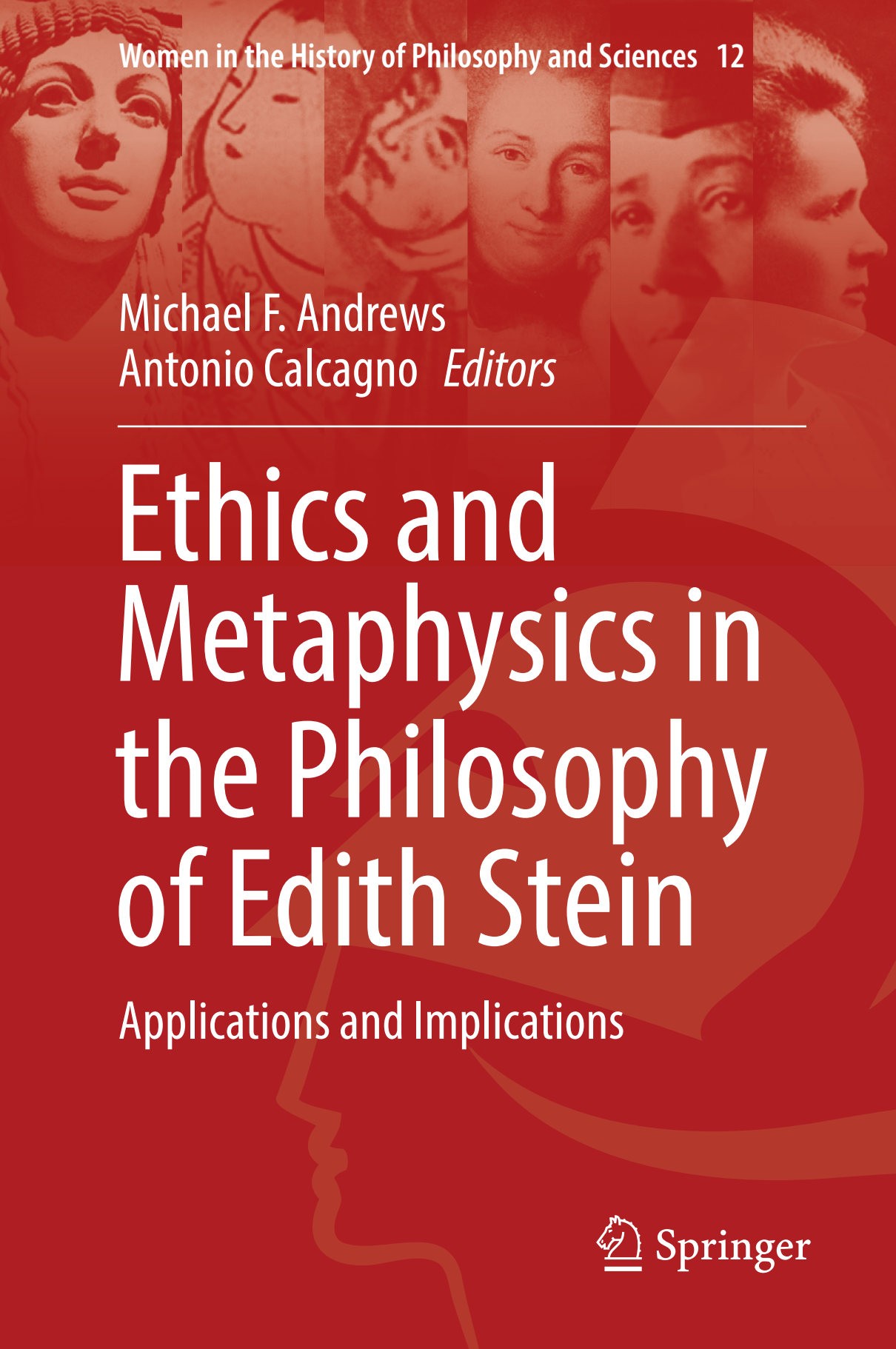

Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences 12

Michael F. Andrews
Antonio Calcagno *Editors*

Ethics and Metaphysics in the Philosophy of Edith Stein

Applications and Implications

Springer

Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences

Volume 12

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Editors

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ISSN 2523-8760 ISSN 2523-8779 (electronic)
Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences
ISBN 978-3-030-91197-3 ISBN 978-3-030-91198-0 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91198-0

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

There are two scholars—dear friends and inspiring mentors, really—without whom this work, and the entire corpus of Stein scholarship, would be tremendously diminished, if even possible at all. It is with the deepest gratitude and immense joy for their collegial spirit, sharing of resources, professional support, and especially their friendship that this book is dedicated in memoriam:

Sr. Josephine Koeppel, OCD
and
Rev. Michael Linssen, OCD

Acknowledgements

This book would not have been possible without the encouragement of Dr. Ruth Hagengruber and Dr. Mary Ellen Waithe. Their work on the history of women philosophers and scientists has created a shift in consciousness, bringing to light the work of important women philosophers like Edith Stein. We are also grateful for the editorial work of Karen Enns, who read and edited a number of essays contained in this volume. Her acuity, care, and grace with language have helped transmit the ideas and thoughts of Edith Stein.

Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction

Michael F. Andrews

Edith Stein's contributions to ethics and metaphysics presuppose a coherent philosophical framework by which human experience can be explored and thematized. According to a rich and apperceptive methodology rooted in phenomenological descriptions of social reality, Edith Stein proposes exciting and innovate approaches to contemporary ethics of value, care, and reciprocity, at once both dialogical in a Husserlian sense while remaining metaphysically congruent with the perennial philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas. This synthesis is not accidental; it reflects the two great codices that mark Edith Stein's formative training in terms of phenomenology and scholasticism, philosophy and theology, ethics and metaphysics. In this collection of essays, some of the most respected international scholars on Edith Stein explore various ethical and metaphysical influences at play in the development of her thought. The goal of these essays is neither to present a comprehensive system of ethics and metaphysics drawn from Edith Stein's various philosophical and theological treatises, nor to propose a particular systematic approach towards interpreting Edith Stein. On the contrary, this book serves as a lacuna to open-up new levels of discourse and meaning steeped within Stein's scholarly writings. The essays are written with both the scholar and the casual reader in mind. They serve to introduce Stein's theory of social constitution to a general audience as well as explore creative new initiatives for further professional research.

Investigating ethical and metaphysical themes previously unaddressed in contemporary Stein scholarship offers a significant contribution towards understanding the complex development of Edith Stein's creative thoughts and impulses. At the same time, exploring ethical and metaphysical implications in Stein's literary *corpus* will help scholars evaluate her contributions towards applying themes and topics in connection with those developed by several of her contemporaries, including Edmund

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M. F. Andrews and A. Calcagno (eds.), *Ethics and Metaphysics in the Philosophy of Edith Stein*, Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences 12,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91198-0_1

Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Max Scheler, Roman Ingarden, Hedwig Conrad-Martius, Emanuel Levinas, and others. In turn, we will be better able to explore the impact that contributions drawn from Stein's scholarship may have on emergent fields of empathy theory, feminist thought, social and behavioral ethics, ontology, Christian spirituality, contemporary education, and philosophy of religion.

Edith Stein's early and mature scholarship traverses a kind of arc or broad swath of themes. She draws together ancient, medieval, and contemporary authors even as she anticipates a variance of themes evident in post-modern philosophy, including issues of intentionality, intersubjectivity, post-ethics, and deconstruction. Although Edith Stein does not address many of these themes directly in her writings, the authors gathered in this collection of essays bring Edith Stein's voice into the polyphony of contemporary philosophical and theological discourse.

Who was this prolific philosopher, a woman born into an observant Jewish family at the end of the nineteenth century; educated under the tutelage of Husserl, Reinach, and Scheler; killed in Auschwitz in 1942; and later canonized by the Catholic Church and declared a patron saint of Europe? Edith Stein was born in Breslau, Germany (currently Wroclaw, Poland) on October 12, 1891. The youngest of eleven children, Stein was raised in large part by her oldest sister, Else, following the sudden death of her father. At the age of thirteen, Edith Stein underwent a profound existential crisis of faith, by which she abandoned her traditional Jewish faith and belief in God, though she continued to take part in family religious celebrations due, in no small part, to the presence and satisfaction of her mother. As a university student, Stein began to explore the idea that the world can be described in terms constitution, that is, as appearances of phenomena. Whether real or imagined, all phenomena—including ethics and metaphysics, as well as trees and persons and experiences of every sort, etc.—become meaningful through the manifold of consciousness *as such.* For Stein, what we call "the world" is constituted through a flow of conscious acts whereby consciousness grasps *itself* as the temporalizing unity that gives meaning to its perceptual field of experiences. Consequently, "metaphysics" and "ethics" open-up meanings by which the "I" becomes constituted in terms of temporal unity by describing different descriptions of intentional flows of consciousness. The "I," and with it, the com-possible temporal and spatial descriptions of every possible experience, engages the world as both a constituting and a constitut*ed* reality. The "I" that emerges as self-consciousness constitutes or regulates or gives order to primary and temporal experiences of factical existence.

Ethical and metaphysical implications of constitutive reality are the themes, practically speaking, of the essays gathered in this collection. At the heart of our discourse is the ethical conundrum of egoic constitution, namely, how the Other is essential in the constitution of the self, especially in terms of ethical reciprocity and metaphysical identity. The Cartesian idea that the human individual is an "isolated monad" is rejected by Edith Stein out of hand. The full articulation of human "personhood" can never be reducible to a pure stream of monadological intentionality. Rather, to be "person" means to be always and already open to a reciprocity of influences that co-constitute individual egoic experiences in a kind of "with-world," a flow of mutual intentionalities and relationships by which the self is experienced as integrated, that

is, as one self among others. Without the Other, even my own "I" would remain an existential and thematic impossibility. The "I" always implies the precedence of a social world, that is, a world of others like me, only different.

Edith Stein first encountered Husserl's thought when she read the 1901 edition of his *Logical Investigations* as a psychology major studying at the University of Breslau, in 1912. Enthralled by what she and others described as Husserl's "realism," Stein left Breslau in order to study phenomenology under "the Master" himself. She enrolled as a graduate student in the philosophy department at the University of Göttingen in order to begin what might be described upon hindsight as a loyal, yet critical proponent of Edmund Husserl's nascent phenomenological method. In 1915, the precocious doctoral student was invited by Husserl to accompany him to his new position at Freiburg University. There, Edith Stein was awarded the Ph.D. *summa cum laude* in 1916. Her dissertation, written under Husserl's tutelage, explored a lacuna in Husserl's own phenomenological description of empathy in terms of his theory of egoic constitution. Due to political and social realities of Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, Edith Stein was unable to achieve the rank of a university professor or even teach at a German university, first because she was a woman and, later, because she was Jewish.

On January 1, 1922, Edith Stein was baptized into the Roman Catholic Church. The impact of her decision to seek the sacrament of baptism was profound in terms of the themes which she engaged following her conversion regarding a binary relationship she saw between ethics and metaphysics. After successfully completing her habilitation defense in 1922 (*Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*), Edith Stein became a noted advocate for women's education as well as a strong proponent for Catholic education. Following her conversion, Edith Stein formally encountered the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas and subsequently entered the strict Order of Discalced Carmelites in 1924. She took as her religious name Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, thereby signifying the profound impact of her two spiritual mentors, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. The influence of Carmelite spirituality, Thomistic thought, and Husserl's early realist phenomenology offered Edith Stein a remarkable and quite unique perspective into unitive yet multi-dimensional aspects of the inter-relationality between ethics and metaphysics.

The essays in this volume represent what is the first, major, international scholarly investigation towards integrating Edith Stein's understanding of the relationship between ethics and metaphysics. All of the essays are presented in English, though some have been translated from Spanish, French, and German texts in the original languages of leading international Stein scholars, including from Europe, Australia, North America, and South America. The scholarly and supplementary topics of these essays speak for themselves. Or, rather, they allow Stein to speak for herself—as a woman and also as a philosopher. To allow Edith Stein to speak in her own voice is not an easy task. She was a Jewish woman writing in a substantively male academic environment during the first half of the twentieth century in Germany during the decades leading to and including the implementation of Aryan laws by the National Socialist Party in Germany. Edith Stein knew well the limitations that gender, race, and historical context imposed upon her. Add to this Edith Stein's choice

to enter the strict cloister of the discalced Carmelites, and the elusiveness of Stein's own voice becomes even more deafening. Placed under arrest by the Gestapo on August 1, 1942, Edith Stein was forcibly taken from her convent in Echt, Holland, along with her sister Rosa. She was sent by train first to Westerbork, a site at which many Jews, including Etty Hillesum and Anne Frank, were also processed before being transported "East" to forced labor and extermination camps. From Westerbork, Edith Stein was transferred directly by railroad to Auschwitz by way of her hometown of Breslau. There, she and her sister were killed a few days later on August 9, 1942. After being murdered in a gas chamber at Auschwitz, Stein's voice largely remained silent for forty years, except for surviving friends and family members and a handful of scholars seeking to engage her ideas through texts mainly limited to primary archival research in Germany and Holland. The next time the world "heard" her voice was when Edith Stein was beatified as a martyr on May 1, 1987 in Cologne and declared a saint eleven years later by Pope John Paul II in Rome. But it was no longer merely Edith Stein's voice or words; hers was now the voice of Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Having been eclipsed as a woman in the male-dominated emporium of early twenty century German academic circles and then as a Jew following the promulgation of the Nuremburg Laws, Edith Stein's voice remains particularly elusive. Even today she speaks to us "from on high," namely, as a Catholic saint, following her canonization in 1998 and her being named "Co-Patroness of Europe" the following year, along with St. Catherine of Siena and St. Bridgett of Sweden. A former atheist and a daughter of observant Jewish parents, Edith Stein is currently venerated by millions as a Catholic saint. A woman philosopher as well as a mystical doctor of the Church, Edith Stein is as much at home in her adopted Latin as she is in her native Hebrew. On every level, Edith Stein remains an enigma, a sign of contradiction as well as a promise of reconciliation. Nowhere is this more evident than in her scholarly attempts to expose the tensions and conditions of possibility that make ethics possible and, at the same time, undo every metaphysical attempt to justify them.

The essays collected in this volume do not present a systematic interpretation of Stein's position regarding any particular ethical or metaphysical theme or school of thought. On the contrary, they represent a breadth and scope of tensions that permeate a broad swath of applications and implications concerning multiple scholarly perspectives. This is true, not only for the collection of scholars represented here, but also for Stein herself. For example, many issues raised by Stein in her own primary allocutions remain unresolved in a text even after a rigorous systematic approach outlining various positions, definitions, and axioms. What is helpful in exploring ethical and metaphysical issues, both within and outside Stein's texts, is a spirit of suspicious engagement that reaches beyond the texts themselves, including dialogue with other leading phenomenologists, Catholic and non-Catholic apologists, contemporary philosophical thinkers, and primary and secondary interpreters. At times, her work can feel frustratingly elusive as well as profoundly groundbreaking in its scope and insight, and opposed to easy interpretation. I would argue that what is needed to understand the complexity and richness of Edith Stein's thinking is a distinctive non-modern trait, namely, to be able to live with tensions of ambiguity

and ambivalence amidst many layers of meaning and complexity. In this respect, the range of ethical and metaphysical interlocuters engaged in exploring the full range of Edith Stein's work runs from Aristotle to Aquinas, Dionysius to Derrida, from pre-Socratic metaphysicians to post-modern deconstructionists.

Many ideas and insights collected in the chapters that comprise this manuscript were shared and presented in their nascent form at the fourth International Association of the Study of the Philosophy of Edith Stein (IASPES) conference convened in June 2017 and co-hosted by the University of Portland and the University of Portland's McNerney-Hanson Endowed Chair in Ethics in Portland, OR, USA. Subsequent and weighty revisions ensued over the next several years through scholarly conversations, discussions, and formal events. My deepest gratitude to all those whose work and support over the past several years made the collection of this volume possible. The text is divided into three parts, though the dividing into three sections is more pragmatic or functional than determinant and exclusive: (1) Ethics; (2) Metaphysics; and (3) Applications and Implications. Each of the three parts contains scholarly essays that explore themes and reflections drawn from key philosophical texts written by Edith Stein. The essays are presented in order to engage primary sources and explore ideas that were key to Stein's intellectual development and which offer vital insight to contributions to contemporary discussions. As a whole, these essays offer a rich historical and thematic contextualization of Stein's thought. For example, "Part Three: Applications and Implications" involves a robust discussion concerning practical and pedagogical implications of Edith Stein's ethics and metaphysics on such varied contemporary topics as right human action, a priori law, the genesis of authentic community, the meaning of suffering, and the emergence and destiny of human identity.

Part One explores various themes in Edith Stein's writings relating to ethics. Marian Maskulak, CPS notes in her essay, "Edith Stein and Catholic Social Teaching," that the corpus of Edith Stein's philosophical and pedagogical writings supports several important principles of Catholic social teaching. Such principles hinge on the interplay between the individual human person, the community, and the person's origin and goal in the love of the Triune God, all of which are key concepts in Stein's thinking. Moreover, Stein's awareness of the importance of the formation of the individual, and specifically, the formation of the individual for community, provides valuable considerations for the implementation of Catholic social teaching in terms of Stein's own interest and involvement in social issues. Not only would Edith Stein feel very much at home with contemporary Catholic social teaching, Maskulak notes, but properly understood, Edith Stein should be considered an early proponent of this type of teaching.

In "Putting the Emotion Back into Empathy: Edith Stein's Understanding of Empathy Applied to Contemporary Issues," Melinda Jolly argues that the abundance of literature in Edith Stein's writings offers various ways of applying Stein's insights to issues in the contemporary world, especially her understanding of empathy. Stein first develops how we empathize with one another in her doctoral dissertation, *On the Problem of Empathy*, and offers an appropriate application to issues in contemporary society. Because contemporary social issues are multifaceted, they are grounded in

various layers of inter-relationships, whether between individuals or institutions. For Stein, empathy is the key to understanding the nature and context of human relationships, as empathy meaningfully engages other persons as centers of ethical value and integrity. In her essay, Jolly applies Stein's understanding of empathy to current issues questioning the results of science and terrorism.

Jacob W. Torbeck explores important links between the Carmelite mystical tradition that Stein investigates phenomenologically in *Science of the Cross* and the broader mystical theology investigated in Edith Stein's essay, "Ways to Know God." Set in the context of her life and other writings, "Mystical God-forsakenness and the Ethics of Solidarity" argues that links between these two works offer opportunities to understand the normative implications and demands that impinge upon anyone who enters this "most sacred darkness." What emerges from an encounter with the dark night of the soul is an ethics of solidarity. Through an understanding of "surrender" that remains illuminative and valuable in our time, Edith Stein emphasizes that it is not merely the carrying of the cross that offers redemption. The analogous crucifixion and seemingly God-forsakenness of the dark night enables real solidarity between persons and, ultimately, union with God.

Michele Kueter Petersen explains that, for Edith Stein, the individual human being is in content an embodiment, that is, a particular instantiation of something that is more universal. In her essay, "Love Divined: Discerning a Contemplative Ethic in the Philosophy of Edith Stein," Petersen posits that, for Stein, an individual human being is described as always a part of a whole. As a "vital unity [*Lebenseinheit*]," the individual human being achieves her unfolding and full flowering only within the context of a whole. Such rootedness in a particular place and time requires working together in order to provide life sustenance for contemporary humans and generations to come. With its spirit nature [*Geistnatur*], humankind "is called to a communal life which—after having grown from a temporally, spatially, and materially determined soil—eventually annuls the limitations of time and space." Stein applies the poetic metaphor of the unfolding of an exquisite flower to explain how the individual soul, after blooming in its earthly homeland, is inserted into an eternal, imperishable wreath surrounded by other small, seemingly insignificant blossoms. Nature and grace cooperate in a kind of reciprocal relatedness, such that Stein's ethics can be described as a relational freedom that brings together the mind and the heart through an integrating hermeneutical principle of discriminative discernment. At the limits of finitude, grace is bestowed by the divine as pure gift in a contemplative ethic of call and response.

The final essay of Part One by William Tullius argues that, as Stein develops her social ontology, from her early works in phenomenology to her later Christian writings, the relationship between ethics and personal unfolding becomes more explicit. Although some of the ethical implications of Edith Stein's personalism are visible early on in her scholarly endeavors, it is not until the 1930s that the implicitly Christian dimension of her personalism becomes explicit. "Person in Community, Repentance, and Historical Meaning: From an Individual to a Social Ethics in Stein's Early Phenomenological Treatises" explores ways in which Edith Stein utilizes Christian personalism to mine ethical implications for a teleologically oriented self-formation.

Part Two explores various themes in Edith Stein's writings relating to metaphysics, especially as they touch upon ethical questions. L. R. Lovestone's essay, "The Empathic Gaze: A Steinian Approach to the Study of Religion," offers a study of religion based on Edith Stein's phenomenology that may perhaps best be described in terms of "the empathetic gaze." Stein's phenomenology offers a critical engagement of "the gaze" in the academic field of film and cultural studies. In effect, the emphatic gaze explores what are some of the implications and effects about issues of openness and affirmation in relation to experiences that qualify as scientifically rigorous.

In "Edith Stein's Concept of Soul Revisited," Sarah Borden Sharkey argues that various aspects of Edith Stein's understanding of soul are deeply Aristotelian. Nevertheless, Stein does not simply want to supplement the Aristotelian-Thomist view of soul; rather she wishes to challenge it. Stein holds that the Aristotelian model of potency to act is inadequate. What is needed is a new model of "soul" that focuses on levels of fullness, and not simply actualization of capacities. In *Finite and Eternal Being,* Edith Stein reimagines what is meant by being created in the image of God. Stein's understanding of the relation between phenomenology and metaphysics focuses primarily on Stein's critique of St. Thomas' Christian description of Aristotle's understanding of the soul.

Martina Galvani argues in her essay "Moral Interiority and Self-Realization: The Relationship Between Good and Being in Edith Stein's Metaphysics" that Stein's investigations about the human spiritual dimension are synthesized through a relationship between phenomenology and metaphysical-theological research. Edith Stein describes the human being as "essentially spiritual," meaning that the human being is a synthesis or integration of intellect and will. Such synthesis is required in order to comprehend reality in its full "meaning" [*Sinn*] and in order to act freely in it. The ethical implications of Stein's metaphysical reflections can best be described in terms reminiscent of St. Augustine's understanding of "moral interiority."

C. M. Wulf argues that Hume's moral distinction between "is" and "ought" is significantly challenged by Stein's onto-social framework. Insofar as the "is" becomes personal for Stein and insofar as Steinian ontology roots is-ness in essence, the "ought" of moral duty has an ontic and personal ground that makes possible the ought of morality. In her essay, "'Is' and 'Ought' Reconciled: The Contribution of Edith Stein's Essentialism and Existentialism to Postmodern Ethics," Mariéle Wulf notes that the logical inference of "is" to "ought" is removed by Edith Stein from its linguistic and logical frameworks and reset within the existential framework of being and person.

In "The Problem of Evil in the Political Philosophy, Ethics, and Metaphysics of Edith Stein," Angela Ales Bello offers an analysis of the genesis, structure, and dissolution of the state within western modernity. From her particular perspective, Edith Stein is very well aware that she is referring to a particular thing or matter [*Sache*], which belongs more to the realm of culture than to that of nature. She seeks to grasp the essential aspects or senses that make the "state" a state in and of itself, a form of sociality, beyond its historical and factual determinations. For Stein, historical and factual elements, for example, geography and economics, may condition the

historical nature of the state. That these elements may be more or less present in no way varies our understanding of what the state is. The state, according to Stein, is a social formation that is distinct from other forms of sociality, including the mass, society, and community, which Stein investigates in her exhaustive study, *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities [Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften].* This essay establishes an interesting parallel between the individual and intersubjective forms of sociality. Having described with great acuity the different types of lived experiences proper to the lived-body, psyche, and spirit in her text *On the Problem of Empathy*, Edith Stein proceeds to investigate the sociality of the mass, which is described in purely psychic terms, as well as the sociality of society, which is directed by specific objective ends or goals, and the community, with its deep psycho-spiritual structure.

Anna Maria Pezzella's "Personal Identity: The Formation of Person in Edith Stein's Thought" raises the question of identity as part of a broader anthropological reflection, deepened by phenomenology. Max Scheler, for example, is very interested in anthropology and some scholars consider him as the founder of philosophical anthropology, in particular, the science of essence and eidetic structure of man, of his relationship with the kingdoms of nature (inorganic, plant, animal), and with the psychophysical problem of the relationship between the soul and the body. Husserl is interested in anthropology, too, especially in the second book of *Ideas*, largely elaborated and revised by Edith Stein. Husserl gives a very precise and broad anthropological vision; nevertheless he is critical towards the scientific anthropology of that time because it considered the human being as an animal species and described how the functions and constitution of the human being differed from those of other animals. This type of anthropology, which was closer to biology and zoology, was based solely on a morphological description and causal explanation that did not meet the complexity of the human being. For this reason, it was necessary for Edith Stein to seek and even found a new anthropology that would take into consideration the whole human being, living body, and soul.

Part Three explores important applications and implications concerning ethics and metaphysics drawn from Edith Stein's writings. Antonio Calcagno raises significant questions about culture and social ontology in his essay, "People and the State Community: Two Conflicting Forms of Sociality in Edith Stein's Conception of *A priori*." In her early phenomenological social ontology, Stein conceives of the state as an important community of law-givers and -followers. But by the time Stein is teaching in the 1930s in Münster, her philosophical anthropology pays scant attention to the sociality of the state. In fact, "the people" becomes one of the highest and largest forms of sociality. Indeed, God is seen to relate to the human collective as a people. This latter development in Stein's philosophy creates a problem, in that it diminishes the role of *a priori* law and all that it seeks to preserve in Stein's social ontology, including the universal and necessary value of persons as persons, the preservation of life, and the concept of universal human rights. "The people" is an idea that finds it maximum expression in culture, yet culture unfolds in the time and space of human history, with all of its vicissitudes and changes. The advantage of an *a priori* theory of law defended and lived by the state community is that it

preserves a realm of personal existence that transcends the shifting desires, needs, and shortcomings of the human history of a people. Perhaps the only way to reinsert what *a priori* state law achieves is through the idea of a people that is also a universal human community, an idea that Stein develops in her Münster anthropology.

Mary J. Gennuso argues in her essay, "Beyond Ethics: Edith Stein on Suffering, Sacrifice, and Death," that, although Edith Stein did not write a formal work of ethics, her philosophical and theological writings, as well as her life, highlight particular ethical ideas. It is an ethic that can be situated in the existential tradition that emerged out of phenomenology, and even further in a Catholic response to existentialism, and deeper still, particularly later in her life, in a Carmelite way of life, one that ultimately reveals itself in the life and martyrdom of Edith Stein herself, from her particular life. Stein's later writings concentrate on the themes of suffering, sacrifice, and death. Edith Stein responds by placing particular points of Heidegger's existentialism into conversation with themes drawn from Carmelite spirituality, including such key concepts as authenticity, the soul, and free will.

In her essay, "Ontology and Relational Ethics in Edith Stein's Thought," author Paulina Monjaraz Fuentes notes that Husserl's ethics was deeply influential on Stein's thought insofar as it conditioned Stein's relational ontology. The Husserlian notion of the value bearer is amplified by Stein as she demonstrates that the objectivity of values must be constituted in a deeply subjective and intersubjective framework. It is only by situating values within the aforementioned framework that one can understand the personal contexts that lie at the core of Steinian and Husserlian ethics.

John Sullivan, OCD notes that there is a tendency in those who follow the destiny of Edith Stein to place the high point of her life at its very end in the infamous Auschwitz/Birkenau Nazi death camp and thus identify her as a victim of World War II's tragic conflagration. In "Crucible of Empathy: Nursing Service in World War I," Fr. Sullivan posits that it is important to recall that another significant point on her life's arc occurred during the First World War, some 27 years earlier. Regardless of where we center our attention, we ought to keep in mind that Edith lived during the two immensely cataclysmic and catastrophic events we now term "World Wars" I and II. Through her autobiographical account, *Life in a Jewish Family,* Stein explains how she engaged directly in the "Great War." Her autobiographical account allows us to delve into the war's mayhem scenario through fascinating eyewitness vignettes. For example, in Chap. 9 of her autobiography, Stein describes fully the service of "Nursing Soldiers in the Lazaretto at Mährisch-Weisskirchen." Her nursing collaboration exercised a distinct formative influence and would stay imprinted in her memory to the very final days of her regrettably abbreviated life, in effect showing how much these turbulent experiences marked her outlook.

Michael F. Andrews observes in his essay, "Edith Stein's Understanding of the Personal Attitude: Applications and Implications for a New Ethics," that Edith Stein's phenomenological description of the human person is a lacuna that invites further reflection. As a re-imagining of Enlightenment ethics, Edith Stein's understanding of the personal attitude attests to a fundamental critique of the underlying principles of metaphysics, namely, what has been called by Heidegger as the onto-theological

"metaphysics of presence." By Enlightenment ethics, Andrews means the presupposition that proper moral behavior is based on self-evident truths and universal principles common to all human beings, including reason, the capacity for pleasure and pain, utility, and a commitment to freedom as a categorical imperative. Properly speaking, the project of Enlightenment ethics was to uproot and de-historicize both the subject and the methodological search of inquiry related to ontological issues. The goal of the Enlightenment was to ground ethics on *a priori*, universal principles. Edith Stein's "personal attitude" challenges the onto-metaphysical assumptions upon which Enlightenment ethics and medieval/Greek metaphysics have rested for centuries. Stein's description of the demise of the isolated epistemological subject points to no less a fiction than the notion of an isolated moral subject who looks helplessly about with the eyes of pure reason for rules of conduct and ethical criteria. Turning to the earlier work of Husserl's realist phenomenology, Stein challenges the strict epistemological description of the constitution of the Other to include a more robust and deconstructive element, namely, the co-constitution of the Other through the phenomenology of empathy and emotional and social experience.

Edith Stein does not present a concise ethical or metaphysical system per se. What she does offer is a methodological inquiry into being *qua* being by which she never leaves behind her phenomenology; indeed, she continues to discuss the manner in which phenomenology can relate to both metaphysics and ethics in an indirect and exploratory capacity. Following Husserl's early realism and Scheler's personalism, Stein attempted to develop both an ontology of the human person and a phenomenology of empathy that together could account for the existence of the objective world that includes the manifestation of social values. From Hedwig Conrad-Martius and associates of the Munich school, Stein reached towards a realist social ontology that valued what was unique and original in human existence, even as a reaction to Martin Heidegger's growing influence in Freiburg. And from Przywara, Stein attempted to provide a reorientation away from Husserl's later idealist turn to transcendental phenomenology. Stein begins with Descartes' discovery of the *ego cogito*, that is, the discovery of the ego as the original recognition of the facticity of one's existence as a conscious subject, and then implements a fully developed Thomistic metaphysics in which being is revealed amidst the complexity of human consciousness. For Edith Stein, the certitude about my own existence as the most primordial, intimate, and immediate self-experience I can have remains consistent with the way St. Thomas thinks of the living organism as the model for understanding substance. For Stein, *actus essendi* is a dynamic act of genuine agency. Consequently, being is neither divorced from ethical engagement with the concrete world nor is it reducible to a merely static metaphysical principle like a Platonic Form that needs matter in order to be actualized. In effect, Stein points to an original account of human existence that is ethical insofar as each individually situated, historical, existent person manifests the absolute singularity and uniqueness of its own finite and eternal being. Here is an important contribution from Stein regarding a thematic synthesis between Husserl and Aquinas.

Taken together, the essays in this volume present a significant contribution to contemporary studies concerning the interrelationship between ethics and metaphysics. As a phenomenologist, as a woman, and as a member of the Carmelite Order, Edith Stein synthesized quite diverse fields of inquiry, including philosophy, theology, education, social sciences, and spirituality. The implications and applications of her thought are vast and largely unchartered. Like many of her Göttingen and Freiburg companions, Edith Stein remains both an enigma and a profound source for deep personal and scholarly introspection. She is an important and original thinker whose scholarly contributions demonstrate a depth of thought and an approach to truth that is as much needed in the twenty-first century as it is rare.

Part I
Ethics

Chapter 2
Edith Stein and Catholic Social Teaching

Marian Maskulak

Catholic social teaching provides a framework for addressing numerous social and ethical issues. Rooted in scripture and the tradition of the church, which includes a long tradition of Catholic moral teaching, contemporary Catholic social teaching has developed from numerous papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents beginning with *Rerum Novarum* (1891) [*On Capital and Labor*]. In line with the Catholic theological tradition of utilizing both faith and reason, Catholic social teaching draws on other fields of knowledge, not least of which is philosophy. The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* states that philosophy contributes to understanding key "concepts such as the person, society, freedom, conscience, ethics, law, justice, the common good, solidarity, subsidiarity, [and] the State."[1] Most of these terms are basic components of Edith Stein's corpus and I propose that Stein's philosophical and pedagogical writings support several principles of Catholic social teaching. Such principles hinge on the interplay between the individual human person, the community, and the person's origin and goal in the love of the Triune God, all of which are key concepts in Stein's thinking. Moreover, her awareness of the importance of the formation of the individual, and specifically, the formation of the individual for community, provides valuable considerations for the implementation of Catholic social teaching. I submit that much of her writing, along with her own interest and involvement in social issues, indicate that Stein would feel very much at home with contemporary Catholic social teaching and that she can be seen as an early proponent of this type of teaching.

I will begin by briefly noting Stein's own interest in social concerns. Doing so provides some contextual background for her thought and offers further rationale

[1] Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (2005), no. 76–77.

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M. F. Andrews and A. Calcagno (eds.), *Ethics and Metaphysics in the Philosophy of Edith Stein*, Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences 12,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91198-0_2

for viewing Stein's work in terms of Catholic social teaching. I will then highlight how her thinking supports five principles of contemporary Catholic social teaching: human dignity, association, participation, solidarity, and care of creation. Finally, I will conclude with Stein's understanding of who is to be regarded as one's "neighbor"—a term that is used in each of the encyclicals and episcopal documents mentioned in this chapter that deal with Catholic social teaching.

2.1 Stein's Interest in Social Issues

A few scenes from Stein's life point to her active interest in the social issues of her time, ranging from women's issues to the ever increasing dangers of National Socialism. Here, I will focus on only two examples. Writing about her life during the years 1911–1913, Stein states that her love of history was tied to "a passionate participation in current political events as history in the making." She also describes herself as having "an extraordinarily strong social conscience, a feeling for the solidarity" of all humankind as well as smaller social groups, and notes that her "deep conviction of social responsibility" made her advocate women's full political equality and led her to join the Prussian Society for Women's Right to vote.[2] She writes that she was "repelled by chauvinistic Nationalism"[3] and in a 1932 lecture, Stein calls "brutal" the National Socialists' attitude that valued women solely from a biological perspective for the purpose of racial breeding. She attributes the loss of the gains made for women in the previous decades to this attitude, as well as to a romantic ideology of women and the economic conditions of that time.[4]

Even more striking in terms of viewing Stein as an early proponent of Catholic social teaching is her 1933 letter to Pope Pius XI requesting that he denounce "deeds taking place in Germany which make a mockery of all justice and humanity – not to mention love of neighbor."[5] This letter was precisely a call for a papal pronouncement, perhaps even an encyclical, that would have fallen directly into the then nascent body of Catholic social teaching. Ironically, it was Pius XI who two years earlier coined the term "Christian social teaching" in his encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) [*Reconstruction of the Social Order*].[6] Stein's ongoing knowledge and concern about Germany's current events is apparent in the details that she includes in this necessarily concise letter. For instance, she notes that the leaders of National Socialism had been preaching hatred of the Jews for years and the hatred had grown once the National Socialists seized government power and armed their followers, including criminals. She reports that public opinion had been silenced, riots were

[2] Stein (1986).

[3] The English translation of *Life in a Jewish Family*, 190, mistakenly states, "Darwinistic" Nationalism.

[4] Stein (2000e).

[5] Stein, "Der Brief an Papst Pius XI". Henceforth, translations from Stein's German texts are mine.

[6] Pius XI (1931).

not isolated incidents, and reaction from abroad pushed the government to "milder" methods, namely, boycotting. However, she writes that boycotting "deprives people of their economic existence [*wirtschaftliche Existenz*], civic honor and fatherland" and "drives many to despair."[7] Here, one has to wonder if Stein was hoping that the mention of "economic" existence would cause Pius XI to recall his own encyclical (*Quadragesimo Anno*) two years earlier in which he uses the term "economic" over 70 times. Her writings confirm that Stein was familiar with three of the pope's other encyclicals,[8] and given her own interests and public speaking engagements, it seems very likely that she stayed current with papal pronouncements.

The desperation in Germany led to many suicides, five of which Stein had personally learned about in the week just before writing the letter to Pius XI. She unequivocally states that the responsibility must fall on those who brought people to this point and on those who remain silent before such happenings. And she does not hesitate to say that Jews and thousands of Catholics were waiting for the Church to speak out against this government that called itself "Christian" and yet hammered a message on daily radio that idolized race and government power.[9] Stein's letter really causes one to pause, not only at her grasp of the situation as it had already escalated by April 1933, but also at her courage as a woman of her day, not hesitating to straightforwardly address the pope in seeking action against this injustice. And as she states, her first choice of action had been to speak directly to the pope one-on-one herself.[10]

With this brief backdrop pointing to Stein's own practical involvement in the social issues of her time, I will now turn to some of Stein's philosophical and pedagogical thinking that clearly resonates with five principles of contemporary Catholic social teaching.

2.2 Dignity of the Human Person

The foundational principle of Catholic social teaching is the dignity of the human person. Stein, of course, maintains the Judeo-Christian belief on which this principle is based, namely, that all human beings are created in the image of God[11] and thus, rightfully deserve the utmost respect. For Stein, the human person is a rational and free being, characterized by the conscious, free, self-determining "I" who "determines its life out of its own self in the form of free acts."[12] The person not only "is" and lives,

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[7] Stein, "Der Brief an Papst Pius XI."

[8] Stein makes references to the following encyclicals of Pius XI: *Ubi arcano dei consilio* (1922) [*On the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ*], *Divini Illius Magistri* (1929) [*On Christian Education*), and *Casti Connubii* (1930) [*On Christian Marriage*]. See Stein (2001c), 124; Stein, "Probleme der neueren Mädchenbildung," 131; and Stein (2000f).

[9] Stein, "Der Brief an Papst Pius XI."

[10] Stein (1990).

[11] Stein (2001c).

[12] Stein (2002), 376.

but knows about her being and living, and that of others.[13] At the same time, each "I" is unique in that it possesses something that is singular to itself that cannot be shared with any other created being. This incommunicability is the hallmark of being a human person, in distinction to the persons of the Trinity who have in common their entire *quid*. Stein makes her point about the unique singularity of each person with the analogy of uniformed marching soldiers—despite the appearance of being an undistinguishable mass, a loved one awaits and identifies one individual who is unlike any of the others.[14] The imagery of the military was a reality for Stein, who volunteered as a nurse's aide during World War I, and had many friends and acquaintances who fought in the war.[15]

Another way Stein conveys the particular singularity of each human being is by her conviction that "[e]very human soul is created by God; each receives from God an imprint which distinguishes it from every other."[16] Furthermore, each individual has her own particular way of being the image of God,[17] for "in each creature a ray of the divine essence is imaged, and in each, a different ray."[18]

Stein posits a possible reason for the existence of such diverse individuals that is based on perceiving God as the plenitude of love. Since created spirits are unable to receive into themselves and realize the full plenitude of divine love, she suggests that "[t]heir share is measured according to the measure of their being, and that means not only a 'so much,' but also a 'thus' ['certain manner']—love bears the stamp of personal particularity."[19] It is reasonable "that God may have created in every human soul a dwelling for himself so that through the diversity of different kinds of souls, the fullness of divine love would find a wider scope for its communication."[20] For those who believe that humans are made in the image of God, Stein's view that each individual has her own particular way of imaging God only strengthens the principle of human dignity. Moreover, she further supports the inherent dignity of each person by drawing attention to the indwelling presence of the Trinity within the human being. As she pens in a poem, "The innermost chamber of the human soul is the Trinity's favorite abode, its heavenly throne on earth."[21]

[13] Stein (2004), p. 78.
[14] Stein (2002), 343, 356, 508–509.
[15] Stein (1986), 318–367.
[16] Stein (2000e), 179.
[17] Ibid., 175.
[18] Stein (2016).
[19] Stein (2006b).
[20] Stein (2006b), 423.
[21] Stein (2007b).