar var och en till en rubrik för den här avhandlingen: människan, miljön och världen. Värt att notera är att även om Næss, Scheler och Bateson är eniga om existensen av dessa holistiska konstellationer så föreligger det vissa skillnader mellan dessa filosofer då det kommer till det specifika innehållet i dessa konstellationer och varför de har intriniskt eller extrinsiskt värde.

Dessa tre teman appliceras därefter på det tillgängliga materialet på respektive organisations webbplats med syftet att utröna huruvida dessa organisationer anser att dessa holistiska konstellationer existerar och har ett värde, antingen intrinsiskt eller extrinsiskt. Således skiljer sig denna metod från analysmetoden av de filosofiska texterna i det avseendet att temana var etablerade innan analysen utfördes.

I denna analys kom jag fram till att det är möjligt att skönja vissa kopplingar mellan Næss, Scheler och Bateson samt organisationerna The Green Party, WEN och Organiclea. Emellertid diskuterar jag i avhandlingen att ordet "likheter" för att beskriva dessa kopplingar är för starkt utan att ordet "associationer" snarare är mer passande. Anledningen till denna justering av benämning ligger främst i att det med rätta kan sägas att de valda organisationerna anser att dessa holistiska konstellationer existerar och är värdefulla, men de skiljer sig från Næss, Scheler och Bateson i deras tolkningar vilket påverkar synen på det värde som dessa konstellationer har. I analysen föreslår jag att de skilda organisationerna, med deras specifika intressen, syftar till att tillgodose intressen hos nutida människor bosatta i London och Storbritannien och att attrahera nya medlemmar som kan säkerställa organisationernas existens. Jag grundar denna slutsats på att organisationerna, generellt sett, tillskriver de holistiska konstellationerna extrinsiskt värde i det att de är värdefulla *för* människan. I avhandlingen diskuterar jag att ett sådant ställningstagande kan vara fruktsamt i rekryteringen av nya medlemmar. I avhandlingen noterar jag vidare att ett karaktärsdrag hos organisationerna är att de har ett stort fokus på aktivism, vilket skiljer sig från Næss, Scheler och Bateson i de texter av dem som är relevanta för avhandlingen. Jag föreslår att en möjlig anledning till detta är att effekterna av destruktiva klimatförändringar är mer kända i dag än vad de var i den kontext som filosoferna var verksamma i.

I avhandlingen resonerar jag vidare att valet av medium har en inverkan på de slutsatser som dras i analysen av de holistiska konstellationernas värde. Till skillnad från Næss, Scheler och Bateson, presenterar organisationerna sina påståenden på sina respektive webbplatser, vilket medför att de har begränsat utrymme och således möjlighet att presentera djupgående argument för sina ställningstaganden. Således är materialet för analysen begränsat och medför att det ter sig som att organisationerna inte har ett etablerat värdeteoretiskt ramverk som är vägledande för deras verksamhet. Å andra sidan föreslår jag i avhandlingen att organisationerna har ett sådant ramverk i det att de har en uppfattning om vad som är värdefullt för dem och varför. Jag diskuterar att ett sådant resonemang finns inom organisationerna i det att de presenterar avsnitt på sina webbplatser som presenterar deras

grundläggande värden, vilket i sin tur väcker associationer till filosofiska ställningstaganden. Jag diskuterar vidare i avhandlingen att om ett sådant perspektiv inte skulle vara tillgängligt skulle det vara problematiskt för organisationerna att bedriva sin verksamhet, motivera sina ställningstaganden till medlemmar, driva igenom förändringar och motivera den aktivism de förespråkar.

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