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Original publication:

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Edith Stein's Theory of the Person in Her Münster Years (1932-1933)

translated by Amalie Enns

in: *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 82 (2008), pp. 47–70

Philosophy Documentation Center 2008

<https://doi.org/10.5840/acpq200882119>

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Edith Stein's Theory of the Person in her Münster Years (1932–33)

Beate Beckmann-Zöllner

Translated by Amalie Enns

Abstract. The new critical edition of Stein's lectures on philosophical and theological anthropology makes it possible to further research her theory of the person as developed during her middle period in Münster, that is, between 1932 and 1933. Her project revolves around the anthropological foundations of a Catholic pedagogy. This phase of her work is marked by various debates. On one hand, she attempts to bring the intellectual legacy of Husserl and phenomenology into dialogue with Thomas Aquinas and other Scholastic thinkers. On the other hand, she confronts the ideas and spirit of National Socialism with her Catholic faith. Stein's Münster phenomenological method differentiates from Husserl's transcendental phenomenology; she develops an "eidetic psychology within a universal ontology." In her "somatological" anthropology, the human being appears as a unity of lived body, soul, and mind. As a person, the human being is investigated as species, double species (man-woman), individual, as having a communal essence (outside the concept of race), and, ultimately, as a seeker of God. Stein examines the freedom of human beings, which lies between the givens of nature and grace, as well as the tension between knowledge and faith. In the final section of this paper, I discuss Stein's position over against contemporary deconstructivist feminism.

Nothing occupied the philosopher Edith Stein more intellectually than the problem of a theory of the person. Previous research into Stein's anthropology was centered either on her early work (*On the Problem of Empathy*¹) or her late work (*Finite and Eternal Being*,² *Science of*

¹ See Edith Stein, *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* (Munich: Kaffanke, 1980). Henceforth, "PE."

² See Stein, *Endliches und ewiges Sein. Versuch eines Aufstiegs zum Sinn des Seins*, Edith-Stein-Gesamtausgabe 11/12 (Freiburg: Herder, 2006). Henceforth, "EES."

*the Cross*³). With the new critical edition⁴ of Stein's public lectures, it is now possible to get a more accurate picture of Stein's theory of the person from the middle years of her creative career at Münster between 1932 and 1933. This article will present Stein's Münster anthropology, explaining its development and significance for Stein's view of the person.

I.

Edith Stein in Münster: In the Midst of Various Debates. At Easter of 1931, after years of absence from academic circles, Edith Stein left her quasi-cloistered and financially secure existence as a teacher in Speyer to pursue independent research: the “debate between scholastic and modern philosophy.”⁵ She tackled this task in her thesis written for her university lecturer qualification, *Potenz und Akt*,⁶ “a systematic work on ‘Act and Potency,’” as she writes to Ingarden, “that can only begin with the problem of Thomas and then develop into my ‘system of philosophy’—and this, of course, includes a debate *between* Thomas and Husserl.”⁷ In the spring of 1932, she received the call to the “center of Catholic pedagogy for all of Germany,”⁸ the “German Institute for Scientific Pedagogy” in Münster.⁹ This was not her first choice; that would

³ See Stein, *Kreuzeswissenschaft*, Edith-Stein-Gesamtausgabe 18 (Freiburg: Herder, 2003). Henceforth, “KW.”

⁴ *Edith-Stein-Gesamtausgabe* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2000–). Henceforth, “ESGA.”

⁵ Stein, *Selbstbildnis in Briefen I* (1916–1933), ESGA 2 (Freiburg: Herder, 2000), Letter 130 to Heinrich Finke (1/6/1931). Henceforth, “SBB I.”

⁶ See Stein, *Potenz und Akt*, ESGA 10 (Freiburg: Herder, 2005). Henceforth, “PA.”

⁷ Stein, *Selbstbildnis in Briefen III. Briefe an Roman Ingarden*, ESGA 4 (Freiburg: Herder, 2001), Letter 153 (3/9/1932). Henceforth, “SBB III.”

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ The Pedagogical Institute was founded in 1922 at the instigation of Maria Schmitz, supported by the Catholic Women Teachers Association of Germany and the Catholic Teachers Association of Germany, which were forcibly dissolved in 1937. One year later the Pedagogical Institute was liquidated as well. After World War II, continuing-education research facilities were founded once more, restructured in 1963, with a new constitution in 1971, then disbanded in 1980. See

have been a position at the University of Freiburg. But, it was at last an opportunity to once more take part in intellectual activity in financially secure circumstances and, at the same time, to have a broader influence on students.

The beginning at Münster was not easy for Stein; she had to work through a large amount of literature on pedagogy and anthropology of gender, although these also led to philosophical questions concerning the basic concepts of pedagogy.¹⁰ Stein's Münster lectures on philosophical anthropology, given in the winter semester 1932/33,¹¹ follow lectures given in the summer of 1932 on "Theoretical Pedagogy": "Probleme der neueren Mädchenbildung" ("Problems of the New Education of Women", ESGA 13¹², 127-221).¹³ They offered a good opportunity for Stein to systematize her earlier works. At the same time, she applied her newest insights from her studies of Thomas in *Potenz und Akt* to the body-soul-mind connection of the human person.¹⁴ She also took part in an active exchange of ideas with her colleagues; the difference in educational backgrounds of the lecturers made understanding difficult, she writes to her friend Hedwig Conrad-Martius, but they were in agreement in their desire to build a "Catholic pedagogy."¹⁵

Otto Kreis, *Das Deutsche Institut für wissenschaftliche Pädagogik* (Münster: Universitätsverlag, 1989). Publications edited by the German Institute for Scientific Pedagogy: *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Pädagogik* (1925-33, 150-), *Handbuch der Erziehungswissenschaft*, ed. Max Ettliger, Franz Xaver Eggersdorfer *et al.* (Munich: Kösel & Pustet, 1928-1938), *Lexikon der Pädagogik der Gegenwart*, ed. J. Spieler (Freiburg: Herder, 1930-32).

¹⁰ See SBB III, Letter 154 (4/29/1932).

¹¹ See Stein, *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person. Vorlesung zur philosophischen Anthropologie*, ESGA 14 (Freiburg: Herder, 2004). Henceforth, "AMP."

¹² See Stein, "Probleme der neueren Mädchenbildung," in: *Die Frau*, ESGA 13 (Freiburg: Herder, 2000) 127-221.

¹³ Original in *Benediktinische Monatsschrift* 14:9-10 (1932): 356-71, 14:11-12 (1932): 436-444, and 15:1-2 (1933): 24-44, 15:3-4 (1933): 110-122.

¹⁴ See SBB III, Letter 155 (11/11/1932), SBB I, Letter 245 to Hedwig Conrad-Martius (2/24/1933).

¹⁵ She admits that, unfortunately, she suffers from gaps in her knowledge of pedagogy and the history of philosophy: see SBB I, Letter 245 to Hedwig Conrad-Martius (2/24/1933).

In January of 1933, a conference took place in Berlin on “Catholic pedagogy and its basic foundation and meaning for the contemporary school” (January 2–5, 1933),¹⁶ in which the Catholic pedagogy developed in her Münster lectures was presented and brought into discussion with representatives of National-Socialist pedagogy. Stein presented “Youth Education in Light of the Catholic Faith”¹⁷ as part of this debate with National Socialism.¹⁸ In sum, the time in Münster is marked by intellectual debates: first, the intellectual one between Husserl and Thomas and, second, the ideological-intellectual one between National Socialism and the Catholic faith.

Stein intended to continue her lectures in philosophical anthropology in the summer semester of 1933 with a theological anthropology entitled, *Was ist der Mensch? (What is the Human Being?)*¹⁹.²⁰ With unabated enthusiasm, Stein undertook the study of Catholic dogma²¹, which she had already consulted in preparation for her Berlin lectures,²² in order to outline her lectures for the summer semester.²³

¹⁶ See *ibid.*

¹⁷ See Stein, *Bildung und Entfaltung der Individualität*, ESGA 16 (Freiburg: Herder, 2004), 71–90. Henceforth, “BEI.”

¹⁸ For example, in a book review probably written after 7/14/1933 in Cologne, she emphasizes the urgency of the debate and the need to secure the legal rights of the Church in the schools at a time of “such eventful school politics” (*ibid.*, 140).

¹⁹ See Stein, *Was ist der Mensch? Theologische Anthropologie*, ESGA 15 (Freiburg: Herder, 2005). Henceforth, “WIM.”

²⁰ Also see SBB I, Letter 245 to Conrad-Martius (2/24/1933): In the “summer I will try to tackle the problem from the point of view of theology. These are all attempts to connect to my earlier works—and to form the basis of a pedagogy.”

²¹ Denzinger, Heinrich / Bannwart, Clemens, *Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (Freiburg: Herder, 1928).

²² See BEI, 73.

²³ The essay, “Theoretische Begründung der Frauenbildung” (in *Die Frau*, ESGA 13 [Freiburg: Herder, 2000], 225–6), which first appeared in the *Wochenschrift für Kath. Lehrerinnen* 4/15/1933, 136, is closely tied to theological anthropology. Stein presents a program for a Catholic pedagogy in which philosophical and theological anthropology flow together in a reciprocal relationship. *Die Frau* will henceforth be abbreviated “F.”

On April 5, 1933, Stein wrote to Conrad-Martius that she had “nothing to fear for her position.”²⁴ Unfortunately, this changed shortly thereafter. Stein clearly felt the impending evil of the times, reacting to Hitler’s seizure of power in an active manner. First, she prayed for her vocation to be able to “carry the cross” in those difficult times.²⁵ Stein took further action when, as early as sometime around April 12, 1933, she wrote a letter to Pope Pius XI, which was made public on February 15, 2003. In the letter she pleaded for a statement on the emerging anti-Semitism that could, she feared, turn into hostility against Christianity.²⁶ With this letter she took her place on the list of women who dared to write letters to the pope. Before her, other holy women—for example, Catherine of Siena and Bridget of Sweden—had already proven themselves to be “passionate admonishers of popes.”²⁷ Stein emphasized that “responsibility” falls on those who “keep silent” in the face of the measures against Jews.²⁸

“It will not be long before a Catholic in Germany will no longer be able to hold any office unless he supports the new course of things without reservation.”²⁹ This prediction would soon prove to be true for Stein herself. When she returned from Beuron to Munich on April 19, 1933, the managing director Bernhard Gerlach advised her that, for the time being, she should not deliver any lectures for the summer semester. She continued to receive her salary and was instructed to work quietly in the Collegium Marianum.³⁰ This she did, writing a new introduction

²⁴ *SBB I*, Letter nr. 250 to Conrad-Martius (5/4/1933).

²⁵ Stein, “Wie ich in den Kölner Karmel kam”, in *Aus dem Leben einer jüdischen Familie und weitere autobiographische Beiträge*, ESGA I (Freiburg: Herder, 2002), 348. Henceforth, “LJF.”

²⁶ The cover letter of Abbot Raphael Walzer, Stein’s spiritual companion, is dated 4/12/1933; her letter itself has no date.

²⁷ See also Beate Beckmann-Zöllner, *Frauen bewegen die Päpste—Hildegard von Bingen, Brigitta von Schweden, Katherina von Siena, Mary Ward, Elena Guerra und Edith Stein* (Augsburg: St. Ulrich Verlag, 2010).

²⁸ *SBB I*, Letter 251 (to Pope Pius XI). Actually, Stein wanted to travel to Rome, but she was given little chance of a private audience with Pius XI. She decided instead on a written plea for an encyclical.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ See LJF, 349–50.

to her lectures on theological anthropology; she prepared to have these published in book form. Stein then announced that she would leave the Institute.³¹ She probably did not receive a notice of dismissal from the German Institute for Scientific Pedagogy; she writes that it was her “free decision” to leave.³² She could have worked in a school in South America, but when this offer came, her decision to join the Carmelite Order had already been made.³³ [... see german version]

II.

Stein's Phenomenological Method at Münster. In her philosophical anthropology as well as in her lectures on the education of girls, Stein systematically describes the phenomenological method in precise language, which, unfortunately, is entirely missing in her theological anthropology, “What is the Human Being?”

We will concentrate on the things themselves³⁴ and build on that as far as we can. ... The method with which I will look for a solution to the problems is the phenomenological one, that is, the method that Edmund Husserl developed and first applied in volume II of the *Logical Investigations*.³⁵ But it is my conviction that it has been used by the great philosophers of all time, if not exclusively, and without a clear reflective awareness of their own method.³⁶

³¹ On 4/28/1933 Joseph Schröteler of the headquarters of the German Catholic School Organization in Düsseldorf asks her not to be hasty. He hopes and prays “that things will not turn out as they seem to be in the turbulent development of the last few days” (SBB I, Letter 253).

³² SBB I, Letter 270 to Werner Gordon (8/4/1933).

³³ See SBB I, Letter 282 to Margarete Günther (9/18/1933), note 4.

³⁴ Husserliana = Hua XIX/1, 10.

³⁵ Husserl, Edmund, *Logische Untersuchungen*, 2nd Volume, 1st Part, Hua XIX/1; 2nd part, Hua XIX/2, ed. Ursula Panzer, (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1984). Original: Halle: Niemeyer, 1900/01.

³⁶ AMP, 28–9.

Here the Husserlian concept of “intuition”³⁷ becomes necessary to comprehend the particular in the universal³⁸ through calm observation.

In her lectures on gender Stein presents the phenomenological method as one among others. She maintains that phenomenological intuition or *Wesensanschauung* is fundamental to the study of the essence of woman. Here, she understands consciousness as being capable of “bringing to light the universal structure of concrete objects,”³⁹ which has also traditionally been called abstraction. She proceeds then by differentiating between species, types, and individuals. But, here it is not “entirely” phenomenological intuition that is implemented, since she also incorporates her theological anthropology, rich with its biblical assertions, into her method.⁴⁰

Husserl saw Stein’s activity at this time⁴¹ as the exact opposite of his “transcendental phenomenology” and aptly described her starting point as “the psychology of essence (*eidōs*) within a universal ontology.”⁴² The question concerning the constitution of consciousness and Stein’s earlier employed method of “empathy,” with which self-knowledge is acquired, no longer

³⁷ See *Hua* XVIII, *Logische Untersuchungen, 1st vol.* ed. Elmar Holenstein. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1975) 246; *Hua* XIX/1, 512; *Hua* XIX/2, 539, 567 etc.; *Hua* III/1, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erstes Buch*, ed. Karl Schuhmann (The Hague: Nijhoff, 2nd ed., 1976) (Original: Halle: Niemeyer, 1913) 46f., 51, 53 etc.

³⁸ See AMP 28-9.

³⁹ F, 156.

⁴⁰ See F, 164: “While philosophy, with its specific task of perceiving, is called to explore the essence of the necessity of being and the possibility of being, it is the task of theology to determine what God’s revelation tells us about the nature of the woman.”

⁴¹ He was probably familiar only with the *Jahrbuch* publication: “Husserls Phänomenologie und die Philosophie des hl. Thomas Aquino. Versuch einer Gegenüberstellung,” in *Festschrift. Edmund Husserl zum 70. Geburtstag gewidmet*, Ergänzungsband zum Band X des *Jahrbuches für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* (1929): 315–38.

⁴² SBB I, Letter 168 from Edmund Husserl (7/17/1931). Husserl further writes: “But it is a curious thing that, even if someone does not separate transcendental phenomenology and phenomenological psychology and goes the way of a universality of *a priori* science, understood as a totality, he or she can (by classifying an eidetic psychology) contribute a most valuable work that is able to fit into my transcendental phenomenology.”

played a significant methodological role. This was probably also connected to the fact that her Münster audience was not trained in philosophy. Nonetheless, Stein continued to contribute to the movement of the “realist phenomenologists” of Münster and Göttingen, whose objective was to be a “completely open eye.”⁴³ They wanted to observe carefully and to analyze so that others could see what one sees in the mind’s eye (principle of evidence), always within a common and intersubjective context.⁴⁴

Stein’s anthropology can be classified easily as a phenomenological anthropology as well as a somatological anthropology similar to those of Frederik Jakobus Johannes Buytendijk,⁴⁵ Herbert Plügge,⁴⁶ and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.⁴⁷ It could also be viewed as a phenomenological social anthropology similar to Michael Theunissen’s work⁴⁸ or as a phenomenological

⁴³ Stein, *Einführung in die Philosophie*, ESGA 8 (Freiburg: Herder, 2004), 7. Henceforth, “EPh.”

⁴⁴ See Wilfried Plöger, *Phänomenologie und ihre Bedeutung für die Pädagogik* (Paderborn and Munich: Schöningh, 1986). The fact that the literature on the problem of the relation between phenomenology and pedagogy has not taken Stein into account as yet is certainly due to her relatively brief period of activity in Münster, where she uncovered a research gap in scientific pedagogy that still needed to be filled. See Hans-Hermann Groothoff, “Phänomenologie und Pädagogik,” in *Phänomenologie heute. Festschrift für Ludwig Landgrebe*, ed. Walter Biemel (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1972): 204–22. — Literature on Stein’s pedagogy published until now: Bruno H. Reifenrath, *Erziehung im Lichte des Ewigen. Die Pädagogik Edith Steins* (Frankfurt a. M.: Diesterweg 1985), Edward Birkenbeil, “Ganzheitliches Leben—Ziel und Weg der Pädagogik Edith Steins,” in: *Katholische Bildung* 91:5 (1990): 272–89, Hergard Schwarte, “Wahres Menschentum in sich und anderen zur Entfaltung bringen. Edith Stein als Pädagogin,” in: *Katholische Bildung* 99:9 (1998): 341–55, Rudolf Schweighofer, *Erziehung im Sinn Edith Steins* (Speyer: Verlag der Edith Stein Gesellschaft, 1999).

⁴⁵ See Frederik Jakobus Johannes Buytendijk, *Das Menschliche* (Stuttgart: Koehler, 1958).

⁴⁶ See Herbert Plügge, *Der Mensch und sein Leib* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1962).

⁴⁷ See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris : Gallimard, 1945).

⁴⁸ See Michael Theunissen, *Der Andere* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1965).

anthropology of the individual similar to the thought of Otto Friedrich Bollnow⁴⁹ and Eugen Fink.⁵⁰ It is possible, however, on the basis of Stein's conscious reception of the metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas, to understand her philosophical anthropology as a link in the chain of the project of a "Catholic pedagogy."⁵¹ Stein's reference to a "Catholic pedagogy" is evident in the example she gives of the "pedagogical meaning of Eucharistic truth."⁵² She tries to show how the Christian image of the human being affects education in the faith.

III.

The Human Being as Person—Philosophical Anthropology. Human beings are free, and due to their intellectual gifts are destined to be responsible for their lives: this is the goal toward which Stein's lectures on the *Structure of the Human Person* move.

I look into the eyes of a human being and his gaze is my answer. He either lets me enter into his inner being or he rebuffs me. He is master of his soul and can open or close its gates. ... If two people gaze at each other, an "I" and another "I" stand opposite each other. It can be a meeting before the gate or an encounter within the inner being. If it is an inward encounter, then the other "I" is a "Thou." The gaze of the human being speaks. One sees an *autonomous, alert "I."* For this reason we also say: *a free spiritual person.* To be a person is to be a free and spiritual being. That the human being is a person sets it apart from all other beings in nature.⁵³

⁴⁹ See Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Das Wesen der Stimmungen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Klostermann, 1941).

⁵⁰ See Eugen Fink, *Studien zur Phänomenologie, 1930–39* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1966), *Erziehungswissenschaften und Lebenslehre* (Freiburg: Rombach, 1970).

⁵¹ SBB I, Letter 245 to Hedwig Conrad-Martius (2/24/1933).

⁵² AMP, 162.

⁵³ AMP, 78.

In sensitive phenomenological analyses, Stein scrutinizes human individuality. Although the differentiation of the sexes is only articulated in the chapter on the “Social Being of the Person,” in her Münster phase she is sensitive to the sex/gender problem, albeit in the terminology of her time. She asks which characteristics are innate and which are the result of environmental influences; she also ponders the question concerning the difference of the sexes:

Humankind appears in double form, as masculine and feminine; at birth the individual belongs to one or the other “part of the species” (if we want to name it as such). Also, masculine and feminine characteristics only become actual during the course of life; again that happens under the influence of the environment. So, what approaches us in every later developmental phase and what one could designate as a “masculine” or “feminine type” is, in fact, a social type for which it is very difficult to distinguish between “environmental conditioning” and the founding of the social form in the “specific.”⁵⁴

A thorough investigation of the human species or “double species,” man and woman, could also have been part of Stein’s philosophical anthropology, but she already dealt with this issue in detail the previous semester in her lectures, “Problems of the New Education of Woman”:

I am of the conviction that the human species enfolds as a double species “man” and “woman,” that the human being’s essence ... reveals itself in a twofold manner, and that the entire structural essence is stamped by the specific. It is not only the body that is built differently, it is not only individual physiological functions that are different, but the entire life of the body is different; the relation between body and soul is different, and within the spiritual the relation between mind and sensation as well as the relation of the intellectual powers to one another are different. The female species corresponds to a self-contained unity of the entire body-soul personality, a harmonious development of her

⁵⁴ AMP, 142.

strengths; the male species to the raising of individual strengths to high-level achievements.⁵⁵

Later, in the 1960s, Elisabeth Gössmann formulated a similar “double species” thesis. She calls it the “immediate origination of both sexes.”⁵⁶

Whether man and woman are each only a “type” or, in fact, part of a species decides whether under “certain circumstances the transfer of one type into the other is possible.”⁵⁷ Stein here touches on the discussion that has been led by deconstructionist philosophers (for example, Judith Butler) with regard to the question of whether ascribing “femaleness” or “maleness”—simply put—should preferably be dropped, since there is no discernable “essence” of woman or man. Rather, it is a question of an arbitrary differentiation of gender characteristics. Stein remarks, “Even against the impossible removal of corporeal differences, certain facts—hermaphrodite and forms of transition—may be cited.”⁵⁸ But she replies to the question of whether there is a fundamental essence of either man or woman underlying all individuals by pointing out the fundamental problems of formal ontology that still need to be explained. She suggests, then, following Aristotle’s “first philosophy,” that the relation between gender, species, type, and individual must be explained.⁵⁹ The *meaning* of sexual differentiation, however, can be clarified only with the support of theological and not only by philosophical means.

⁵⁵ F, 167. Stein’s gender anthropology cannot be further elaborated here. See Sophie Binggeli, *La femme chez Edith Stein. Une approche philosophique, théologique et littéraire* (Lyons: Université, 2000), and Katharina Westerhorstmann, *Selbstverwirklichung und Pro-Existenz. Frausein in Arbeit und Beruf bei Edith Stein* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2004).

⁵⁶ See Elisabeth Gössman, *Das Bild der Frau heute* (Düsseldorf: Haus der katholischen Frauen, 1962).

⁵⁷ F, 152.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ See *ibid.*: “The examination of the essence of woman has its logical place in a philosophical anthropology. To the study of humankind belongs the clarification of the meaning of sexual differentiation, the emphasis on the contents of the species as well as the position of the species

In order to gain knowledge about the individuality of the human being—even about the difference between the sexes—Stein uses the realist phenomenological method: Viewed from the outside, the body comes into awareness first and then one’s inner nature, which she designates, following Thomas, as soul and mind. Stein examines human beings in a step-by-step manner as material body, living entity, soul entity, and mind entity—a microcosm, whose inner and outer development is fragmented. The human being as a spiritual person possesses an individuality; it is also a social and cultural being and a seeker of God. In her previous works Stein, following the transcendental phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, had always begun her reflections on the human person with the inner.⁶⁰ In thinking, the mind or consciousness is first, and this is followed by the self-awareness of the soul, the psyche, and the body.

The lectures on philosophical anthropology grew out of Edith Stein’s Münster pedagogy, but they lead directly to the very philosophical questions that had stood at the center of her interests since her student days. Even in her dissertation, *On the Problem of Empathy*, Stein worked on problems concerning the structure of the human person.⁶¹ She herself remarks in her autobiography that this topic had “in all her later works continued to occupy [her] anew, again and again.”⁶²

in the construction of the human individual, the relation of type to species and individual, and the conditions underlying type formation.”

⁶⁰ See PE, Eph, as well as Stein, *Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften. Eine Untersuchung über den Staat* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1970; ESGA 6, Freiburg: Herder); first published in *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* 5 (1922). Henceforth, “BPB” and “US,” respectively.

⁶¹ See PE: “Die Konstitution des psychophysischen Individuums” (40–101).

⁶² LJF, 328: “It was a big task, as the dissertation had grown to an ungainly length. In the first part, I examined, following a few comments in Husserl’s lectures, the act of “empathy” as a special act of perception. From there I proceeded to a matter that was personally dear to my heart and continued to occupy me anew again and again in all my later work: the construction of the human person.”

Her research on “Psychic Causality” and “Individual and Community” (in *Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaft*⁶³) gave rise to the chapters on power and the body-soul connection. She continued with the problem of subjectivity in her lectures, *Einführung in die Philosophie (Introduction to Philosophy)*, delivered in Breslau around 1921.⁶⁴ She covers the question of man’s sociality—in view of the emerging National-Socialist world-view and race ideology, a highly contentious subject—in “Individual and Community,” in *An Investigation Concerning the State*,⁶⁵ and in her review of Dietrich von Hildebrand’s *Metaphysik der Gemeinschaft*.

Reading her lectures one can clearly see the influence of the metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas, whose ontology and theory of perception Stein employs to build her own philosophical anthropology. She also understands her lectures as a continuation, that is, a condensed version, of *Potenz und Akt*. The influence of Conrad-Martius’s *Metaphysische Gespräche*⁶⁶ and her discussion of the soul of the plant⁶⁷ are also important. Stein took up a more in-depth analysis of the body-soul-mind connection three years later in her work *Finite and Eternal Being* (1935–37),

⁶³ See BPG, 1–116 and 116–238, respectively.

⁶⁴ See EPh, 113–48: “Die ontische Struktur psychophysischer Subjekte” and 149–89: “Erkenntnis von Personen.” Also see the new dating of the *Einführung in die Philosophie* and the reconstruction of the text of “Die ontische Struktur der Person und ihre erkenntnistheoretische Problematik” in Claudia M. Wulf’s article, “Rekonstruktion und Neudatierung einiger frühen Werke Edith Steins,” in *Edith Stein—Themen, Bezüge, Dokumente*, ed. Beate Beckmann and Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003), 249–67, and the Introduction in ESGA 8.

⁶⁵ See note 54 above. Also in ESGA 7 (Freiburg: Herder, 2006).

⁶⁶ See Hedwig Conrad-Martius, *Metaphysische Gespräche* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1921).

⁶⁷ See Hedwig Conrad-Martius, “Von der Seele,” in *Summa II* (Hellerau: Hegner, 1917); eadem, “Realontologie,” *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* 6 (1923): 159–333; eadem, “Die Zeit,” *Philosophischer Anzeiger* 2:2 and 4 (1927–28) :143–82 and 354–90; eadem, “L’existence, la substantialité et l’âme,” *Recherches philosophiques* 2 (1932): 1–183; eadem, *Die “Seele” der Pflanze* (Breslau: Borgmeyer, 1934).

which is clearly connected to the Münster lectures. Even in her last work, *Science of the Cross* (1942), Stein speaks to the anthropological theme of “Freedom, I, and Soul.”⁶⁸

The lectures on *The Structure of the Human Person* belong to a time in which Martin Buber had already (1923) developed his I-Thou-philosophy.⁶⁹ The theme of the human person began to occupy Stein’s mind strongly not only because of the rising National-Socialistic world-view⁷⁰ but also because of the horrors of World War I. Philosophically, Stein might have reached back (but she did not) to the anthropology of William Stern,⁷¹ her teacher in Breslau, or to that of Max Scheler, which appeared posthumously in 1928 (she at least refers to the title).⁷² Stein also fails to mention the philosophical anthropology of her fellow student at Göttingen, Helmuth Plessner.⁷³ Instead, she gives more attention to Martin Heidegger’s existential image of Dasein as well as to psychoanalysis, which was receiving lots of attention at that time, although Stein was critical of it as were most phenomenologists.⁷⁴ Stein proceeds to a humanistic conception of the human person, dissociating herself from psychoanalysis as well as from a purely scientific

⁶⁸ KW, 132–9.

⁶⁹ See Martin Buber, *Ich und Du* (Leipzig: Insel, 1923).

⁷⁰ See Otto Hauser, *Der blonde Mensch* (Weimar: Duncker, 1921); Wilhelm Rossmann, *Der faustische Mensch* (Bremen: Winter, 1930); Hans Hartmann, *Mensch sein heißt Kämpfer sein* (Chemnitz: Neubauer, 1931).

⁷¹ See William Stern, *Person und Sache. System der philosophischen Weltanschauung. System des kritischen Personalismus*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Barth, 1906–24). Also see René Kaufmann, “Zum Personalismus William Sterns und Edith Steins Kritik,” in *Die “unbekannte” Edith Stein: Phänomenologie und Sozialphilosophie*, ed. Beate Beckmann-Zöllner and Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2006), 179–91.

⁷² See AMP 30 n. 46 and Max Scheler, *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* (Darmstadt: Reichl, 1928). Also see Alexander Altmann, *Die Grundlagen der Wertethik: Wesen, Wert, Person. Max Schelers Erkenntnis- und Seinslehre in kritischer Analyse* (Berlin: Ph.D. Thesis, 1931).

⁷³ See Helmuth Plessner, *Die Stufen des Organischen und der Mensch* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1928).

⁷⁴ See AMP, 7–8.

account like the one found in Albert Huth's work, *Pädagogische Anthropologie*.⁷⁵ Chapter V of her lectures devoted to the problem of the origin of the species makes it clear that she disputes Charles Darwin's thesis both on philosophical⁷⁶ and theological⁷⁷ grounds. At the same time, Stein understands science as having learned from evolutionary theory, but it is ultimately subordinate to revealed truth. For Stein, both truths can be harmonized within the Christian faith.⁷⁸ It is important for Stein to proceed neither from a purely philosophico-historical perspective (as does Groethuysen, whom she quotes repeatedly⁷⁹) nor from a scientific one (like Huth). Rather, she works from a systematic phenomenological perspective and lets philosophy and theology work together on the problems raised by Thomas Aquinas. She does not, however, simply follow his system, since she has "different interpretations on several essential points."⁸⁰ Nonetheless, the influence of Thomas's philosophy of the individual is clear. Preparing the lectures as a vacation activity, Stein had, for instance, worked on the "study of the psychological problems of the *Summa* and other works." Also, her participation in a session of the *Société Thomiste* devoted to "Phenomenology and Thomism" left its mark on her preparation for the winter lectures.⁸¹ In terms of the influence of the phenomenological legacy, non-idealistic aspects of Husserl and the realist phenomenologies of Adolf Reinach, Hedwig Conrad-Martius, and Max Scheler can also be found in the lectures. The special appeal of her philosophical anthropology lies in the fact that Stein—unlike her approach in her previous works—begins her

⁷⁵ See Albert Huth, *Pädagogische Anthropologie* (Leipzig: Klinghardt, 1932).

⁷⁶ See AMP, 60–1.

⁷⁷ See AMP, 65, 150.

⁷⁸ See AMP, 73.

⁷⁹ In the "Brauner Notizblock" of 1932 (Edith-Stein-Archiv, Cologne, P/A II P, fols. 5–18a).

⁸⁰ AMP, 28. For instance, she considers the question of possibility perhaps not completely solved by Thomas (*ibid.*, 53). Unlike Thomas, she thinks only God, not other spirits (like angels), should be designated as "pure form" (*ibid.*, 103). In addition, it seems incorrect to her to speak of "a replacement of lower forms by higher forms to save the unity of the form, ... since every substance continues to follow its own principles of form" (*ibid.*, 131).

⁸¹ See SBB I, Letter 216 to Adelgundis Jaegerschmid (8/28/1932).

analysis from the realistic outer view of the human being rather than from the idealistic or transcendental-phenomenological starting point of consciousness.⁸²

IV.

The Human Being's Body-Soul-Unity ("Somatic" Anthropology). Since her dissertation, *On the Problem of Empathy* (1917), one of Stein's philosophical strengths was her phenomenology of the body, in which body and mind/soul are clearly differentiated but reciprocally referred to each other.⁸³ The bodily nature of humans is first considered as a material thing, then as an organism. As the essence of the plant is to reach toward the light—here Stein follows Conrad-Martius—so in the "face of the human being . . . , as in the bloom, lies its fullest self-revelation."⁸⁴ Stein sees the animal in humans—as does Hettinger⁸⁵—primarily in the phenomena of movement, the states of feelings and emotions, and finally in the power of the soul. Movement is unfettered in space, resulting in a characteristic restlessness, a being driven and moved from without and within by desires and attractions to which humans react. Furthermore, the animal aspect is characterized by inner confusion, sensitivity, and feelings or bodily sensations. The center lies in the soul/spirit, which is the recipient of outer stimulations and the source of reactions. The inner, emotional state of the soul shows itself in passions or feelings.⁸⁶

⁸² See also Peter Schulz, *Edith Steins Theorie der Person. Von der Bewußtseinsmetaphysik zur Geistmetaphysik* (Freiburg and Munich: Alber, 1994).

⁸³ See also Beate Beckmann-Zöller, "Zugänge zum Leib-Seele-Problem bei Edith Stein im Hinblick auf das Ereignis des religiösen Erlebnisses," in *Das Leib-Seele Problem und die Phänomenologie*, ed. Cathrin Nielsen, Michael Steinmann, and Frank Töpfer (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2007), 157–72.

⁸⁴ AMP, 43.

⁸⁵ See Max Ettlinger, *Beitäge zur Lehre von der Tierseele und ihrer Entwicklung* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1925).

⁸⁶ See AMP, 70–1.

Following Thomas's principle, *anima forma corporis*, the soul is the unitary form-principle, which makes human beings into a living essence as opposed to a dead body or object; it is the principle of the unitary structure of the individual.⁸⁷ Stein, however, emphasizes the Thomistic principle *individuum de ratione materiae*: the individual exists by measure of the material, that is, not only does the inner form of the soul express itself in outward form but also, conversely, the outer body limits or supports the inner development. Here, Stein shows her "somatological" anthropology, the body-centeredness of her theory, which moves her closer to the starting point of Merleau-Ponty, who, long after her and independently of her, came to the same conclusion. Stein's appropriation of Thomas's *anima forma corporis* principle is especially clear when concrete conclusions are drawn from her argument for a gender-differentiated education. When not only the body and psychic functions depend on this principle but also the structure of the human being's mind, and given that woman is stamped by a bodily essence and her respective gender, then the "education must be aware of the specific structure of the mind."⁸⁸ In her treatise, "Nature, Freedom, and Grace,"⁸⁹ Stein clearly differentiates between the body inhabited by a soul (*Leib*) and the body without a soul (*Körper*); however, in her theological anthropology she unfortunately confuses these concepts.⁹⁰ The body is understood as material body, but is no less valued because of it, since the soul is completed by the body, that is, it needs to be supplemented by the body. The soul is also considered the form of the body in her theological anthropology. Following Church dogma, she emphasizes that evil spirits do not create the body, but that it is, on the contrary, highly esteemed in Catholic teaching. The accusation of animosity toward the body that one can make against individual Christians thinkers is not justified with regard to Christian doctrine as such, as Stein makes clear. Just as the body should not be underrated, the soul must not be overrated: it is neither a part of God nor a godly

⁸⁷ BPG/IG, 248.

⁸⁸ F, 163.

⁸⁹ See Stein, "Freiheit und Gnade" (printed under the incorrect title, "Die ontische Struktur der Person und ihre erkenntnistheoretische Voraussetzung"), in *Welt und Person. Beitrag zum christlichen Wahrheitsstreben*, Edith Steins Werke 6 (Freiburg and Louvain: Herder, 1962), 137–97. Henceforth, "FG." (ESGA 9).

⁹⁰ See WIM, 7–8.

substance in humans, but rather a necessity of the human body. The connection between body and soul is not a chance occurrence, since the soul could not be a soul if it were not connected to the body: “In humans, where the soul, unlike the body, is capable of subsisting, the being of the soul in ‘the body’ must be understood as receiving body matter into the subsistence of the soul. With that it becomes the subsistence of the entire human.”⁹¹

In addition to mortality as a result of disobedience to God Stein emphasizes the problem of desire in humans. In contemporary anthropology this is, at most, thematized in connection with the overall sinfulness of humans or with a morally neutral sexual desire in psychoanalysis and the phenomenology influenced by it.⁹² Stein points out that in the state of Paradise there was an appropriate desire; a disordered desire came about after the Fall. Body and soul together belong to fallen nature, not the body alone. After the Fall humans are neither saved from desire nor from death.

The decisive element in Stein’s theological anthropology is the unity of body and mind/soul in Christ. Christ possesses the nature of Adam and is, therefore, perfect, although He freely takes upon himself the imperfection of death and of sorrow. Furthermore, the person must never be used as a means to an end, as Stein emphasizes without directly citing Kant.⁹³ The person has dignity because she is conscious and free to use and enjoy creation.

The specifically human trait in the body-soul unity—the personal structure that expresses itself in responsibility, personality, and the “I”—is especially developed in Stein’s philosophical anthropology. Intellectuality (*Geistigkeit*) as openness to the inner as well as the outer is accompanied by the personal phenomena of freedom and the “thou shalt” (that is, values). Self-

⁹¹ WIM, 87.

⁹² See also Edith Seifert, *Was will das Weib? Zu Begehren und Lust bei Freud und Lacan* (Weinheim: Quadriga, 1987); Armin Walter, *Der Andere, das Begehren und die Zeit. Ein Denken des Bezuges im Grenzgang zwischen Emmanuel Levinas und der Dichtung* (Cuxhaven: Junghans, 1996); Gilles Deleuze, *Lust und Begehren – Deux régimes de fous* (Paris: Minuit, 2003).

⁹³ See WIM, 88.

structuring is demanded of the person; that is, the “I” and the self structure sensations and perceptions. The “I” and the self, therefore, are at the same time forming and being formed.⁹⁴ Stein goes on to differentiate between periphery and center, the superficial and the depth of the experience of the “I.” She does not, as she does later in *Finite and Eternal Being*, assign a specific place to the “I”:

I cannot⁹⁵ designate any spot in the body where the “I” has its place. This was attempted by an earlier age; yet even if one were able to designate a specific part of the brain, which when destroyed could result in a fading of “I” consciousness and the entire personal-mind structure, we could not say that the “I” is localized in this part. The “I” is not a cell in the brain; it has a spiritual meaning that is accessible only from the experience of the self. And, the localization of the “I” is only determined by experience (*Erleben*). This experienced localization (just as the phenomenon is given to others) is not determined physically.⁹⁶

Three years later, however, after Stein studied the work of Alexander Pfänder on the soul, in *Finite and Eternal Being* she follows his questionable speculation, agreeing with him that one can prove that the “I” has a specific place in the organic body.⁹⁷ The “I” “resides in the body and the soul—present in every point where it senses something living-present, even if it also has its specific place in the corporeal body and *its actual ‘seat’ in a specific ‘place.’*”⁹⁸ And, since ‘its’ body and ‘its’ soul belong to it, the name ‘I’ is applied to the entire human being.”⁹⁹

⁹⁴ See AMP, 112–18.

⁹⁵ The earlier edition in Edith Steins Werke, vol. 16, *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person*, Freiburg : Herder, 1994) had the incorrect words “I can.”

⁹⁶ AMP, 84.

⁹⁷ See also Karl Schumann’s critique, “Stein und Pfänder,” in *Edith Stein—Themen, Bezüge, Dokumente* (cited in note 58 above), 25–36.

⁹⁸ Reference in EES, 318, 34: “See also A. Pfänder, *Die Seele des Menschen*, Halle 1933, 20: ‘The subject of the soul has within its conscious surroundings a specific location. On the one hand, it is, in a certain sense, in the center of its own soul and in the life of one’s own soul. On

Not only the “I” of the human being but also the human as an individual are, in the end, known only by conscious abstraction. Actually, as Stein explains in her chapter on “The Social Being of the Person,” the human person is in an interwoven relationship, his “Dasein is Dasein in a world, his life is life in community.”¹⁰⁰ In addition to fundamental sociological concepts, Stein analyzes the concept of *Volk*, entering into the debates of her day. She declines, however, to give an analysis of “race” because it is too controversial.

V.

The Transition from Philosophical to Theological Anthropology. It is not enough to describe the “inner” and “outer” of the human being; the “above” must also be included for an integrated and realistic view of the person. Stein, therefore, views her philosophical anthropology as setting the stage for her planned theological anthropology. The philosophical anthropology is incomplete because it can only claim ontologically and theologically that the finite refers to the infinite.¹⁰¹ The human being is naturally a “seeker of God,” who is able to acquire a certain knowledge of God and the self through “natural reason.” Signs in the world, according to Stein, following the traditional view concerning natural knowledge about God and philosophical teachings about God, make the search for and the finding of God meaningful. In their inner as well as their outer world human beings find indicators of something that is above them and above everything, on which they depend as well as does everything else. The question

the other hand, it is located behind the eyes, approximately at the center of the head ... The subject comes closer and closer to himself if he moves the other parts of his own body back to this center of the head. From this location in the head the spiritual subject orientates himself in his own body and in the rest of the surroundings of which the body is conscious. Instinctively, therefore, the glance of other human beings (and some animals) turns to this location in the head behind the eyes when they want to approach the spiritual subject itself.”

⁹⁹ EES, 345–6 (emphasis original).

¹⁰⁰ AMP, 134.

¹⁰¹ Stein will argue a similar position in EES: “Sinn und Möglichkeit einer ‘Christlichen Philosophie’” (12–30).

concerning this Being, the search for God, is part of being human. To explore by natural means how far one can go in this search is the task of philosophy, a task that both anthropology and epistemology share. The solution must lead to a delineation of the limits of natural knowledge.¹⁰²

Questions concerning salvation belong to being human. These cannot be solved by empirical or rational inference.¹⁰³ Answers from a “superior mind” are required. The same applies to a pedagogy that seeks to answer questions regarding human nature. Biblical revelation can assist us in answering such questions.¹⁰⁴ The human being, according to Stein, is not only to be seen as God’s creation but also as being in need of redemption, that is, in need of salvation, since the human being is fallen from its natural, holistic condition. The person can arrive at salvation, understood as wholeness, when she joins Christ and the Church.¹⁰⁵ Stein clearly

¹⁰² See AMP, 32.

¹⁰³ See AMP, 161: “But what is necessary for salvation must be accessible to all and cannot depend on the standing of human research.”

¹⁰⁴ See AMP, 162: “If, however, pedagogy abstains from drawing from Revelation, it risks ignoring the most important insights we can have about humans, their destiny, and the way to this destiny; pedagogy cuts itself off, in principle, from adequately achieving its object (that is, the development of the human being). ... Thus, pedagogy will not become theology, but rather enters into a meaningful and secure relation.”

¹⁰⁵ See AMP, 12: “The human being has no power over the forces of the deep and cannot on his or her own find the way to the heights. ... To heal human nature and return it to the elevation over nature that was intended for human beings since time began, God himself became man. The Son of the eternal Father became the new head of the human race; everyone who is joined with Him in the unity of the mystical body is a child of God, carries a fountain of godly life within himself or herself ... the natural light of human reason is strengthened by the light of grace and is better protected against false teachings, albeit not entirely. Above all, the human being’s spiritual eye is opened to everything that gives us knowledge in this world of another world; the will is turned toward the eternal good and not easily turned away from it. She possesses more strength in the fight against the lower powers. ... Thus, for the Christian a critical position over and against the world in which he or she finds himself or herself as a spiritually awakened being, over against his own ‘I’, is required.”

maintains that her starting point is realistic; it is neither a pessimistic nor an optimistic view of humans. Human beings in their original state were good, but because of the Fall from grace their wills have been weakened. Humans are confused in their desires and murky in their reasoning until they return to Christ.¹⁰⁶ As mentioned in her lectures and essays on pedagogy (*Bildung und Entfaltung der Individualität*¹⁰⁷), her lectures on philosophical anthropology point to an ascent of her thinking from the finite to the eternal as a transition to the theological foundation for the understanding of humans as beings created and protected by God.

In *What is Man?* Stein fleshes out the image of the human being that is implicitly found in the Catholic faith. She wants to write an “anthropology based on dogma” from which philosophical and theological conclusions can be drawn. A scientific pedagogy must account for its idea of man;¹⁰⁸ this is especially true for Catholic pedagogues. Stein does not see faith and dogma as restrictions on pedagogical science, but rather as purifying and clarifying. Faith can provide additional and supplementary knowledge that cannot be gleaned from scientific research.¹⁰⁹ Stein’s theological anthropology, unfortunately, remains in draft form and was not made ready for publication; it ends in mid-sentence, but it nonetheless allows us a glimpse into Stein’s intellectual “workshop.”

VI.

¹⁰⁶ See AMP, 11.

¹⁰⁷ See note 16 above.

¹⁰⁸ See WIM, 2.

¹⁰⁹ See also EES: “Sinn und Möglichkeit einer Christlichen Philosophie” (20–36).—Stein’s specific understanding of metaphysics appears in SBB I, Letter 230 to Hedwig Conrad-Martius (11/13/1932): “I have, however, a different idea of metaphysics: an understanding of all reality as including revealed truth and, therefore, it is grounded in philosophy *and* theology.”

Human Freedom between Nature and Grace. After truth,¹¹⁰ freedom occupies an important place in Stein's anthropology. Freedom not only coincides with something that is true, but if truth gives a person his or her freedom, then it is something attractive to and worthy of humans.¹¹¹ In 1921, Stein takes another theoretical step toward her conversion to Roman Catholicism with her essay "Natur, Freiheit und Gnade" ("Nature, Freedom, and Grace").¹¹² The theme of freedom that was briefly treated in her philosophical anthropology under the "specifically human,"¹¹³ where the tension between nature and grace is brought to the fore, is of renewed interest in her theological anthropology; Stein, right from the beginning, poses the question of the freedom of the human will.

Humans, created by God, are called to be co-creators, that is, they must give the world form and structure, which is only possible if they understand and obey God's call.¹¹⁴ Thus, for Stein, conscious perception and free will become the primary constants in being human. Free will is, unfortunately, inhibited by sin, that is, the Fall, and "only by grace is the freedom for the good restored."¹¹⁵ Stein is especially interested in Augustine's theory of grace in relation to human existence. Grace always presupposes nature, that is, being a child of God is unthinkable without human freedom, which in turn requires grace. Stein asks whether freedom could cease in the afterlife; she answers in the negative, arguing that a union of love could never flourish without freedom.¹¹⁶ Freedom as self-determination of the will, however, can be misused. God's

¹¹⁰ See also Claudia Mariele Wulf, *Freiheit und Grenze: Edith Steins Anthropologie und ihre erkenntnistheoretischen Implikationen. Eine kontextuelle Darstellung* (Vallendar-Schönstatt: Patris, 2002).

¹¹¹ See also Beate Beckmann-Zöllner, "Religious-Philosophical Reflections on the Relationship of Freedom and Commitment in Edith Stein and Simone Weil," in *Contemplating Edith Stein*, ed. Joyce Avrech Berkman (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2006): 301–19.

¹¹² See note 83 above.

¹¹³ AMP, 79–80.

¹¹⁴ See WIM, 30.

¹¹⁵ WIM, 19.

¹¹⁶ Here, Stein makes use of Augustine's theory of freedom: "For us, it is of the utmost necessity to gain clarity about which *idea of freedom* lies at the foundation of the definitions" (WIM, 43).

foreknowledge changes nothing in regard to freedom of the will. For this reason Augustine makes a clear distinction between *praedestinatio* (predestination) and *praescientia* (foreknowledge). God knows everything beforehand, but this does not take away human freedom.¹¹⁷

Stein understands Augustine as a “non-determinist” since freedom is not identical with predestination. This route, however, leads to Duns Scotus, who has a very weak concept of free will.¹¹⁸ Stein defends Augustine’s theory of freedom. Explaining her own project at the same time, she emphasizes that Augustine is concerned with a philosophical procedure, with self-certainty and insight, and only secondarily with the teachings of the Church and theology.¹¹⁹ She rejects accusations that Augustine abandoned freedom of the will. Theologians who had no clear conception of freedom arrived at this interpretation.¹²⁰ In a footnote Stein emphasizes that she offers her own supplement to Augustine’s train of thought.¹²¹ To this end, she presents a pointed analysis of the will that is reminiscent of Schopenhauer but also of Alexander Pfänder.¹²² For Stein, the will is an “indisputable, certain fact of our self-conscious being.”¹²³

Free will, explains Stein in her exposition on grace, does not, unfortunately, lead directly to salvation; it can be diverted, but through grace the way to the good can be freed.¹²⁴ Free human beings can choose to be open to grace; human freedom, therefore, is always present.¹²⁵

¹¹⁷ See Ernst Dassmann, *Augustinus: Heiliger und Kirchenlehrer* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1993), 122.

¹¹⁸ See WIM, 50, 61.

¹¹⁹ See *ibid.*

¹²⁰ See WIM, 59. Stein nevertheless impartially addresses critical aspects of the predestination question, for instance, the passages in the Old Testament where it is clear that God directs the worldly human will. Ultimately—and this is Stein’s solution—human willing is referred to the mystery of God’s willing.

¹²¹ See WIM, 52.

¹²² See Alexander Pfänder, *Phänomenologie des Wollens* (Leipzig: Barth, 1900).

¹²³ WIM, 53.

¹²⁴ See WIM, 63.

¹²⁵ See WIM, 103.

Grace may be experienced in the impulse for certain actions of love, ascetic practices, and choices of a profession.¹²⁶ Since grace may also be lost, one cannot be certain of being chosen to receive grace.¹²⁷ Fundamentally, grace gives “the power to withstand disordered inclinations”¹²⁸ such that it becomes possible to purify desires with new standards.

Stein poses the question of whether one can be a “good human being” by virtue of one’s own natural strength; she differentiates between “natural goodness and the supernaturally valuable.”¹²⁹ On the whole, love and the good are possible as they can come out of natural strengths, but these strengths are not enough.¹³⁰ No matter how highly rated, the strengths of nature do not bring renewal. For this reason Christ is understood as the mediator who brings salvation and atonement for original sin.¹³¹

VI.

Knowledge and Faith. A philosophical theme that Stein addresses from 1937—more intensely in her theological anthropology and later in her analysis of Dionysius the Areopagite in her *Wege der Gotteserkenntnis (Ways to Know God)*,¹³² than in her philosophical

¹²⁶ See *ibid.*

¹²⁷ See WIM, 101–03.

¹²⁸ WIM, 102.

¹²⁹ WIM, 70.

¹³⁰ See WIM, 68.

¹³¹ See WIM, 73: “But in this deed that was accomplished for all, only those will have a part who belong to the Savior. This affiliation is won by believing in Him, that is, taking Him for what He claims to be, accepting the gift He offers, setting hopes in His promises, obeying his commands.” In her religious-philosophical essay “Freiheit und Gnade” (1921), Stein provides a detailed phenomenology of mediation, whose limits she finds in the realm of freedom: “From the beginning we will say that free mediating activity is limited by two absolute borders: by human beings’ freedom, whose salvation is in question, and by divine freedom” (FG, 160). ESGA 9.

¹³² See Stein, *Wege der Gotteserkenntnis. Studie zu Dionysius Areopagita und Übersetzung seiner Werke*, ESGA 17 (Freiburg: Herder, 2003).

anthropology—is the question of whether and how humans can have knowledge of God despite their inadequate cognitive abilities. The paths of knowledge to the divine and the relation to God are situated between faith in this life and seeing in the hereafter.¹³³ The recognition of God is a first step toward God; it is not followed, however, by an “overwhelming certainty”: that is the mark of faith. Faith, as the act of “free obedience,” is neither accessible through knowledge nor acquired through experience or by natural cognition.¹³⁴ Stein, unlike later in her essay “Ways to Know God,” interprets the act of faith here also as virtue because it passes into a *habitus* (disposition or habit). Stein, in line with Thomas’s *De veritate*, lays out the distinction between the act of faith and the object of faith. Faith, according to Stein, already presupposes knowledge of God, namely, the self-revelation of God, which then makes the certainty of faith possible and this surpasses knowledge of God.¹³⁵ For Stein, faith is “thinking with assent”¹³⁶ that becomes possible through the will and the object of the will, but not through reason nor by a judgment on the basis of knowledge. So, Stein would perhaps like to have faith understood as recognition but not as knowledge, that is, in the sense of a “gaining of recognition” and not “having knowledge on the basis of logical conclusions.”¹³⁷ She therefore sets the concept of faith (to gain knowledge) apart from the concept of religious experience as the moderns use it in this context.¹³⁸ The “beginning of faith is the gaining of knowledge from God that is the foundation of all assumptions about the truths concerning God.”¹³⁹ At the same time, faith is “the beginning of eternal life,”¹⁴⁰ an expression that Stein also uses in her pedagogical lectures.¹⁴¹ She

¹³³ See Beate Beckmann-Zöllner, “Phänomenologie der Gotteserkenntnis und Gottverbundenheit,” *Edith-Stein-Jahrbuch* Würzburg (2005): 109–33.

¹³⁴ See WIM, 170.

¹³⁵ See WIM, 32.

¹³⁶ WIM, 34 (a citation from Augustine).

¹³⁷ WIM, 34–5.

¹³⁸ See WIM, 36 n. 150.

¹³⁹ WIM, 36.

¹⁴⁰ A phrase from Aquinas, *De veritate*, qu. 14, art. 2, corp. (= Stein, *Untersuchungen über die Wahrheit* [Breslau: Borgmeyer, 1932]).

¹⁴¹ See BEI, 77.

emphasizes that Christ is the foundation of the hope of Christians: a mystery or even a “non-appearance” that can nevertheless be the object of the will and the keeper of truth.

The meeting between the human “I” and the divine “Thou” takes place in the spiritual beholding of God after earthly death; it is similar to an encounter between human beings. Stein makes use of this point to reflect on self-awareness and the awareness of the stranger.¹⁴² Despite sincerity and openness, there is in self-awareness as well as in the awareness of strangers always the possibility of self-deception. Thus, “faith” is relevant not only to the awareness of God but also to that of human beings; it is never entirely free from doubt. Here, Stein sees the limits of language and also bodily expression insofar as, on the one hand, the other reveals himself or herself and, on the other hand, our “intrusion [... finds its] limit in the other person’s freedom to open or close him/herself.”¹⁴³ The need to interpret gestures in interpersonal relations leads Stein to consider the general problem of the interpretation of symbols and to the role of language.¹⁴⁴ Trust is necessary when God speaks through human beings; Stein refers to this trust as a “dark sensing”¹⁴⁵ or “dark perception.”¹⁴⁶

It seems that Stein is undertaking a revision of her theory of empathy here. She is concerned with understanding and experiencing something together with the other: to understand joy, for example, is not understood as in her earlier theory of empathy; rather, the reason for the joy (about what, why, etc.) must be recognized. The “with and after of the carrying out” [?] of inner experience of the other is life-unifying, since the experience of the other is incorporated into one’s own. To love the other and to recognize (and know) him are two human acts that belong closely together.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² See also EPh, 149–57.

¹⁴³ WIM, 40.

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ KW, 131.

¹⁴⁶ EES, 459.

¹⁴⁷ See WIM, 41.

Stein's interest in the object of cognition is also evident in the reference to Descartes's *cogito ergo sum* and similar expressions of Augustine:¹⁴⁸

The starting point of all proofs is the most certain of all facts: that of one's own being, life, knowing. Knowing stands above being and life because it includes both. And reason, the source of our mental awareness, is higher than the senses, since it gains all the knowledge that the senses grasp as well as itself. Reason is highest in humans and if there is anything higher it must be God.¹⁴⁹

Stein proceeds from a twofold order of knowledge, that is, reason and faith do not contradict each other. Rather, they assist each other. Faith frees reason from errors; reason proves the foundation of faith.¹⁵⁰ This twofold order of knowledge is dissolved in the so-called modernist views of science, whose false teaching Pope Pius X tried to clarify.¹⁵¹ Inner drives, necessities, and a general principle of "development," not natural revelation, are seen by modernists to be the decisive factors for faith. At stake here is a religious experience that is built on religious sentiment only; there is a disregard for divinely enlightened reason. A turn in Stein's own phenomenology of religious experience is evident here: in her early phase Stein herself proceeded from the possibility of religious experience without recourse to revelation. Since her

¹⁴⁸ See Augustine, *De civitate dei* XI, 26; *De Trinitate* 15, 12, 21; *De vera religione* 39, 73; *De libero arbitrio* 2, 3, 20. On the similarity between the *cogito* of Descartes and statements by Augustine, see Christoph Horn, *Augustinus* (Munich: Beck, 1995), 162–3.

¹⁴⁹ WIM, 46. Stein soon draws the line further between her and her teacher Edmund Husserl in *Finite and Eternal Being*: "For everywhere—in the 'life' of Augustine, in the 'I think' of Descartes, in Husserl's 'consciousness' or 'experience'—everywhere there is an *I am*" (EES, 35–6).

¹⁵⁰ In *Finite and Eternal Being*, she pursues this tension more methodically. See EES, 20–36.

¹⁵¹ In a note in the *Edith-Stein-Archiv* (B I, 64b), Stein cites various modernists: Loisy, von Hügel, Tyrell, Murri, Gisler. It is unclear whether she studied their writings herself.

conscious turn to Christianity, she focuses on the mutual dependence of faith and religious experience.¹⁵²

VII.

Stein's Achievement and the Project of an Anthropological Foundation for a Catholic Pedagogy. The brief span of three years, marked by her first considerations to move away from her independent scholarly activity (end of 1930) and her entry into the Carmel after the abrupt end to her lecturing activity in Münster¹⁵³ (fall of 1933), was for Edith Stein a time of hope for scholarly activity and public influence. The field of pedagogy enabled Stein to return once more to the problem of the human person. At the same time, moods alternating between doubt and career-certainty announced her spiritual path.

Whatever one thinks about human beings, whether one considers them primarily as social beings or understands them from the perspective of their individuality, whether one, in the end, views them as persons or only as objects to be used (embryonic stem-cell research) or eliminated (euthanasia debate), there is always the “difference between something and someone” (Robert Spaemann¹⁵⁴), which Stein brings out in her lectures. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, in a contradictory fashion, human rights, on the one hand, are legislated to recognize human freedoms and dignity. On the other hand, among many philosophers, the concept of “person” does not apply to the embryo from the beginning and to old, sick, and suffering human beings. With appeals to one’s “autonomy” one is expected to make a decision to end one’s life or, as in the Netherlands, a consensus among relatives and physicians makes the decision for you. In the arbitrary depreciation of the dignity of the person the fact of creation and the aspects

¹⁵² See also Beate Beckmann, *Phänomenologie des religiösen Erlebnisses*.

Religionsphilosophische Untersuchungen im Anschluß an Adolf Reinach und Edith Stein (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003).

¹⁵³ See also Elisabeth Lammers, *Als die Zukunft noch offen war: Edith Stein—das entscheidende Jahr in Münster* (Münster: Dialog, 2003).

¹⁵⁴ Robert Spaemann, *Personen. Versuche über den Unterschied zwischen “etwas” und “jemand”* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1996).

of the divine image remain consciously excluded from philosophical reflection. Consequently, ultimate grounds for the inalienable dignity of human life are missing. Therefore, it becomes clear that philosophical anthropology alone is unable to offer a grounding for either the dignity of the person or the political protection of human dignity. In opposition to contemporary ethical discourse, from which theologically grounded assumptions are, to a large extent, excluded, Stein's unabashed addition of theological anthropology to the philosophical is refreshing and points in the right direction.

Stein's most important achievement with regard to her theory of the person during her time at Münster is surely her positive view of the body. By closely and phenomenologically analyzing the intimate dependence of the human soul on the body she contributes to a realistic view of human beings without sinking into a shallow biologism or vitalism. In her theological anthropology she knows exactly how to bring out those aspects of Church doctrine that also present a positive view of the body; for example, the emphasis on sexual desire as appropriate in marriage. According to Edith Stein, on the basis of her freedom the human person is, above all, called to responsibility toward her own being, that is to say, toward the possibilities of her body as well as those of her soul and his spirit. One also has responsibility for other persons with whom one coexists in a network of relations.¹⁵⁵ Edith Stein's theory of the person appears as unique and integrated because, contrary to most philosophers of the twentieth century, it does not start with a dualism—however mediated—of the human person (body-soul/body-mind). Rather, the synthesis of the three aspects—body, soul, and intellect—and their interactions enabled Stein, drawing on the body-soul-mind-teaching of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, to offer a thorough, realistic description of the human person and her potential for good as well as evil. The soul as immaterial has until now been given too little consideration in its significance for the

¹⁵⁵ In *Finite and Eternal Being* Stein will go beyond her work in philosophical and theological anthropology to describe the body-soul-mind being of humans. Similar to Augustine, she describes it as the image of God as Trinity: the Father corresponds to the being of the soul as the source of effervescent life from within itself; the Son, as the incarnate person of God, the birthed fulfilment of life that does not cling to itself, corresponds to bodily being; and the Holy Spirit corresponds to spiritual or intellectual being as flowing, free, selfless, and inspiring. See EES, 334.

body. Only at the end of the twentieth century, on the basis of pathological observations in psychosomatic medicine, was the influence of the soul on the body taken seriously; this is precisely the connection that Stein's theory of the person had already shown to be relevant in her phenomenological analyses.

In addition, Edith Stein's importance as a thinker of freedom, long before the appearance of existentialist philosophy, should be acknowledged anew and again. Central for the human person, according to Stein, is the freedom toward the self, nature, and even toward God. To the human person the task is assigned of forming the self with its natural limitations—not independently and in a struggle against these inherited tendencies, but rather in a reconciled relation to one's own limitations. This aspect of Edith Stein's theory of the person, that is, the association between freedom and limit, should be given more serious consideration within gender anthropology. Moreover, the possible influence of supernatural grace on the human person and his or her search for, and acceptance of, salvation from God is remarkable and should be further examined.

Until now, Stein's theory of the person has not been appropriately considered in a practical way, neither in the study of pedagogy nor in philosophical-phenomenological anthropology. The project of an anthropology specifically derived from Catholic doctrine, and with a view to establishing a distinctive Catholic pedagogy, still needs further research. In times of ecumenism among the confessions and even religions it nevertheless remains desirable to take up Edith Stein's venture toward a vision of the human that develops from Catholic teaching. What Stein had appealed to in the times of National Socialism must be rediscovered in the face of ideological liberalism and the unforeseeable possibilities of manipulative genetic engineering: how life with and in Jesus Christ and the Church is able to change human beings, enabling them to be free and to recognize the truth and the good.

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