

Edith Stein on the Human Quest: An Analysis of Her Method

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Edith Stein (1891-1942) is an important figure in philosophy. She was one of Edmund Husserl's distinguished students. More importantly for Catholics, she is a saint. The late Pope John Paul II canonized her in 1998. Her doctoral dissertation on the problem of empathy marks a great progress in the phenomenological method of Husserl.

In this study I will make an analysis of Stein's methodology, to later conclude that her methodology was already a blend of Husserl's phenomenology and the perennial quest of what it means to be human. The study contains two parts: (1) Edith Stein and her method, and (2) the quest towards being human.

I. Edith Stein and Her Method

Edith Stein worked within the structure of Husserl's phenomenological method. Even as a Catholic educator later in her life, she had a preference for this method.¹

The aim of the phenomenological analysis is to get an intuition of the essence of an object. "Being" can become intelligible to

¹ Edith Stein, "The Human Person as Male or Female," *Images of the Human: The Philosophy of the Human Person In a Religious Context*, ed. Hunter Brown, et al (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1995), 410.

the mind through this kind of intuition. Through this method reality can be grasped.² That is why Stein was attracted to it. Even in her last works, before her tragic death in 1942, Stein continued to employ the phenomenological method. One can mention an article of Stein posthumously published in *The Thomist*, entitled "Ways to Know God: The 'Symbolic Theology' of Dionysius the Areopagite and its Factual Presupposition." Readers of phenomenology can outrightly detect Husserl's influences here.³

In her last work, *The Science of the Cross*, Stein's approach "remained that of a phenomenologist," claims its translator, Hilda Graef.⁴ The method is observable especially in Stein's analyses of the Night, the Ascent, the union with God, etc. She approaches these topics in an "intuitive and inductive way."⁵

Stein was a faithful disciple of Husserl. It was he who formed her philosophical thinking, as she confessed.⁶ The Husserlian framework really persisted throughout her works. However, as early as her first philosophical work, though loyal to the Husserlian phenomenological method, she already departed from the Master. As Baseheart explains, "Husserl, in his concern for epistemological structures, did not produce a holistic philosophical anthropology and separated personal experience from his ideal of philosophy as strict science."⁷ Husserl remained a child of his time. His was an ardent effort to establish philosophy as a rigorous science.

² See the commentary to this work of Stein. (Ibid., 420).

³ Stein, "Ways to Know God," trans. Rudolf Allers in *The Thomist*, vol. IX, no. 3 (July, 1946): 379-420. Also reprinted in a revised form in Stein, *Knowledge and Faith*, trans. Walter Redmond (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 2000), 83-134.

⁴ Stein, *The Science of the Cross: A Study of St. John of the Cross*, trans., Hilda Graef, ed. Dr. L. Gelber and Fr. Romaeus Leuven, O.C.D. (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1960), ix.

⁵ Ibid., xviii.

⁶ Stein, "Sketch of a Foreword to Finite and Eternal Being" (Fragment) in *Knowledge and Faith*, 81.

⁷ Mary Catharine Baseheart, *Person in the World* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 30.

On the other hand, Stein's approach, continues Baseheart, is "an original blend of phenomenological and perennial ways of probing the question of what it means to be human."⁸

Stein was also greatly influenced by Scheler. According to her, Scheler influenced her "far beyond the sphere of philosophy."⁹ It is generally known that among Scheler's central concepts is the concept of *person*. As John White puts it, "...what substance is for Aristotle or the *actus essendi* is for Aquinas, person is for Scheler."¹⁰ Hence, Stein must have followed Scheler on this path. Reading her work, *On the Problem of Empathy*, one can really observe a personalistic approach. This comes as no surprise, since her goal was to ascertain the structure of the human person. In doing this, Stein "draws not only on her intellectual experiences and reflections but also on those of her life with others."¹¹

The many experiences of Stein "supplied valuable material for analyses investigating themes of subjectivity and intersubjectivity."¹² Baseheart claims that Stein got her materials from

her personal experience of growing up in a large, warm Jewish family and the close bond that united her in her early professional years with men and women of the Phenomenological Society at Göttingen and with friends at Freiburg, as well as late relationships with her students, colleagues, and friends in many walks of life, including the nuns in Carmel.¹³

Sawicki even argues that the fourth and last chapter of Stein's dissertation, *On the Problem of Empathy*, already concerns "interpersonal communication." She observes that in this chapter

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Stein, *Life in a Jewish Family: An Autobiography*, Vol. I, trans. Josephine Koepfel, O.C.D. (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 1986), 260.

¹⁰ John White, "Max Scheler's Tripartite Anthropology," in American Catholic Philosophical Association, *Proceedings of the ACPA*, vol. 75, 2002, 255.

¹¹ Baseheart, *Person*, 30.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

there is already "the breaking and tearing of phenomenology, the hatching of a new model of personality integration." Commenting on Stein, Sawicki continues, "The young woman who crafted these words was working as a substitute teacher, having recently returned from a field hospital where she cared for dying soldiers. You do not refer directly to those experiences, but they haunt your text."¹⁴

Stein lived during the difficult times of Europe. Moreover, as mentioned in her autobiography, while finishing her work, there were "human problems" pressing upon her.¹⁵ These external worries could have affected her deeply. So much so that, in Sawicki's observation, even if Stein did not directly refer to these human problems, they haunted her text.

If Stein had persisted in simply following Husserl's framework, she could not have gone this far in her work. She would have remained only at the level of transcendental phenomenology. But she went beyond this. According to Sawicki, the "epoche" of Husserl was already difficult to enforce.¹⁶ For instance, the personal problems encountered by Stein and all her experiences as a nurse volunteer during the war could no longer be bracketed.¹⁷ Since phenomenology is an extension of the Cartesian indubitability of the *Cogito*, the "transcendental Ego" remains despite the reduction.¹⁸ The personal experiences of Stein could no longer be a part of the exclusion. This was the reason why she had to go beyond the

¹⁴ Marianne Sawicki, *Body, Text, and Science* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 131.

¹⁵ For further details see Stein, *Life in a Jewish Family*, 371-376.

¹⁶ Sawicki, *Body*, 131.

¹⁷ Details of Stein's nursing experience see *Life in a Jewish Family*, 318-367.

¹⁸ In the *Ideas*, Husserl puts it flatly, "I myself as this individual essence, posited absolutely, as the open infinite field of pure phenomenological data and their inseparable unity, am the 'transcendental Ego'; the absolute positing means that the world is no longer 'given' to me in advance, its validity that of a simple existent, but that henceforth it is exclusively my Ego that is given (given from my new standpoint), given purely as that which has being in itself, in itself experiences a world, confirms the same, and so forth." (*Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W.R. Boyce Gibson [New York: Collier Books, 1972], 11).

transcendental phenomenology. Fortunately, she got Scheler and Dilthey to help her. Years later after her dissertation, she testified,

In the first section, based on some indications from Husserl's lectures, I had examined the act of "empathy" as a particular act of cognition. After that, however, I went on to something which was personally close to my heart and which continually occupied me anew in all later works: the constitution of the human person. In connection with my work, research along this line was necessary to show how the comprehension of mental associations differs from the simple perception of psychic conditions. Max Scheler's lectures and writings, as well as the works of Wilhelm Dilthey, were of the utmost importance to me in connection with these questions. Following up on the voluminous literature on empathy which I had to work through, I added several chapters on empathy in social, ethical, and aesthetic areas.¹⁹

At first, while investigating the problem of empathy, she found the transcendental phenomenology of Husserl suitable to her project. According to James Collins, the task of Stein at that time could still be accomplished within the Husserlian framework. "Yet in her consequent investigation," continues Collins, "she was led to admit that only a painstaking analysis of the structure of human personality could validate this experience of other subjects. Thus her dissertation served mainly to raise a set of problems and to suggest the probable solution."²⁰

Stein's use of her method indeed created confusion. She was flitting from "the eidetic realm, to the realm of nature and history, to the transcendental, and back again, all with nary a glance in the direction of methodological taboo."²¹ It was a "crazy quilt," Sawicki adds.²² Maybe this happened since Stein was still working within the auspices of the Master. Nevertheless, it is not our task to deal with Sawicki's commentary on Stein's work. It is

¹⁹ Stein, *Life in a Jewish Family*, 397.

²⁰ James Collins, "Edith Stein and the Advance of Phenomenology," *Thought*, vol. XVII, no. 67 (December, 1942): 687.

²¹ Sawicki, *Body*, 131-132.

²² *Ibid.*, 132.

enough to say that Stein, in this first philosophical work, already crossed beyond the Husserlian line.

This consideration is very important. Stein later became a convert. As one can see, even the methodology she was using suggests that there are things in her dissertation that could have prepared her to conversion. Her method was already a blend of phenomenology and the perennial quest for what it means to be human. Only then can the *structure of the human person* be hypothesized as a seedbed that prepared for her later conversion.²³ Yet this provocative issue of her conversion is not the goal of the present study. Conversion appears to be beyond the scope of a philosophical inquiry. Thus the researcher reserves that for another, more theological work. For the purpose of the present study, however, the following analysis may suffice.

II. The Quest Towards Being Human

1. Preliminary Consideration: *The Tripartite Anthropology*

Stein's complete structure of a person, as can be drawn from her investigation on the problem of empathy, is a three-fold anthropology. What does this mean? She started her investigation with the constitution of the psycho-physical individual. The term psycho-physical can be dissected into two aspects, the psychological and the physical. Then towards the end of her dissertation, she speaks of the spiritual subject. Hence there are three things here: the psychological, the physical, and the spiritual.

²³ It must be made clear here that this dissertation of Stein cannot yet provide her a full understanding of the constitution of the human person. Five years after this work, in 1922, she wrote two treatises contained in a book called *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*. These two treatises are among her significant pre-conversion writings. They also correspond greatly to the early years of the phenomenological movement. (See the preface to the ICS Publications Edition, *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, trans. Mary Catharine Baseheart and Marianne Sawicki, ed. Marianne Sawicki [Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 2000], x). Moreover, Baseheart claims that this subsequent work was Stein's continuation of "her search for a deeper knowledge of person." (Baseheart, *Person*, 41)

What comes to mind is Max Scheler's "tripartite anthropology."²⁴ Stein, as one could see, was really influenced by Scheler. Scheler's concept of the human person must have thoroughly infiltrated her own philosophy.

In philosophy, one can speak of two distinct principles of the human being, to wit: *body* and *soul*. This duality can be traced back to Greek philosophy. Yet in the Christian tradition, says White, there is a third principle, that is, the *spirit*. White has second thoughts on the Western tradition, particularly that of the Greeks, for which there are only two principles, the body and the soul. The point here is that there are three principles active within the human being: *spirit*, *soul* and *body*. This doctrine can be found already in the Christian tradition, especially as early as the Patristic era. White mentions that the source of this doctrine of the three principles in the Christian tradition is St. Paul himself. One can read in the Thessalonians: "May the God of peace make you perfect in holiness. May he preserve you whole and entire, *spirit*, *soul* and *body*, irreproachable at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."²⁵

In general terms, these principles can be differentiated from one another. The soul is the "life principle of the body." The spirit embraces the "religious and the rational powers" of man at the same time. Therefore, the spiritual nature is more than the soul, which is only the vital energy of the body. While the soul makes the human being belong to the animal species, the spirit makes him an "image of God."²⁶

²⁴ John White's article, "Max Scheler's Tripartite Anthropology," will set the background of this section's analysis. Most of the information treated in this section comes from this article of White, unless specified otherwise. "Tripartite anthropology" would refer to "a vision of the human being as comprising three distinct though related sources of conscious life and activity, sources that, though capable of functioning in relative independence, characteristically cooperate in a person's living out of conscious life." ("Max Scheler's Tripartite Anthropology," in *American Catholic Philosophical Association*, 255-256)

²⁵ 1 Th. 5:23.

²⁶ It must be recalled that in St. Thomas Aquinas' "Hierarchy of Beings," man allocates himself to both the spiritual and material realms. There are grades in the order of nature; according to being, life and intelligence. Being's

According to White, in Scheler these three principles are referred to as *lived body*, *psyche*, and *spirit* or *person*. The lived body (*Leib*) is to be contrasted to the physical body (*Körper*). What about the psyche? The psyche is different from the lived body, but it is linked to it since it is its life principle. But this life principle or psyche is not yet the "person."²⁷ The spirit is then already another aspect of the human being and, in Scheler, it is associated with the person. For Scheler, "it *belongs to the essence of the person* to exist and to live solely in the *execution of intentional acts*."²⁸ This is what makes a person spiritual.

[This study however does not intend to give a thorough explanation of what is stated above. It is enough to say that in the philosophical tradition this tripartite anthropology has already been an issue.] Stein also investigates the structure of the human being along this line. She starts with the constitution of the psycho-physical individual. Like Scheler, she speaks also of the difference between the living body and the physical body.

Her study proceeds from the psychic to the psycho-physical individual. The psyche or the soul and the body can now be grasped simultaneously here. She discovers that the "psychic phenomenon" cannot be studied apart from the body. The soul is therefore always in the body.²⁹ The human being is really both body and soul. This is the traditional understanding. However this

extension covers God, angels, man, brutes, plants and minerals. However, intelligence is the least extensive for it only covers God, angels, and man. "The more being approaches God, the more perfect it is because the more spiritual in nature and activity; on the contrary, the more far from God, the more material and the least perfect." Since man is in the middle between the spiritual and the material, he shares both spirituality and materiality. (See Fr. Antonio Aureada, OP, "Three Applications of 'Nature' in Aquinas," Unpublished Class Notes in Special Questions in Metaphysics, 1st Semester, Academic Year 2001-2002, 2-3). See also Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, vol. I, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, 1948), QQ 75-102, pp. 363-502.

²⁷ For further reading see Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, trans. Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 30ff.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 390.

²⁹ Stein, *On the Problem of Empathy*, 3rd rev. ed., trans. Waltraut Stein (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelites Studies Publications, 1989), 41.

unity of the body and the soul tends to be dichotomized. In Plato the soul is only imprisoned in the body. Even more, Descartes makes a duality between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*.

This is not the case in Stein where there is no duality between the body and the soul. They form a substantial unity. After establishing the psycho-physical individual and showing that this unity has a natural occurrence, she goes to the realm of *Geist* (translated here as spirit), a step outside the order of nature.³⁰ In sum, she tries to project a total structure of the human being: psychic, physical (psycho-physical when combined), and spiritual. This is a tripartite anthropology, the "whole and entire" structure of the person.

As mentioned earlier, an exposition of Stein's work on the problem of empathy is no longer given. Yet a brief description of the acts of empathy is here in order.

2. *The Meaning of Empathy*

a) *The Nature of Empathy (General Description)*

The very basis of the problem of empathy is that there is the "phenomenon of foreign psychic life." The external world is not only a world of existing "physical bodies," but also of "experiencing subjects." Henceforth, empathy is the givenness of foreign subjects and their experiences. In a word, it is the comprehension of the other. The givenness of the other has been established only after clarifying the indubitability of the "pure I" as an "experiencing subject" living in experience.

Through a *via negativa*, Stein maintains that empathy is not a perception or representation like in memory or expectation, nor is it a neutral assertion like in fantasy. Empathy is a primordial act, like in one's present experiences, yet its content is non-primordial for it does not come from one's "I." The content is an object facing the empathizing subject, but after the inquiry into its "implied tendencies" it no longer presents itself as an object. The empathizing subject is already pulled into it. In other words, the empathizing subject is already in the shoes of the empathized.

³⁰ See Stein, *On the Problem of Empathy*, 91-118.

Stein says that in empathy she lives in the joy of the other, yet she does not feel "primordial joy." The primordial experience of the other is only manifested in the non-primordial experience of the one empathizing.

In empathy, three levels of accomplishment can be comprehended: (1) the emergence of the experience, (2) the fulfilling explanation, and (3) the comprehensive objectification of the explained experience. The first and third levels are accomplished non-primordially, similar to perception. The second level is accomplished non-primordially, similar to the experience. What is new then in the act of empathy is that the empathized subject and the one empathizing are not one. They are two distinct subjects. This is something new when one compares it with memory, expectation, and fantasy. Empathy, then, as described generally, is an act of perceiving *sui generis*.³¹

This is quite problematic. How can such experience be certain since the content of empathy originally flows from the other's zero point of orientation? To solve this, Stein proposes a solution: deceptions and errors can be avoided through outward perception.³² She assumes that what is given as a physical body presupposes the givenness of a psycho-physical individual.³³ This would bring us to the two levels of empathy.

b) The Two Levels of Empathy

Stein's investigation shows that empathy happens on two fundamental levels: that of the psycho-physical individual and that of the mental person.³⁴ She begins her investigation with the constitution of the psycho-physical individual, that is, the aware-

³¹ Ibid., 6-11.

³² Ibid., 87.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Chapters 3 and 4 of Stein's dissertation deal respectively with the psycho-physical individual and the spiritual or mental persons. See Ibid., 38-89; 91-118. See also Carmen Balzer, "The Empathy Problem in Edith Stein," *Analecta Husserliana*, vol. XXXV, ed. Anna Teresa Tymieniecka (Netherlands: Kluwer Academia Publishers, 1991), 275ff.

ness of one's own being. This individuality is no other than the self. Yet this self is also facing the self of the other, that is, the "You," which is also an individual.

The individual is given in the perception of the other as a living body. Yet this is grasped in consciousness. Thus, it becomes an "objective datum" in one's consciousness.³⁵ Indeed, this level is "transcendentally constituted." What is outwardly perceived is only the physical body.

The comprehension of the foreign body begins with the senses. The empathizing subject interprets a "sensing living body." There is something in the foreign body which is not perceived but "co-given" with what is perceived. The empathizing subject now projects himself into the other, obtaining a "new image of the spatial world," a new "zero point of orientation." Hence, there is now the possibility of constituting one's individuality. One's zero point is only considered as one among many zero points in the spatial world. Only through this can one see one's own "living body" as "a physical body" among all the rest.³⁶

The second level is the mental person. Here, the person is recognized as a spiritual one. In this level one can apprehend the "spirit" at work in history or human cultural formation. In the first level, that is, the psycho-physical, what is apprehended takes place only as a natural occurrence. In this new level, one is transported into the realm of the spirit. This is now the emotional realm, that is, the realm of feelings and of values.

In this domain, empathy is not anymore the grasping of natural occurrences like the soul in a body or the psycho-physical individual as seen earlier, but the grasping of "motivation."³⁷ This is the "meaning context" of one's experience. This is already the sphere of the mind. Only on this level can one's values and personality be found. What is more, the value doctrine that establishes the doctrine of the human person is also revealed on this level.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Stein, *Empathy*, 63.

³⁷ Balzer, "The Empathy Problem," 276.

From the above description we proceed to the corollaries of the acts of empathy.

3. *Corollaries of the Acts of Empathy*

a) *The Knowledge of the Self*

Subjective experience is required if one is to grasp a foreign consciousness. That is why Stein starts her investigation with the awareness of one's own being, the awareness of one's individuality. The starting point is always the self. How will one know the other if one does not even know one's own self? Then, through empathy, self-knowledge is enhanced. It brings one to an inter-intra personal or, as this paper prefers to call it, an inter-intra subjective relationship, that is, a relationship with oneself and with the other. The self is what is closest to the person. One sees the other from the way one sees oneself. In the other person one can see more about oneself, that is, what one is and what one is not. Sometimes deceptions flow from the mistaken conception of oneself, from the "idols" of one's knowledge.

Often people take for granted that they know themselves. Interestingly, however, Hegel says, "What is 'familiarily known' is not properly known, just for the reason that it is 'familiar'."³⁸ Human beings are really troubled by these "fundamental questions": "Who am I? Where do I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?"³⁹ There are many things in life that escape one's knowledge.

This is the significance of the Socratic dictum: *Know yourself!*⁴⁰ Human beings must know themselves. The reality out there becomes the object that brings one to the knowledge of oneself. The journey towards self-knowledge is a journey towards the truth. As Pope John Paul II maintains,

³⁸ Hegel, *The Phenomenology of the Mind*, trans. J.B. Baillie (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967), 92.

³⁹ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* (Vatican City: Editrice Libreria Vaticana, 1998, n. 1. Henceforth cited as FR.

⁴⁰ Plato, *Charm.* 164d; see also *Laws* 923a, *Phaedo* 230a, *Phil.* 48c and *Protag.* 343b.

In both East and West, we may trace a journey which has led humanity down the centuries to meet and engage truth more and more deeply. It is a journey which has unfolded – as it must – within the horizon of personal self-consciousness: the more human beings know reality and the world, the more they know themselves in their uniqueness, with the question of the meaning of things and of their very existence becoming ever more pressing. This is why all that is the object of our knowledge becomes a part of our life.⁴¹

Empathy, since it allows the person to know the world foreign to him, permits him to know more about himself. This is the importance of Stein's study on the problem of empathy. Empathy can give clarity to oneself. It is good to know one's own self, but knowing the other makes the individual know more about himself.

Stein's philosophy is coming from this conviction. Empathy does not only allow a person to comprehend another person, but it also enables him to comprehend his own personhood. In empathy new spheres can be given, a new realm of values can be acquired. One's individuality is introduced to a new ground. Hence, one's unfamiliar values become visible. Even in her later essay on the "Principles of Women's Education," Stein declares "that the possibility exists of the inner formative functions needing the help of exterior ones; indeed, that is the hypothesis of all education."⁴²

The knowledge of the self is a very important consequence of empathy. This becomes Stein's starting point in her later works, as a Catholic convert and a Christian philosopher. This is very clear in her monumental work entitled *Endliches und ewiges Sein*, subtitled *An Attempt at an Ascent to the Meaning of Being*. Baseheart, in her article "Infinity in Edith Stein's *Endliches und ewiges Sein*," writes,

The ascent is constructed on the theory that being is intelligible only in the knowledge of Eternal Being and that

⁴¹ FR, n. 1.

⁴² Stein, "To Know and Understand the World and People," in *Essential Writings*, selected with an intro. John Sullivan, OCD (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 109.

Eternal Being can become present to human consciousness through reflection on the finite being of the self. This preliminary statement suggests at first glance a philosophy of pure subjectivity, a reduction of the question of being to the mere content of consciousness. In the course of this presentation, it will be seen that the being of the self, which Stein's starting point, is transsubjective, having experience of itself because it has experience of the outer world as well as of the inner world. At the same time, she may be seen to capitalize, so to speak, on experience that is personal, making the approach to Infinite Being a very human one, bringing to bear on it the total human experience, which reaches toward its terminus in God as person.⁴³

What transpires here is not only the knowledge of the self but also what it means to be human. This consideration brings our analysis to another corollary of the acts of empathy: *the openness to being*.

b) *The Openness to Being*

The stepping out from one's individuality is the inexorable consequence of empathy. It cannot be called empathy if one's concern solely rests on his own individuality. Empathy then, as pointed out by Stein, is the foundation of intersubjective experience. Why? Because empathy is not just an external perception, but through it one enters the world of the other. With this, one can get to know the existing world out there. The analysis above is yet insufficient, and so one proceeds to analyze the individual's openness to being.

One cannot go out of one's being if one is a closed entity. This is an excellent food for thought for philosophers who tend to be dogmatic in their findings, building a kind of system which is impervious to what is outside of it. Often, if one's philosophy is not open, one creates an "idol" of it. One famous example is Hegel's *Absolute Knowledge* that makes a totality of itself. A philosophical

⁴³ Mary Catharine Baseheart, "Infinity in Edith Stein's Endliches und ewiges Sein," in *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, vol. LV (1981): 126-127.

system has the tendency to become just like a monad, windowless. Levinas wrote a book entitled *Totality and Infinity* as a reaction to the Hegelian Totality.⁴⁴ Levinas demands something outside totality and that is infinity.

For her part, Stein never claims the self to be obliterated. She says, "From the viewpoint of the zero point of orientation gained in empathy, I must no longer consider my own zero point, but as a spatial point among many."⁴⁵ Multiple live bodies appear. Thus a plurality of zero points or centers of orientation arise. Yet in this "*world of multiple centers*," the foreign center does not require one's center to be obliterated, but the other center is simply acquired. One is still the same, and yet already open to rupture. Indeed, one's individuality can never be complete without this openness to the other, this relationship with the other.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ The underlying assumption of Modernity is the Cogito. The whole of Modernity from Descartes to Hegel and Husserl rests on the assumption of the Cogito. This Cogito took several shapes in this period. It is Kant's pure reason, transcendental apperception, or pure apperception; Husserl's pure consciousness; Hegel's Geist; Locke's mind as "tabula rasa"; and Berkeley's perceiving mind, etc. "Universal thought," observes Levinas, "is an 'I think'." (Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis [The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1979], 36). But after Modernity, there is already the breaking of totality. The Cogito, Levinas continues, "hearkens to itself thinking and surprises itself being dogmatic, foreign to itself. But faced with this alterity the I is the same, merges with itself, is incapable of apostasy with regard to this surprising 'self.' Hegelian phenomenology, where self-consciousness is the distinguishing of what is not distinct, expresses the universality of the same identifying itself in the alterity of objects thought and despite the opposition of self to self." (Ibid.)

⁴⁵ Stein, *Empathy*, 63.

⁴⁶ One's being is an open individuality. In other words, it is relational. It exists along with the world around him. It is a being-for-itself and for-others. Norris Clarke, S.J. has a beautiful description of this. He says, "All being..., is caught up in this unending dialectic of the within and the without, the in-itself and the toward-others, the inward-facing act of existential presence in itself, and the outward-facing act of self-expression and self-manifestation to others, by which it enters into a web of relationship with them. So too the whole life of a personal being, even more intensely, revolves around this basic polarity of presence to self and presence to others. A person, like every other real being, is a living synthesis of substantiality and relationality, and the relational side is equally important as the substantial side, because it is only through the former that the

Philosophy today no longer speaks of "systems." Heidegger says, "The time of 'systems' is over."⁴⁷ This is indeed a good development. If so, the philosopher can now be more open to many things not yet known to him. To Heidegger this is already the "other beginning," the crossing of a new path in Western philosophy. He asserts, "This pathway brings the crossing into the openness of history and establishes the crossing as perhaps a very long sojourn, in the enactment of which the other beginning of thinking always remains only an intimation, though already decisive."⁴⁸ Philosophy is no longer a totality. It is now open to infinity. Yet this still entails a hard work. There are no shortcuts in philosophy. But in moving a philosopher is already open to every possibility and begins to step out of his individuality.

Stein's philosophy can thus be considered already as post-modern. If one tries to open oneself to the world, then one is no longer locked up in one's own individuality or in the "I think." The *Cogito* has now exploded. This would mean that one's previous position or standpoint would be corrected or even modified. One can be considered postmodern if one allows oneself to share one's truth with others – in a dialogue. In other words, one is open to what others believe to be true and good. As Salman Rushdie in his novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* puts it,

Your songs are your planets. Live on them but make no home there. What you write about, you lose. What you sing, leaves you on the wings of song.

Sing against death. Command the wildness of the city.

Freedom to reject is the only freedom. Freedom to uphold is dangerous.

Life is elsewhere. Cross frontiers. Fly away.⁴⁹

self as substance can actualize its potentiality and fulfill its destiny." (W. Norris Clarke, S.J., *Person, Being, and Ecology*, ed. with commentary by Rainier R.A. Ibana [Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Philippines: Office of Research and Publications, Ateneo de Manila University, 1996], 42-43).

⁴⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy* (From Enowning), trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999), 4.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁹ Salman Rushdie, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1999), 150.

This becomes even more radical if one proceeds to what Derrida calls the *Margins of Philosophy*. In Dr. Abulad's words, "The postmodern man or woman is, therefore, placed on the margins, which is why Derrida's book, *Margins of Philosophy*, makes sense. Postmodern philosophy is philosophy on the margins, where all language is crossed out, leaving only traces, traces which are likewise subject to erasure."⁵⁰ In Postmodernity, nobody owns the master key to what truth is. As Derrida puts it, "...what we would know if it were simply a question here of something to know, is that there has never been, never will be, a unique word, a master-name."⁵¹

But moving further may lead us far-fetched to be led astray beyond the point of our discussion here. The point this analysis is trying to drive at is that one's being must be open to other beings. Stein is trying to show that through empathy one can reach a new ground, the other's zero point of orientation that is no longer one's own.⁵² Only then can one enter into the world of the other.

⁵⁰ Romualdo E. Abulad, "Postmodern Critique and the Ethics of Postmodernism," in *Karunungan: A Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 19 (2002): 68-69.

⁵¹ Jacques Derrida, "Difference," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 27.

⁵² This is quite radical of Heidegger for there is no more ground but already the swaying of the ground. The ground quakes and sways. There is no more stable ground on which to stand. Heidegger calls this the Unground, the "dissembling, disswaying." (See Heidegger, *Contributions*, 216-217; see also Abulad's article, "Postmodern Critique," 67). According to Antonio Calcagno, Stein criticizes Heidegger for stifling the basic questions of every being. If being is thrown into the world, then what is its origin? Stein claims that Heidegger fails to ask these fundamental questions of man: Where did I come? What is my origin? A human being always desires to inquire into his "ultimate origin." Other questions Heidegger never bothers to ask: "Whence have I been thrown? Who threw me into this existence?" These are questions of man's ultimate meaning. This is the "why" of one's existence. (See Antonio Calcagno, "*Die Fülle oder das Nichts? Edith Stein and Martin Heidegger on the Question of Being*," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. LXXV, no. 2 [Spring, 2000]: 272) Nevertheless, as argued by this article, Heidegger influences Stein, but only negatively. Calcagno writes, "Stein saw in Heidegger a great thinker who indeed opened the door to the question of being. His approach, however, was much too solipsistic, nihilistic and pessimistic. Heidegger viewed being in much too dark a fashion. We know that the later Heidegger gives a more ecstatic interpretation of being; Stein, however, never

Empathy is indeed the basis of intersubjective experience. Through this act, new things come to the fore, and new experiences come to light. Moreover, this becomes an ascent to being. The person, through the empathic act, steps out of himself, discovers a being other than himself. This would allow him to check his own being, to correct the "idols" of his life.

Stein's research on the problem of empathy pushes her towards the opening of one's individuality. As mentioned above, Stein's analysis, in this first work of hers and in her subsequent works, begins with the self. Yet it gradually becomes a "trans-subjective experience," that is, an experience of both outer and inner world. One thing crucial here is, that her philosophy becomes open to being. That is why in her last philosophical work, she speaks of an *ascent to being*. She is now open to Being. Marcel shares the same sentiment with Stein when he writes, "...my researches have bearing on all the conditions that permit us to maintain thought in the state of 'openness', in contradistinction to a systematized dogmatics closed in on itself."⁵³

c) *The Mingling of the Heart and the Mind*

Stein's methodology, as shown above, now goes beyond the phenomenological reduction of Husserl. It already blends with the perennial question of what it means to be human. She goes on investigating what she describes as something close to her heart, that is, *the constitution of the human person*. Husserl's phenomenology is only epistemological. It is a rigorous science indeed, but

knew the text of the later Heidegger. She employs Heidegger's thought as a tool of inquiry. She dialogues with Heidegger's phenomenology of being. Meditating on similar experiences such as death, fallenness, thrownness and *das Man*, Edith Stein draws quite different conclusions about the *Sinn des Seins* (meaning of being), for the meaning of being is viewed as an experience of fullness concretized in radically personal and communitarian terms." (Ibid., 284-285) Whether Calcagno's observation is correct or not, is no longer the concern of this study. See Stein's essay "On Death," reprinted in Florent Gaboriau's book *The Conversion of Edith Stein*, trans. and preface by Ralph McInerny (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2002), 46-49. Stein wrote this essay with reference to Heidegger.

⁵³ Gabriel Marcel, Preface to the English Edition, *Metaphysical Journal*, trans. Bernard Wall (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), XIII.

it is not holistic in its approach for it lies only on the level of cognition. *Stein gives heart to Husserl's method, like Marx giving flesh to Hegel's consciousness.* It is not that she abandons the method, but she adds something to it: the human person's affective side.

The person is incomplete if he lives merely on the cognitive level and is not able to rise to the affective level. The total person is both thinking and feeling. The usual problem with philosophy is that it normally comes only from the mind. As Thomas Morris observes,

We philosophers aren't accustomed to writing from the heart. We are more practiced at doing intellectual combat head to head. Abstract analysis and rigorous debate is more our style. And, as a result, philosophical writing has; for most part nowadays, become as technical and difficult to read as any other specialist literature in the academic world. Care, precision, and intellectual responsibility demand no less within the covers of the professional journals. And autobiography is out. We deal in ideas, not personalities, in arguments, not in the histories of individuals' inner lives. The tone of most writing by contemporary philosophers is, further, more that of at least approximate *objectivity*, and not at all forthright *subjectivity*.⁵⁴

The heart has its reason which reason itself cannot understand, goes the popular saying of Pascal.⁵⁵ Without the heart, the mind is incomplete. As William James avers, "The deepest thing in our nature is this *Binnenleben* (as a German doctor lately has called it), this dumb region of the heart in which we dwell alone with our willingness and unwillingness, our faith and fears."⁵⁶ It is not just cognition that brings a person into contact with reality,

⁵⁴ Thomas V. Morris, ed., *God and the Philosophers: The Reconciliation of Faith and Reason* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 4.

⁵⁵ Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. H.F. Stewart (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), § 626, p. 343.

⁵⁶ William James, "Is Life Worth Living?" in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956), 61-62.

for the heart is the "deepest organ of communication with the nature of things."⁵⁷

Consequently, Stein's conclusion to her investigation of the human person is that it is both cognitive and affective. It is good to recall that Stein later wrote an autobiography. And this is all about her life, her inner life.

There are things that are the proper concern of the heart, such as faith. Stein claims in her dissertation that feelings presuppose theoretical acts.⁵⁸ What is not known cannot be desired. She writes in one of her later works,

Whoever knows God (in the measure in which knowledge of God is possible through natural and supernatural light) cannot do other than love him; whoever loves him cannot do other than serve him. Thus, matters of mind and heart, achievement and act of will are living faith. He who knows how to awaken faith trains all faculties. But one can only awaken it when one summons up all the faculties. This cannot be done through tedious intellectual instruction, but it also cannot be done through fanatic instruction which 'appeals to the emotion'; on the contrary, this can be done only through a religious instruction which leads from the fullness of one's own religious life to the depths of the Godhead, an instruction enkindles love and exacts proof through deed, and it may so challenge because one achieves this by oneself.⁵⁹

It is too early at this time to identify Stein with her faith, since during the writing of her dissertation she was still an atheist. However, in her autobiography, she describes her painful experience as a "solitary battle."⁶⁰ For the first time in her life she felt something beyond her sheer will-power. She remembered what

⁵⁷ Ibid., 62.

⁵⁸ Stein, *Empathy*, 100-101.

⁵⁹ Stein, "To Know and Understand," in *Essential Writings*, 112.

⁶⁰ Stein, *Life*, 278.

her mother told her, that where one's power fails, God helps.⁶¹ Sheer mental power is not enough, for there are things beyond logic.

If one relies solely on human effort, then one's research is insufficient. Philosophy is laborious. And it becomes more laborious if it is just an intellectual effort, which would make it pelagianistic, that is, out of sheer human strength. This is the usual attitude of intellectual scholars, but sheer human power always falls short.

Stein is a restless creature whose mind never stops. In other words, her mind is restless. But while doing her study on the problem of empathy, she discovered that the person is not only a mind, but also a heart. A complete person requires both thinking and feeling.⁶² Feelings presuppose theoretical acts; a heart requires a mind. Affectivity here is not blind, not a kind of emotionalism. Stein is coming from Husserlian epistemology, from a type of cognition that sees the essence of things. It requires the use of human reason at its best, so to say, precisely because it is rigorous. This is true rationality.

A person's mind and heart are always simultaneously restless. When St. Augustine says that his heart is restless until it rests in God,⁶³ he implies that his mind is restless also. Remember that St. Augustine is also an intellectual, a person who possesses both mind and heart. And if both his mind and heart are restless, where can he find rest? It is interesting to note that Stein, in the work immediately following her dissertation, speaks of a kind of rest. She writes,

There is a state of resting in God, of complete relaxation of all mental activity, in which you make no plans at all, reach no decision, much less take action, but rather leave everything that's future to the divine will, "consigning yourself entirely to fate." This state might have befallen me after an experience that exceeded my power, and that has completely consumed my mental lifepower and deprived

⁶¹ Ibid., 277.

⁶² Cf. Stein, *Empathy*, 98.

⁶³ St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Book I: 1.

me of all activeness. Compared to the cessation of activeness from the lack of lifepower, resting in God is something completely new and unique. The former was dead silence. Now its place is taken by the feeling of being safe, of being exempted from all anxiety and responsibility and duty to act. And as I surrender myself to this feeling, new life begins to fill up, little by little, and impel me – without any voluntary exertion – toward new activation.⁶⁴

These words are coming from the pen of once confessed atheist,⁶⁵ yet they somehow reflect the words of Christ: “Come to me, all you who work and who carry heavy burdens and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart; and you will find rest. For my yoke is good and my burden is light.”⁶⁶

While writing her dissertation, she was confronted by the question of faith. Yet this was not her priority and she left the question open. That is why at the end of her work, she said that “religious consciousness” is not clear to her yet and she has to be content with this for the time being.⁶⁷

d) *The Openness to Value*

The psycho-physical individual is not complete without the spirit.⁶⁸ The total structure of the person consists of body, soul,

⁶⁴ Stein, *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, trans. Mary Catharine Baseheart and Marianne Sawicki, ed. Marianne Sawicki (Washington, D.C.:ICS Publications, 2000), 84-85.

⁶⁵ Stein confessed later in life that she had become an atheist from “her thirteenth to her twenty-first year” (Hilda C. Graef, *The Scholar and the Cross: The Life and Work of Edith Stein* [Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1955], 9).

⁶⁶ Matthew 11:28-29.

⁶⁷ Stein, *Empathy*, 118.

⁶⁸ The last chapter of Stein’s dissertation speaks of the realm of Geist. Sawicki criticizes this chapter for being unphilosophical. She claims that this chapter shows Stein’s “convictions concerning interpersonal communication, and it is oriented toward the academic fields of history, psychology, and German studies.” Moreover, this chapter confirms Sawicki’s position that empathy cannot fit into the Husserlian ‘autonomic function of ‘constitution’.” Discussing this criticism is beyond the scope of the paper. For more details just see Sawicki, *Body*, 131-143.

and spirit. This is the tripartite anthropology discussed above. When Stein reaches the realm of the spirit, she speaks already of values. There is then a hierarchy of felt values.⁶⁹ As values increase to a higher level, then one's personality also increases.

This feeling of value is very important to a person, since, as Stein points out, it is the source of one's "cognitive striving." There can be no "cognitive willing" without this value realm.⁷⁰ One penetrates what is obscure to the mind because of the felt value, the value of a thing that attracts a person. Why do people strive for something? Why do heroes and martyrs sacrifice their lives? Why did Peter leave his nets and follow Christ? Why give up anything for something that has no higher value?

In the value realm, a person increases his personality as he ascends the hierarchy. This is a crucial discovery of Stein's dissertation, because it confirms the fact that in the structure of

The structure of the human person, if truly investigated, opens a new horizon for the seeker, that is, the realm of Geist. Prof. Ranhilio C. Aquino once wrote that "the word 'spirit' does not command much respect in many circles of contemporary philosophy primarily because of its ambiguity and also because it has, in the history of thought, been patently abused." (Ranhilio C. Aquino, "The Being of Man and Education," UST Journal of Graduate Research, vol. 19, no. 2 [March 1990]: 78) He claims that the experiences of freedom, values, and the infinite horizon in man belong to this realm of the spirit. He continues, "To recognize the dimension of 'spirit' in man is to reject as inadequate the materialist's approach to the mystery of man.... To speak of the 'spirit' with regard to man is to point at that 'inner life' which manifests itself in man's reflection on himself; man's questions about everything, even himself; man's crisis of decision; or man's unique 'I' in relation to others." (Ibid., 78-79)

Baseheart in her exposition of Stein's philosophy of the human person explains the meaning of Geist. This is a common German word which has no exact equivalent in English. It is translated as "mind," "spirit," "ghost," and "wit." The more appropriate translations are "mind" and "spirit." Stein's use of this German term is more aptly translated as "spirit." This translation suitably provides a "comprehensive concept" which covers "not only intellectual cognition but also feelings, values, and volitions." Though "spirit" and "mind" are related, the use of the latter may contain a "restrictive connotation" that is misleading to Stein's present consideration. However, "spirit" here does not have any moral or religious connotation. (Cf. Baseheart, *Person*, 39-40)

⁶⁹ Stein, *Empathy*, 101.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 108.

the human person, there will always be the inter-intra and the supra-personal relationships. For a person living in the world, there will always be the horizontal and vertical relationships.

From the indubitability of the *Cogito* in the seventh principle of philosophy, we may proceed now to Descartes' seventeenth principle which states that "the greater the objective perfection in any of our ideas, the greater its cause must be." There is no escape from here, and in the next principle he has to conclude with the indubitability of God's existence. Later, in the thirtieth principle, he admits that the things he used to doubt clearly exist.⁷¹ After the Ego's experience of indubitability follows the vertical experience of God. Only then can Descartes confirm the horizontal experiences of the Ego. The same must have been the experience of Stein, except that what follows the self is the horizontal experience with other beings, through empathy. The vertical relationship, that is, relationship with God, is not yet the priority at this time.

Stein's experience is thus concrete, not just an ontological explication. Hers is in the realm not only of ideal objects, but also of ideal values. Values are not intuited, but felt. Persons and the value world are correlates.⁷² In Scheler, too, the "world" is the "correlate of the person." Every "*individual world*" has a corresponding "*individual person*." "Every world," says Scheler,

is at the same time a concrete world, but only as the world of a person.... the realm of ideal objects, or the realm of values – they all have an abstract objectivity. They become fully concrete only as part of a world, the world of a person. But the *person* is never a "part" of the world, the person is always the *correlate* of a "world," namely, the world in which he experiences himself.⁷³

⁷¹ See Descartes, "Principles of Philosophy," trans. John Cottingham, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. I (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 194, 198-199, 203, AT VIIIA 7, 11, 17.

⁷² Stein, *Empathy*, 108.

⁷³ Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values: A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, trans. Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 393.

Again, it must be noted that in *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, there is what Scheler calls "value modalities."⁷⁴ This is the "hierarchy of values" in which Scheler ranks the so-called *a priori* values. A brief review of this is here in order.

According to Scheler, the lowest rank consists of values that are sensible. These values belong to the "range of what is agreeable or disagreeable to a sentient being." Examples of these values are the feelings of sensation like pleasure and pain. The next rank is what is called the "values of life" or, in Scheler's words, "the essence of values correlated to vital feelings." The two extreme poles here are the values of nobility and meanness; those of well-being and ill-being; those of excellence and mediocrity. Specific examples are health, disease, vigour, weakness, and the like.

On the third rank is the realm of "spiritual values." Scheler asserts that "in the kind of their *givenness*, spiritual values have a peculiar detachment from and independence of the spheres of the lived body and environment. Their unity reveals itself in the clear evidence that vital values 'ought' to be sacrificed for them." These values include the following: values of beautiful and ugly, according to aesthetic qualities; of right and wrong, according not to positive laws but to the "objective *order of right*" where human communities rest; and of true and false, according to the "*pure cognition of truth*" which is realized in philosophy. Also mentioned here are "*cultural values in general*" which are "the consecutive (technical and symbolic) values of spiritual values and belong to the value-sphere of goods (e.g., art treasures, scientific institutions, positive legislation, etc.)." These values do not depend on the changes of vital feelings or sensual feelings. They have the "phenomenal quality of appearing *without mediation*." Examples of these are the feeling-states of spiritual joy or sorrow. Moreover, in this rank, Scheler mentions "spiritual sympathy" which is for him the basis of friendship.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 104-110; for further interpretation of Scheler's "value modalities," see Ron Perrin, *Max Scheler's Concept of the Person: An Ethics of Humanism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 76-80. One can refer also to Max Scheler, *On Feeling, Knowing, and Valuing: Selected Writings*, ed. with intro. Harold J. Bershady (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 221-234.

The last rank or "values of the last modality" are those which Scheler calls values of the *holy* and the *unholy*. These values cannot be subjected to "further definition." This final modality of values "forms a unit of value-qualities." They "appear only in objects that are given in intention as 'absolute objects'." In other words, they are given not in a "specific or definable class of objects," but in an "absolute sphere." "All other values," says Scheler, "are at the same time given as symbols for these values." Examples of such feelings range from "blissfulness to despair."

Furthermore, this final modality of values speaks of "the 'nearness' or the 'remoteness' of the divine in experience." Most importantly, Scheler mentions that the act through which one can have an original apprehension of the "value of the holy" is found in the "act of a specific kind of love." This value is then person-oriented. He concludes that "the self-value in the sphere of the values of the 'holy' is, by essential necessity, a '*value of the person*'."

In summary, there are four levels of value: the *sensible*, the *vital*, the *spiritual*, and the *holy*. In analyzing Stein, one can observe that it is still unclear whether she has reached the final modality that concerns the nearness or remoteness of the divine in experience. Until the end of her dissertation she does not explicitly mention this. Yet she speaks of the obscurity of the religious consciousness. Empathy gives her an experience of this modality. Other people, too, have this kind of value experience.

Without discussing further Scheler's view, it is enough to say that Stein must have followed him in this path. The personalist approach of Stein is evidently already beyond Husserl. The problem of empathy cannot be investigated exclusively through Husserl's transcendental phenomenology.

Stein also needs Dilthey for this. There are values possessed by the foreign person that do not belong to the empathizing subject. Every person being empathized has a value in himself as a person. There is worth in every person, so that in empathy one can discover certain personality types, even though their values are not yet within the empathizing subject's experience. In this case, the values can be given non-primordially. Stein mentions the experience of empathy as belonging to the type of *homo religiosus*. At this time, she might not yet be of this type, she says, but

through empathy she can understand what it means to be this person.⁷⁵

Thus, the empathizing subject can understand the value (not experienced by him) of a foreign individual through the common sphere of which the foreign individual is a member. While writing her dissertation, Stein was already confronted with faith, since people around her had their own faith-experiences. Even her fellow phenomenologists were getting converted to Christianity. Conversion was common at that time, which is why, though she herself did not have faith, she could still relate to it in empathy.

Dilthey asserts, "Thus, the individual expressions of life which confront the understanding subject can be considered as belonging to a common sphere, to a type; and the relationship between the expression of life and the world of mind within that sphere not only places the expression into its context but also supplements the mental content which belongs to it."⁷⁶ In Dilthey, says Sawicki, individuals can be considered as representatives of their age. They then become types of personalities.⁷⁷ Thus, when Stein wrote her autobiography, she revealed her own type, that of the "German Jew and the academic woman – a defensive effort in the face of National Socialism."⁷⁸ These are types considered in empathy.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Stein, *Empathy*, 115.

⁷⁶ Wilhelm Dilthey, *Pattern and Meaning In History: Thoughts on History and Society*, ed. with intro. H.P. Rickman (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1962), 121.

⁷⁷ Sawicki, *Body*, 9.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Furthermore, Dilthey has this to say, "When we have grasped the sum of all the achievements of understanding the objectification of life, in contrast to the subjectivity of experience, opens up within it. Together with experience, the seeing of the objectivity of life (...) becomes the foundation for the human studies. The individual, the communities and the works into which life and mind have entered, form the outer realm of the mind. These manifestations of life, as they present themselves to understanding in the context of nature. The great outer reality of the mind always surround us. It is a manifestation of the mind in the world of the senses – from the fleeting expression to the century-long rule of a

Conclusion

One can see that Stein's methodology in investigating the problem of empathy is no longer restricted to the phenomenological method of Husserl. It is already mixed with the question of what it means to be human. The constitution of the human person is indeed dear to Stein's heart. She uses Scheler and Dilthey to approach this area of her study.

Indeed, Stein's investigation brings the reader to the knowledge of the human person. But what does it mean to be human? She tries to answer this perennial question through an analysis of the problem of empathy. No doubt, Stein, the seeker, has come to grapple with its mystery.⁸⁰

constitution or code of law. Every single expression of life represents a common feature in the realm of this objective mind.... the individual always experiences, thinks and acts in a common sphere and only there does he understand. Everything that is understood carries, as it were, the hallmark of familiarity derived from such common features. We live in this atmosphere, it surrounds us constantly. We are immersed in it. We are at home everywhere in this historical and understood world; we understand the sense and meaning of it all; we ourselves are woven into this common sphere." (Dilthey, *Pattern and Meaning*, 123-124)

⁸⁰ If Stein had gone this far in her research, then conversion would have been easy for her. She read Teresa of Avila for just a night. Is it really possible for a conversion to take place in just one night? Stein must have long been searching for the truth. Waltraud Herbstrith makes this remark, "What truth had been revealed to Edith through this book? What had been accomplished in this one night? Since her childhood Edith had sought a clue which might lead her to spiritual enlightenment. She had questioned the sense of human existence. In St. Teresa of Avila she found the teacher who taught her about the inner light of the soul – God himself. Edith saw in this biography her own fate. God is not a God of science but a God of love. Reason advancing slowly and logically could not attain to the divine secrets. St. Teresa was the great mystic who knew God's love by experience, but she was also a psychologist and master of self-recognition. She united in herself mystical devotion and clear realistic pedagogic knowledge." (Waltraud Herbstrith, *The Way of the Cross*, Edith Stein, trans. and adapt. Lee Marill (Frankfurt/Main: Verlag Gerhard Kaffle, 1974), 35-36) For the life of St. Teresa of Avila see *The Autobiography of St. Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (New York: Book-of-the Month Club, 1995); originally published as the *Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*, vol. I (ICS Publications, 1987).

I wish to end this essay with a commentary from Prof. Frederick Fermin, OP on the matter at hand. He wrote,

I wonder what Stein herself thought of her thesis once she had received the light of faith. She probably dismissed it as a pretentious attempt to understand what actually exceeds our comprehension. Who are we. What makes that we can perceive the world of which we are part and can interact with it. What, finally, enables us to have an intimate knowledge of other persons and enter into a "spiritual" relationship with them.

If you accept that man is a creature, only the Creator can answer those questions for He knows how he built us. But if the concept of God and creation is inadmissible, no reasoning can fully explain those things. We know ourselves only through experience, and can agree with an analysis to the extent that we recognize our experience in it. Otherwise the explanation remains just words. Some of Stein's analysis strikes me as that: a juggling with words.

What makes it possible for us to break out of our shell? Stein calls it empathy. But what is empathy? Perhaps it is as difficult to define empathy as it is to define life and love, for it is part of them. The capacity to empathize is inseparable of our understanding of what it means to be a living person, in need of being loved and capable of loving.

In last analysis, your study would be a preliminary investigation into the history of Stein's conversion. Empathy led her to an understanding of the human person, and the person revealed itself as having a transcendental (spiritual) dimension that can only be explained in relation to God, who escapes explanation. But then you are already in the field of theology. It seems that the whole laborious process of Stein's philosophizing served to make her receptive to the gift of faith.

In faith, we know that man was created in the likeness of God. God reveals Himself as love, which postulates plurality of subjects. In fact, He has manifested Himself as Father, Son and H. Spirit. Our being, then, must reflect God's "constitution" as intersubjectivity, and our life must be patterned after the divine life, which is a shared life of love.

The H. Spirit is the liaison between Father and Son, between God and us, and also between human beings as they inter-relate. He gives us the capacity to interact as the divine Persons interact, “giving” one another their “personality”, which is entirely relational.

The Christian name for empathy is the capacity to love. It is the H. Spirit who is Love, who gives us that capacity. He, then, capacitates us to empathize, and he makes empathy blossom into love. But loving, we discover who we are and who God is.⁸¹ □

⁸¹ A commentary on the author’s thesis on Stein’s empathy problem, June 23, 2004.