

BEGINNING TO READ STEIN'S *FINITE AND ETERNAL BEING*

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ABSTRACT: Stein called *Finite and Eternal Being* her 'spiritual legacy'. The access to this legacy has been restricted by the difficulty of assessing exactly what it is that Stein is doing in the work. It has been regarded as a work of Thomist philosophy, but a closer reading reveals it as quite critical of St Thomas. After the publication of the appendices of the work, it has become fairly clear that it can be conceived as a critique of the early Heidegger. Stein understood her task as being that of bringing together Aristotelian and Modern philosophy, the latter represented by Phenomenology and the former by Scholasticism. We shall propose (the beginnings of) an interpretation of the work that sees it as the culmination of Stein's phenomenological project, as well as a work standing in the tradition of the *philosophia perennis*.

Introduction

Beginning to read Stein's *Finite and Eternal Being* is somewhat daunting, as one seems to remain at the level of beginning for quite some time. To assist that beginning, I shall here give an overview of the preoccupations that structure the work. As I still consider myself a beginner, I must avert to the fact that some accents might be misplaced and some essential issues unintentionally left unaddressed.¹

We shall first characterise the general tenor of Stein's thought as an engagement with the value of the individuality of the human person (1). This engagement is the centre of a philosophy that can be characterised equally as Christian Philosophy (2), Phenomenology and Formal Ontology (3) in the expression it finds in *Finite and Eternal Being*. We shall then attempt to explain how *Finite and Eternal Being* pertains to each of these disciplines and how the disciplines are related in the work (4).

From Stein's early work in Phenomenology (1915-20) through *Introduction to Philosophy* (1916-31) and *The Structure of the Human Person/What is the Human Being?* (1932-33), to culmination in *Finite and Eternal Being* (1935-36) and *Science of the Cross* (1942), an unfolding or maturing is to be observed, which sets the scene for understanding *Finite and Eternal Being* as a final or concluding statement.² We shall endeavour to explain how *Finite and Eternal Being*, by being characterisable in all of the manners proposed, achieves a unity aimed at by Stein from her earliest writings.³

1. The Tendencies Implicit in Stein's Work as a Whole

Stein shows from her earliest writings, and in contrast to Husserl, exceptional awareness of how various types of sociality influence thought, i.e. how they provide the setting for the experiencing I.⁴ Thinking, for Stein, and as a consequence philosophy, is not a context-independent exercise: it not only reflects the social setting in which it occurs, it also depends on it. The choice of context that a philosopher makes is therefore one that will not only be reflected in her or his philosophy, but also one that will substantially contribute to the philosophy itself. This is something the thinker can count on, and indeed must reckon with: the context is the setting of the text she or he produces. Stein's choice of the context of the Catholic Church for her middle and later thought must be seen in this light, and we must

expect that she chose that context because she considered her thinking best served by it, since she had a profound commitment to philosophical truth. The best context is, according to Stein's account, the one that allows for the deepest possible insight, but, given that a context is real and really maintained in a real community of real people with many different agendas, the same context may also constrain, just like any work environment is both enabling and constraining. Stein's engagement with the nature of Christian Philosophy prolongs her desire to think with, and in, context, and her reflections on the topic in the introduction to *Finite and Eternal Being* remains one of the most balanced and interesting accounts in the context of the 'Modernist Crisis'.⁵

As thought has its context provided by the community that sustains it, it likewise contributes to such a context. Hence Stein is aware of creating a climate for the reader, and offers herself as someone who thinks the perspective of the reader is as important as that of the author. Stein is a 'with-thinker' by profound conviction, and as a consequence she is always relying on the reader to test what she says by personal insight; implying by this, both that it is possible to think 'with' another, and that the world is open to be tested by the experience of different people.⁶ Neither could be taken for granted in the philosophical environment she came from; both are distinct contributions of Stein's to that context, which, although practically accepted in her contributions to the publications of both Husserl and Heidegger, unfortunately has been theoretically neglected and overlooked.

That Stein believes in 'with-thinking' as a phenomenologist allows her to compare thinkers in a manner that is both simple and highly reflective: because she presupposes that every thinker is attempting to express reality as he or she sees it, i.e. actually expresses a perspective on reality, every kind of thought (whether sincere or not) testifies to reality as it is in itself. Understanding the perspective hence allows one to understand reality better,

and perspectives may be compared to establish the partiality of each of these.⁷ This kind of comparison is the key to understanding her attempt to bring together the thought-streams of Phenomenology and Scholasticism: in so far as they both are perspectives on reality, understanding the manner in which they relate to each other allows one to better grasp what each attempts to grasp and establish the relationship between the things thus grasped. What remains the focus of such a comparison, however, are the things themselves, upon which the perspective sheds light, and indeed of which the perspectives form part. The recourse to the perspectives of others is therefore constantly subordinated to the revelatory capacity of the perspectives as regards 'die Sachen selbst'. According to this view the things are therefore *ipso facto* taken to admit of different perspectives on them, and thus to be something intelligible *in themselves*, i.e. independently of individual perspectives, although not necessarily independent of any *possible* perspective. The engagement with the things themselves goes hand in hand with an understanding of the workings of intersubjectivity.

It is the importance of community (as a type of intersubjectivity) for thought that makes Stein thematize that which binds us together and makes our experience convertible and sharable: the fact that we are human beings. This is why the question of the human person remains central to her thought right through her life. The question is important because it stands at the root of the openness to and of the world: it is the question that addresses the 'hub' around which the intersubjective world revolves and which as a consequence provides us with the best starting point for our interpretation of it.⁸

The intersubjective dimension of the world makes her philosophy feel more 'realist' than the transcendental idealism of the later Husserl and his disciples, but it remains a fact that she thought she learnt the understanding of this dimension from her teacher, the early Husserl. The underlining of the intersubjective dimension

allows Stein keen awareness of the possibilities for social construction to either hamper or foster the development of the human being and person. This leads her to reflect on the State, the association-community of most decisive importance in Modern times, where the human being is both central and exposed, and on the State's essentially problematic relationship with religion, which claims a privileged relationship with those values upon which the State relies.⁹ Stein's phenomenology is thus one that allows for and incorporates social analysis to an extent that Husserl's (apparently) does not: it therefore feels not only more realist, but also more aware of the political possibilities for dogmatic strategies, than his does.

Apart from the centrality of the human person and the underlining of the intersubjective context which will lead her to reflect on the nature of Christian philosophy as we shall see, the pursuits of Phenomenology and Formal Ontology were in fact inherited from her teacher Husserl. Stein understands these in a slightly different manner compared to him however, dictated by the foundation of her thought on specifically intersubjective constitutional phenomenology. It is this foundation that allows her to discuss Aristotelianism and Scholasticism as perspectives on 'the things themselves' without leaving the methodological starting point of phenomenology.¹⁰ It is this foundation that allows her to study the meaning of being, i.e. the depth and kinds of intelligibility present in what appears to be as such, in what it is and that it is.

Finite and Eternal Being is undoubtedly close to Scholastic Philosophy, both in the manner in which its discussions are conducted, and in the subjects discussed. We may indeed be able to call it a work of Scholastic Philosophy, if we by that understand the type of philosophy which asks for the ultimate reasons and the meaning of being in the tradition of the *philosophia perennis*. It is Stein's achievement that *Finite and Eternal Being* nevertheless also is a work that not only *owes* its method and form to

Phenomenology, but *is* a work of Phenomenology, i.e. of specifically intersubjective constitutional Phenomenology. The main achievement of the work, in fact, is the funnelling of classical and modern ways of thinking into one stream of thought; the insistence on the fact that they must concern the same things and hence provide compatible perspectives on them.

It is also, however, this wide contextuality (relying on what Gadamer calls a 'fusion of horizons') of the work that makes it difficult to access for those bound by loyalty to *either* classical *or* modern ways of thinking, and who regard these as incompatible. It is difficult for those loyal to classical and medieval philosophy because the vocabulary, the starting point, the methodology and the things not taken for granted are unfamiliar. It is difficult for those loyal to a modern context because Christian teachings are deliberately drawn upon as indispensable for accomplishing the ascent to the meaning of being, which is the work's stated intent. It may also present an obstacle to those loyal to a modern context that Stein discusses concepts from the metaphysics of Aristotle and Aquinas in great detail (although in fact very critically), in order to clarify her own understanding of the meaning of being.

Such widening of contextuality or merging of horizons is possible to the extent that Phenomenology ultimately is a quest for the meaning of being that acknowledges the subjective starting point of Modern philosophy. Stein thought that it was that, and thought that the purpose of the methodological bracketing of prejudicial and dogmatic ontological affirmations was precisely to enable the quest to succeed. The use of Phenomenology to indefinitely postpone the fulfilling of the quest can only, in her estimation, be explained by ulterior motives, and cannot in any way be understood to form part of the essence of Phenomenology without rendering it an irrational endeavour.

Having characterised the general tenor of Stein's work, let us now look at the proposed three characterisations of the content of *Finite and Eternal Being* in detail and examine them in turn,

reading the work as a concluding statement of the tendencies inherent in Stein's thought.

2. *Christian Philosophy*

The Introduction to *Finite and Eternal Being* contains, as said, a section on the 'Meaning and Possibility of a "Christian Philosophy"' (§ 4). Here Stein justifies the taking account of Christian doctrine in the doing of philosophy, and claims that so doing is what the believer will want to do, in so far as he recognises the insight of faith to be divinely inspired and reflecting realities, which, although obscure to the mind reaching out in 'the dark night of faith', nevertheless are understood to be higher and deeper than those accessible by the sole light of natural understanding. Stein claims it would in fact be unreasonable for the believer, i.e. for anyone accepting that the revelation of God is available to us, not to take such revelation into account, given that what is implied in this belief is that God's superior wisdom has made itself accessible to us, like one human being reveals something of his inner life to another by opening himself up to him. Such Christian Philosophy, relying on the testimony of others as regards the Other who is God, is relying on the testimony of the 'Christian community' for its context (like philosophy of Physics relies on the testimony of the community of scientists to provide its context). It also contributes to this context, like philosophy of science contributes to the scientific context by thematizing it. In this sense Christian philosophy exemplifies a context-sensitive kind of philosophy, which, like other contexts, remains essentially open for anyone to test by his own lights, taking as hypotheses what the Christian (or the scientist) accepts as theses.

One might not, however, be able to call this Christian philosophy which takes account of Revelation 'pure' philosophy, in so far as one understands pure philosophy to be a purely 'natural' science, i.e. a science relying on natural insight alone, in

contradistinction from 'supernatural' insight. It is necessary to recall however, that the idea of a distinction between 'natural' and 'supernatural' insight in the first place is of religious origin, and intends to describe the difference between what we can 'come up with' independently of Revelation, and what Revelation by itself contributes. The distinction should in other words make mere hypothetical sense to someone who does not believe there is such a thing as Revelation, and as such it would form part of the (Christian) context. It is 'the Thomistic standpoint' however, (and here Stein refers specifically to Maritain) that pure philosophy does not involve taking account of Revelation.¹¹ To the Thomist, therefore, Stein's Christian philosophy would not be 'pure'. In so far however, as the task of philosophy is to penetrate to 'the ultimate meaning, to being itself, to the constitution of beings as such' (p. 27) then one cannot afford to disregard the light Revelation sheds on these matters, as it indeed does shed significant light on them. Stein reminds us that the Church Fathers understood Christianity *as* (their) philosophy precisely because they regarded it to substantially further this central aim of philosophy. To them the purity of philosophy depends on its relationship with truth.

In the same way as Maritain distinguishes between the 'nature' and 'state' of philosophy, and thinks that the Christian state of philosophy allows it a better grasp of the final end of the human being and therefore of moral philosophy, so Stein thinks that the Christian state of philosophy – not only relying on the grace pertaining to individuals, or on the philosophical advances resulting from the clarification of theological matters, but directly on the state of affairs 'known' by the light of faith (Creation, the Fall, Redemption and the End) – allows it to grasp the meaning of being better than if it renounced the guidance of the light of faith.¹² Still more radically put: if philosophy is the science of ultimate reality, whose goal is final clarity and the final understanding of the states of affairs that obtains,¹³ it cannot

dispense with the light of faith in so far as faith also claims to know something about these ultimate states of affairs. For the non-believer, Stein claims, it must be quite intelligible that the believer thinks in this way, and indeed that it is part of the way his faith has importance for him. The non-believer should thus be able to replace the theses which the believer accepts by faith with hypotheses that could be accepted, if one believed. In this way the perspective of the Christian philosopher is open to the non-believer as context-dependent, in the same way as any other context-dependent perspective is: The explanatory power of philosophy in this context may indeed convince some that faith is a reasonable option.

This science of ultimate realities, philosophy as the 'perfectum opus rationis', is essentially incomplete, because it is of ultimate realities and because the human mind is finite also in its ability to take other perspectives into account. Its essential incompleteness makes it open to further developments in other sciences, including that of theology. Stein saw the essential openness of philosophy already in *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*: the depth of reality as comprehended by the very many subjects, past, present and future, with whom the I can stand in relation and understand, reflect the depth of the wisdom that must be God's, infinite, all-present and all-embracing. *The Structure of the Human Person*, Stein's philosophical anthropology, had its counterpart in the collection of dogmatic declarations assembled in *What is the Human Being?*¹⁴ Stein rightly expects the reader to be impressed by the understanding of the human being available from these sources, which in fact has shaped European thought substantially.

It is in the light of the essential openness of 'the perfect work of reason' that Stein's introductory statement must be taken: *Finite and Eternal Being* is written for learners by a learner: it could be nothing else if it were to be true to its own ideal of philosophy. Christian philosophy remains open, not only to all perspectives

on reality, but also to the power of the Holy Spirit revealing the divine perspective in many ways and by many means.

By acknowledging its context-dependence, debt to Revelation and consequent essential openness, Christian Philosophy may contribute to the openness of any context into which it is taken up. As such it is achieved in community by individuals attracted to or affected by the light of Christ. *Finite and Eternal Being* is Christian Philosophy in this sense: compared to Maritain's Thomism, it is both more open to a diversity of perspectives, and more substantially Christian in that it allows for Redemption to have an effect even on the perception of material reality, for example. According to Stein, in guise of illustration, matter presents an obstacle to intelligibility to the fallen mind, but not to the redeemed mind: to the latter, matter is infinitely intelligible and can be brought to conform to human design because of this intelligibility.¹⁵

3. Phenomenology and Formal Ontology

Finite and Eternal Being is not only Christian Philosophy. It is also Phenomenology, and indeed represents a concluding stage of Stein's engagement with this discipline. This, however, means that it is inseparable, in her view, from Formal Ontology, in a manner we shall attempt to say something general about here. A complete investigation of this issue will have to await another occasion.

As already said, Stein's phenomenology is constitutively intersubjective. This means that she is interested in understanding the different ways in which social formations influence the worldview of those who constitute them and constitute themselves as part of them. The second part of her first habilitation thesis (*Individual and Community*) concerns this topic. She did however, already in her *Introduction to Philosophy*, perhaps written in part simultaneously with *Individual and Community*,¹⁶

consider the insight into the intersubjective constitution of the world as synthesisable in a manner that allows us to talk about what things *are*—i.e. what they appear to be, all things and perspectives considered, in a kind of conjecture which we are bound to make when we speak and deal with each other because of the proto-Wittgensteinian insight that intelligible meaning cannot be private or reserved for one perspective alone. We generally use our insight into intersubjective constitution (which may also be faulty) when we talk about how things ‘really are’, despite what ‘people might think’. Awareness of intersubjective constitution constitutes a reflective refinement of the ‘natural attitude’, so that the ‘final’ judgement as to what things are accomplishes the methodology of phenomenology by exhausting it in the sense that it penetrates, by means of the many perspectives, to the essence of things.

Concern with essence was also part of Husserl’s understanding of phenomenology, and here indeed in the form of a complementary type of analysis that was required for constitutional analysis to work.¹⁷ *Eidetic analysis*: the investigation of the essences in terms of which we make sense of our experience, is a type of analysis that does not pronounce judgement about whether phenomena *in fact* reflect this or that reality, but rather turn attention to the structure of what is experienced and to what must pertain to this experienced something for an experience to be of it (e.g. what must pertain to a moth for my experience of it to be an experience of a moth, or what must pertain to perception, for my experience to be perception). The judgement of existence is a solemn affirmation that something is publicly accessible, i.e. that it is available to many perspectives or is intersubjectively constituted, whether *as* this or that or simply. This is how ‘being’ is publicly available, i.e. it is what it *means* when we say something *is*. It is possible that Stein was more amenable than Husserl to draw this latter conclusion from the implications of eidetics: she did not regard it as possible for the thinker

(and therefore for the philosopher) to stay away from judging about existence for any longer than it is possible for the diver to hold his breath.¹⁸

Few has characterised the difference between Husserl's and Stein's understanding of the relationship between constitutional (transcendental) phenomenology and formal ontology (eidetics) as well as Hans Rainer Sepp, in his forward to the forerunner of *Finite and Eternal Being: Potency and Act*.¹⁹ As in fact this work displays the same tendencies as *Finite and Eternal Being*, and as these tendencies are very accurately detected by Sepp, we shall quote him at length:

Stein requires, like Husserl, a 'starting-point'.. [but] for Stein the fact of the activity of the subject is not an occasion to suspend the question of the being of this immanent act[. It is rather so that] this act itself, its actuality, discloses in its temporality, i.e. in its continual passing from potentiality to actuality, *ex negativo* the 'idea of pure being', which escapes temporality [..] If Husserl takes the starting-point to clear the absolute immanent sphere of transcendental subjectivity, so Stein takes the constituting function of subjectivity as an occasion to show that subjectivity needs and refers to something that it is itself not. That [subjectivity] is constituting – and that means 'temporalising' time and 'decaying' subjectivity – refers it to something non-temporal; that it constantly constitutes something refers it to something that does not coincide with its own immanent being. Thus Stein is brought to affirm a sphere of pure being (a transcendent sphere in a second sense) which must be distinguished from both the immanent sphere and the sphere of transcendence announced in the former as distinct. The discipline which attempts to circumscribe the meaning of being in all [of these] spheres is that of Formal Ontology.

Thus is revealed that Formal Ontology is not, for Stein, as it is for Husserl, subordinated to transcendental phenomenology, but stands in a reciprocal relationship with it. Formal Ontology is for Stein referred to transcendental phenomenology, in so far as this latter is not only treating of the relationship between the immanent and the transcendent spheres, but also must question the constitution of the entities of Formal Ontology. Transcendental

Philosophy is referred in the opposite direction to Formal Ontology, not only because it is the task of the latter to determine the meaning of immanence in conjunction with the material ontologies, but because it falls to it to clarify in a general way the fundamental ontological concepts.²⁰

The reciprocal relationship between Formal Ontology and Constitutional Phenomenology (between the analysis of essence and the analysis of how things are constituted for us within consciousness) is one Stein probably took to be constitutive to phenomenology, so that she would regard it as impossible to subordinate one discipline under another in the way Sepp here claims Husserl did. Whether or not Husserl did that, and where it would leave his philosophy if he did, is not of our concern here. What is of our concern, however, is to underline that Stein did not consider it possible to separate the two disciplines, or subordinate one to the other, and still have the discipline of phenomenology intact. For the phenomenological reduction to experience to yield a field of meaning to be investigated by transcendental phenomenology, there must in the field of meaning be meaning that can be investigated. The analysis of this meaning calls for a related discipline that clarifies the meanings possible, investigates how they relate to one another and perhaps condition one another. We know from the fact of intersubjective constitution in the manner Stein portrays it that this meaning is there: things must be intelligible and analysable as such (and that means they must have essence) for them to be possible objects of intersubjective constitution, i.e. for them to be identifiable by several subjects.

Stein's use of the phenomenological starting-point, i.e. of the possibility to reduce experience to how it is experienced or to subjective experience (mediated by intersubjective experience), is thus methodological, and its purpose is to penetrate to final clarity about the ultimate things, the things themselves. The starting-point forms the platform for showing that the subject has experience of something which transcends the temporal ex-

istence it recognises as its own – the suspension over the sword-edge of the *now*. This is the units of experience, which it experiences as lasting in time, and indeed as revelatory of realities, like 'joy as such', the being of which is not temporal at all. Essences, as experienced by the subject understanding its experience as intelligible because of them, are not essentially temporal as the experience of the subject is; they don't rely on time for their being. The simple analysis of experience has thus already given us the being of the I, which is temporal and the being of the essences, which is not, and hence it has handed us two types of being, such that the meaning of being must encompass and allow for this differentiation, and for others we would fall upon, when reflecting on experience. The lifting of the epoche is in fact not necessary, in so far as we are looking for the *meaning* of being: a *Seinslehre*, such as it is Stein's ambition to construct, does in fact not have to make any judgements about existence: it only has to show what it means to make them.

Conclusion

This meaning of being is investigated equally and simultaneously by the three disciplines that essentially characterise *Finite and Eternal Being*: Christian Philosophy, Phenomenology and Formal Ontology. That Stein managed to achieve the ambition of articulating a 'teaching on being' from these sources, an ambition to which her engagement with philosophy pointed from her earliest career, must have given her quiet, but profound, satisfaction. She, of course, would rejoice still more in the fact that it is possible, that truth is common, that the science of philosophy isn't eternally divided but is one and universally accessible. That, it seems to me, is what she tries to make accessible to us in *Finite and Eternal Being* and probably what makes her call it her spiritual testament. At least: thinking or knowing this might provide us with a starting point for beginning to read the work.

Endnotes

1. Two books, which have just come to my attention, are bound to further the understanding of the work. Although I have not had the time to read them in full, I cite them here for the benefit of the reader: Peter Freienstein, *Sinn verstehen. Die Philosophie Edith Steins*, Internationale Maurice Blondel-Forschungsstelle für Religionsphilosophie, London: Turnshare, 2007 and Peter Volek, *Erkenntnistheorie bei Edith Stein*, Frankfurt etc.: Peter Lang, 1998.

2. Chronology according to Marianne Sawicki displayed on the Husserl Page www.husserlpage.com/hus_r2st.html [accessed 27/8-2009], and as regards *Introduction to Philosophy* completed by the studies made by Mariele Wulf and published as the introduction to the work in *Edith Stein Gesamtausgabe* (ESGA), vol. 8: *Einführung in die Philosophie*.

3. Freienstein's idea of Stein conceiving reality on the scheme of dialogue is very appealing. We shall have to differ from Freienstein, however, in his understanding that Stein does not follow Husserl's transcendental reduction but instead takes her point of departure from the empirical I (op. cit. p. 54). Stein, in our understanding remains completely loyal to the phenomenological method, inclusive of its reduction to transcendental phenomenology, but – and here is how we do perhaps not differ at all – the point of view of the other is always already accessible to me by means of empathy, without which I could not make sense of experience as I know it. It is experience, anyway, with its pole constituted as the pure I, that is the final court for Stein. It makes no sense to talk about a transcendental (or pure) I *before* experience. It is also this very experience that makes it indispensable to talk about constitution as the function through which the differentiation of experience is articulated.

4. See in particular *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* (transl. by Catharine Baseheart and Marianne Sawicki, *The Collected Works of Edith Stein* (CWES VII), Washington DC: ICS Publications, 2000) and *An Investigation Concerning the State* (transl. by Marianne Sawicki, (CWES X), Washington DC: ICS Publications, 2006). Both of these were originally published in Husserl's *Jahrbuch* (subsequently published together as *Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften – Eine Untersuchung über den*

Staat, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1970. Only the latter has come out in *Edith Stein Gesamtausgabe* vol. 7. The former is planned as vol. 6). Stein's work for Husserl as editor of *Ideas II* should also be mentioned. See Marianne Sawicki, *Body Text and Science. The literacy of investigative practices and the Phenomenology of Edith Stein*, Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997, pp. 153 ff. and also 'Making up Husserl's Mind about Constitution', in: *Yearbook of the Irish Philosophical Society*, ed. by Will Desmond, 2007, pp. 191-216. Will we eventually see some of that work included in the ESGA?

5. *Endliches und ewiges Sein* (ESGA 11-12), Freiburg: Herder, pp. 20-36. The English translation of the work (*Finite and Eternal Being*, tr. Kurt Reinhart (CWES IX), Washington DC: ICS Publications, 2002) needs to be read alongside this critical edition, which in contrast with the first Herder edition contains the two appendices on Martin Heidegger and Teresa of Avila.

6. Freienstein's idea that Stein understands the world as a whole as an interface where worldliness is but a surface that may disintegrate and transform at any moment relying as it does on the more profound relationship between persons goes still deeper, and is quite probably correct. He calls this feature 'imagistisch', by that referring, presumably, to the fact that Stein conceives everything to be what it is as and in the Trinitarian 'image' of God, and also understands everything to reflect the essentialities, which can be understood as the ideas of God. To Stein, on Freienstein's account, thinking is meeting. This, in fact, is probably what makes Sawicki in *Body Text and Science* op. cit. address the author of *On the Problem of Empathy* and as 'you' in stead of referring to her in third person.

7. The perspective of the early Heidegger, for example, is explained as an attempt to reduce the meaning of being to the meaning of the being of the human being, in a manner that actually allows for a very penetrating analysis of this being (in its fallen state), but disregards other forms of being, which however, as being, should be addressed when considering the meaning of being (and not specifically the meaning of the human being).

8. For Stein's understanding of the 'type' that allows the conversion of perspectives and according to which 'I' am like 'you', see my *On the Problem of Human Dignity*, Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2009, Part III.

9. *An Investigation concerning the State*, op. cit., II, pp. 147-94.

10. This foundation is elaborated in *On the Problem of Empathy and Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*. Please also see my 'Study-guide to Edith Stein's *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*' in: *Yearbook of the Irish Philosophical Society*, 2004, pp. 40-76; available on the net in the NUI Maynooth e-print archives.

11. *Endliches und ewiges Sein* (ESW 11-12), Freiburg: Herder, 2006, p. 20 note 2.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

14. *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person* (ESGA 14); *Was ist der Mensch?* (ESGA 15).

15. *Endliches und ewiges Sein*, op. cit. pp. 205-7.

16. According to Claudia Mariele Wulf's introduction to *Einführung in die Philosophie* (ESGA 8) referred to above. This work discusses in detail the idealism/realism question and leaves it open. It nevertheless constitutes an important stage in Stein's finding the courage to consciously use the verb 'to be'. See pp. 69 ff.

17. See *Ideas* I, Part I, Chapter 1.

18. That however, does not mean that holding one's breath is not possible, nor that it is not a good method for obtaining insights that can only be obtained from diving.

19. Edith Stein, *Potenz und Akt* (ESGA 10), Freiburg: Herder, 2005 (also in the earlier Herder-edition *Edith Steins Werke*, vol. 19).

20. Hans Rainer Sepp, "Einführung des Bearbeiters", in: *Potenz und Akt* (ESW XVIII), Freiburg: Herder, 1998, pp. XXIV-V; ESGA 10, 2005, pp. XXIII-IV. My translation.