The Personalistic Attitude: Edmund Husserl, Max Scheler and Edith Stein

Dermot Moran

Boston College & University College Dublin

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Abstract

In this paper I discuss the close similarities between Husserl's, Scheler's and Stein's concept of the person as an absolute value that exercises itself in position-takings. Ethics, for the classical phenomenologists, Husserl, Scheler, and Stein, concerns the whole person, including the affective and rational dimensions, intellect and the heart, as well as volition. Persons are distinctive for their free *agency, capacity to recognize norms,* and ability to interact responsibly with other personal agents in the context of the communal and historical life-world.

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Ethics, for Husserl, Scheler, and Stein, concerns the whole person, involving the affective and rational dimensions, intellect and the heart, as well as volition. Persons are distinctive for their free *agency, capacity to recognize norms,* and ability to interact responsibly with other personal agents in the context of the communal and historical life-world.[1] The whole person is ethical through and through. In his 1920-1924 *Lectures on Ethics* (*Einleitung in die Ethik*, Husserl 2004), Husserl writes:

> We name "ethical" not only willings and actions [*Wollungen und Handlungen*] with their goals, but also persisting sentiments [*Gesinnungen*] in the personality [*Persönlichkeit*] as habitual orientation of willing. … So, we call many joys, griefs "beautiful," noble, now evil, low, mean, and see in them ethical predicates, as well as corresponding sentiments, habitual orientations of emotion [*Gefühlsrichtungen*] like love and hate. We thus assess all properties of the heart [*Gemütseigenschaften*] and summarize the whole "character" of a person as ethical or ethically reprehensible, the inborn as well as the acquired character, and so finally and especially the person [*die Person*] itself. (Husserl 2004, 8)[2]

Persons, moreover, for Husserl, Scheler and Stein (and Von Hildebrand, see Crosby 2002), instantiate or incorporate value, indeed an absolute value. They also apprehend and create values,

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[1] Husserl's lectured on ethics throughout most of his teaching career (see Husserliana XXVIII, Husserl 1988a, and XXXVII, Husserl 2004). His *Kaizo* articles (Hua XXVII, Husserl 1989a), written in the nineteen twenties, focus on ethical renewal. Husserl's starting point is Brentano and Kant. For Brentano and Husserl, the categorial imperative becomes 'do the best that is attainable'. As de Warren puts it, for Husserl: "Value-feelings are blind without judgments, while ethical judgments are empty without affective intuition of ethical values" (Warren 2017).

[2] I am grateful to Andrew Barrette for giving me access to his unpublished translation of Husserliana XXXVII.

stand in evaluative relations to one another, and recognize and interpret each other's intentional motivations that are interwoven with their own. As agents they have the capacity to will ends and set vocational goals for their lives (Hart 2006; Heinämaa 2019, 2020; Loidolt 2021; Luft 2006, 2012). In this paper, I shall focus on Husserl's and Stein's conception of *persons* and *the personalistic attitude* as the basis for ethical interaction.

Persons, for the classical phenomenology of Husserl, Scheler, Von Hildebrand, and Stein, inhabit the 'world of spirit' (*die Geisteswelt, die geistige Welt*), i.e., the cultural world of significance and value that is disclosed only if one adopts what Husserl terms, in *Ideas* II, 'the personalistic attitude' (*die personalistische Einstellung*, Husserl 1952, 173) towards other subjects and engages in spiritual acts with them. Spiritual acts are acts that persons address to each other as persons. As Husserl writes in his *Introduction to Ethics* lectures:

> … the peculiar essence of the entire spiritual sphere [*Wesen alles Geistigen*] refers *to the essence of the subjects of the whole spirituality as subjects of intentional lived experiences*; these subjects are Egos, are personal subjects …" (Husserl 2004, 104, trans. Andrew Barrette)

Edith Stein similarly writes in *On the Problem of Empathy* (first published 1917, English translation: Stein 1989)

> Our whole "cultural world," all that "the hand of man" has formed, all utilitarian objects, all works of handicraft, applied science, and art are the reality correlative to the spirit. (Stein 1989, 92; GA 5 109)[3]

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[3] Hereafter I will refer to Edith Stein's Gesamtausgabe (published by Herder) as 'GA' followed by the volume and page number.

Both Husserl and Stein also maintain that the person actualizes herself in *uniquely personal acts* (acts that recognize other persons such as promising, forgiving, etc.).[4] Persons, for both Husserl and Stein, operate at a unique level of their own, apprehend and experience values, take stances, and form convictions that shape their spiritual lives as a whole.[5] Persons are apprehended uniquely through a spiritual recognition from other persons. It takes a person to recognize a person (Husserl does not address the issue of whether there are non-human persons but Stein does allow for purely spiritual persons, e.g. angels).

Persons have intrinsic value because they are unique and unrepeatable. Husserl always maintains that each consciousness is 'uniquely and originally individual': 'Absolute individuation enters into the *personal* Ego' (Husserl 1989, 315; Hua IV 301).[6] For Stein, similarly, each human being has 'unrepeatable singularity' (Stein 1996, 182) and 'uniqueness' (*Eigentümlichkeit*). Edith Stein similarly maintains that every individual has a unique 'value-essence' (*Wertwesen*) in their 'personhood' (*Persönlichkeit*). The world would be missing this unique value-being (*Wesen*) if the person did not exist. In later writings, Stein speaks of 'person-being' (*Personsein*, Stein 2002, 363; GA 11/12 310). Persons are complex but unique entities (Husserl speaks of their 'double unity' of body and soul (*Doppeleinheitigen*, Hua IV 162) enfolding lived bodies, cultural belonging, personal histories, and are enmeshed in interpersonal relationships. Stein similarly speaks of human beings doubly entangled in causality

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[4] Stein was deeply influenced here by her mentor Adolf Reinach's account of 'social acts' (Salice 2015). Reinach in his *A Priori Foundations of Civil Law* (Reinach 1983) argues that persons are the source of all 'legal ability' (*rechtliches Können*) and thus also of all value. Furthermore, Reinach writes that persons have the right and duty to develop themselves. An absolute moral entitlement, such as the right to develop one's own personality, can have its ground in the person as such (Reinach 1983, 13).

[5] As Sophie Loidolt writes: "To take a stance, to express it, to even form one's whole life and actions according to certain convictions, is at the center of Husserl's descriptions and characterizations of personhood," (Loidolt 2021).

[6] Hereafter Husserl's Husserliana volumes will be abbreviated to 'Hua' followed by the volume number in Roman numerals.

and motivation, 'the twofold basic lawfulness' (*die doppelte Grundgesetzlichkeit,* Stein 2000, 1). For Stein, the realm of spirit is also the realm of freedom (Stein 2002, 372; GA 11/12 317).

Husserl, Scheler and Stein (and Dietrich von Hildebrand), understand persons as primarily constituted through feelings and emotions that apprehend and respond to values (*Werte*) that are real and external to the person. Persons emotionally apprehend and appreciate *values* and are motivated to follow *reasons* they themselves find compelling, against a background of 'ends' or goals considered defining *for them.* For the classical phenomenologists (Husserl, Scheler, Von Hildebrand, Stein) persons are individual, unique and of inestimable value.

The Person in Scheler, Husserl, Von Hildebrand and Stein

The first published *phenomenological* discussion of the person is to be found in Max Scheler's *Formalism in Ethics* published in two parts in 1913 and 1916 in Husserl's *Jahrbuch* (Scheler 1916; Scheler 1973). Husserl's lectures of the period (on ethics and on 'nature and spirit) as well as his *Ideas* II manuscript were unpublished. Husserl denied the direct influence of Scheler and maintained that he had arrived independently at his own conception of the person.[7] Husserl largely resented Scheler for copying his ideas; Scheler in turn poured scorn on Husserl's formulations in his extra-mural lectures delivered in front of Husserl's students at Göttingen (as Edith Stein recalls (Stein 1986, 259). Scheler claimed to have independently discovered phenomenology (Stein excuses him by saying that he was a voracious reader, and very likely could not recall where he had found his ideas, Stein 1986 259). Nevertheless in the Preface to his *Formalism*, Scheler writes that he owes "to the significant works of Edmund Husserl the

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[7] Stein was conscious of the tension between Husserl and Scheler and comments on it in her *Life in a Jewish Family* (Stein 1986, 259). At Göttingen, Scheler belittled Husserl's work at every opportunity and insisted on his own originality, whereas Husserl was convinced that Scheler was dependent on Husserl's work (Stein 1986, 259).

methodological consciousness of the unity and sense of the phenomenological attitude" (Scheler 1973, xix),

Scheler was seeking to lay a foundation for ethics through a concrete analysis of the relation between persons and value. A secondary aim was to critique Kant whom, nevertheless, Scheler regards as having produced the most scientific account of ethics. Scheler had an enduring influence on Edith Stein. In many ways, she sought to harmonize Husserl's and Scheler's accounts of personal spiritual life.[8] She was particularly taken by his account of the person. It is difficult to separate the accounts of the person in Scheler, Husserl and Stein but I will sketch a brief account (see also Andrews 2012).

Persons, for Scheler, are peculiar entities, what he calls 'beings-in-act', whose nature cannot be objectified (Scheler 1973, 387). The person is a performer or 'executor of acts [*actvollziehendes Wesen*]' (Scheler 1973, 384) '… genuine acts in which something is "meant"' (Scheler 1973, 388). Scheler (mistakenly according to most Kant scholars, see Perrin 1974) criticized Kant for designating the person purely formally as a 'rational person' (*Vernunftperson*), whereas, for Scheler, '*the person* is *the concrete and essential unity of being of acts of different essences … The being of the person is therefore the "foundation" of all essentially different acts* (Scheler 1973, 383). The person, moreover, 'is not an empty "point of departure" of acts; rather he is a concrete being' (Scheler 1973, 384). For Scheler, the person is a layered unity of drives, feelings, spiritual sentiments and desires. Most of all persons are bearers of value and apprehend value.

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[8] Stein's first book, *On the Problem of Empathy* (1917), for instance, contains references not just to Scheler's *Formalism* that had just been published in Husserl's *Jahrbuch* (1913, 1916), but also his earlier *Zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Sympathiegefühle* (1913; later revised in Scheler 1923, trans. Scheler 1954), his *Versuche einer Philosophie des Lebens* (1915), "The Idols of Self Knowledge," *Ressentiment*, and other works published by 1916. Stein was greatly taken by the charismatic Scheler when she attended his extramural lectures in Göttingen. She wrote in her *Life in a Jewish Family*, "One's first impression of Scheler was fascination. In no other person have I encountered the "phenomenon of genius" as clearly. (Stein 1986, 259).

For Scheler, the value of a person is based on their capacity to give example as a good person and this in turn is based on their uniqueness or *haecceity* ('thisness'):

> One can therefore say that the highest *effectiveness* of the good person on the moral cosmos lies in the pure *value* of *exemplariness* that he possesses exclusively by virtue of his *being* and *haecceity,* which are accessible to intuition and love, and not in his will or in any acts that he may execute, still less in his deeds and actions. (Scheler 1973, 575)

For Scheler, the good person *exemplifies* goodness and this *value* motivates and inspires other persons to be good. Scheler is explicit:

> Nothing on earth allows a person to become good so originally and immediately and necessarily as the evidential and adequate intuition [*Anschauung*] of a good person *in* his goodness. (Scheler 1973, 574)

The person, for Scheler, is the center of all acts of valuation: 'That which can be originally "good" and "evil" . . . is the *person*, the *being* of the person itself … *"good" and "evil" are values of the person* [*Personwerte*]' (Scheler 1973, 28). For Scheler, there are ideal types of the good person for each social situation (and Stein follows him here). These *types* act as models because they are *values* and they are apprehended by us in *value-cognitions* (Scheler 1973, 577) that are given intuitively. We love the being who is the model. Scheler writes that a model or moral exemplar is a "*structured value-complex* in the form of *unity* of the *unity* of the person, a structured thisness of *values* in the *form* of the *person*" (Scheler 1973, 578). The person who *follows* the model is not under a moral law but rather a free act of consent based on love:

> Following, however, is to be understood in the sense of *free* devotion to the content of personal value that is accessible to *autonomous* insight. For we become *like* the exemplar as a person. We do not become what he is. (Scheler 1973, 580)

The person is not a thing or object; the nature of the person, for Scheler, can never be objectified. The person, furthermore, manifests him or herself in the execution of acts, but is not a mere aggregate of acts (Scheler 1973, 386). The whole person is present in and permeates their acts (Scheler 1973, 386). Scheler presents his account of the concrete person as an antidote to Kant's formalism but he was clearly unfamiliar with Kant's much more detailed discussions of the person in his anthropology, which brings his account closer to Scheler's.

Persons as Unities of Body, Soul and Spirit

For Husserl, Scheler and Stein, persons are unique ontological entities, distinct from material things. First and foremost, the person is a genuinely objective thing, constituted in objective time and belonging to the spatio-temporal world. On the other hand, its essence is quite distinct from that of 'real things' (*Ding-Realitäten*, Husserl 1965, 493). Each person, for Husserl, develops a particular individual 'style' (*Stil*) of life and acts with typicality and habituality in certain circumstances (*Ideas* II § 60).[9] As Stein emphasizes, one's 'individual uniqueness' (*individuelle Eigenart*, Stein 2004, 22) is expressed in one's original expression, handwriting, impact on others, as well as in one's innate

Husserl, Scheler and Stein claim that the person is a surplus over and above its psychophysical constitution (i.e. body and soul). We are not just embodied, material beings causally caught up in and dependent on the world (experiencing gravity, breathing air). The body is living and ensouled—an organism. Each physical thing is an instantiation of a type; its essence is universal (e.g. water, oxygen, Hua IV 298), whereas each person as spirit has its 'individual essence' in a unique sense (Hua IV 298), for Husserl:

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[9] See Hiroshi Goto, *Der Begriff der Person in die Phänomenologie Edmund Husserls: Ein Interpretationsversuch der Husserlschen Phänomenologie als Ethik im Hinblick auf den Begriff der Habitualität* (Würzburg: Köningshausen & Neumann, 2004).

> … the spirit lives through, takes a position, is motivated [*Der Geist aber ist ein erlebender, stellungnehmender, motivierter*]. Each Spirit has its way of motivation. and, unlike a thing, it has *its motivation in itself.* It does not have individuality only by being in a determinate place in the world. The pure Ego of any given *cogitatio* already has absolute individuation, and the *cogitatio* itself is something absolutely individual in itself. The Ego, however, is not an empty pole but is the bearer of its habituality [*Träger seiner Habitualität*], and that implies that it has its individual history. (Husserl 1989, 313; Hua IV 299–300)

Being a person is ontological; it is not just a social role. As Sophie Loidolt points out:

> … it is important to note that the uniqueness of the person is not created by social interaction nor practical agency. Rather, it is actualized, formed and unfolded through them. (Loidolt 2021)

Persons experience themselves first and foremost as 'personal egos' (Husserl 1989, 149; Hua IV 141). In one sense, Husserl says, the personal ego is one with the psychic ego (the ego of affective life), but in another sense these egos are apperceived from different standpoints—two different 'modes of apprehension' (Husserl 1989, 150; Hua IV 142). The personal ego is related to the interpersonal world of other subjects; the psychic ego relates just to its body (*Leib*, Husserl 1989, 149; Hua IV 142). The personal ego acts, Husserl says, 'as ruler of the soul' (*als regens der Seele*, Husserl 1989, 150; Hua IV 142). Stein elaborates these ideas but does not deviate substantially from Husserl.

For Stein, specifically, the individual uniqueness of a person is encapsulated in an individual essence from which the person gradually 'unfolds' or 'develops' (*entfaltet*) throughout

life.[10] Husserl's captures an essentially similar notion of the entire concrete life encapsulated in a 'monad' (a term that already appears in "Philosophy as Rigorous Science" (1910/1911, Husserl 2002) but which achieves prominence in *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl 1950). For Stein, the person is a "center to engage the world [*ein Zentrum in die Welt hineingestellt*]," (Stein 2009, 191; GA 10 128).

Persons in the Nexus of Motivation

Persons, for Husserl and Stein, are constituted in 'spiritual acts' that stand outside the causal order (Stein 1989, 109; GA 5 127). They operate by 'motivation' (*Motivation*), which is a connectivity that works through recognizing and understanding reasons that make sense to those persons and invoke specific responses within an overall intentional 'nexus' (*Zusammenhang*) of meanings, as Stein develops, following Husserl *Ideas* II, in her "Psychic Causality," Part One of her 1922 *Beiträge* (Husserl 2000).[11] Persons respond to what has *significance* or 'importance' (von Hildebrand's *Bedeutsamkeit*) *for them*, rather than automatically reacting to stimuli, as in the cause-effect network of the natural world. For Stein: "Motivation is the lawfulness of spiritual life" (Stein 1989, 96; GA 5 107; a similar sentence is also found in Husserl's *Ideas* II § 56: "motivation is the lawfulness of the life of the spirit," Husserl 1989, 231; Hua IV 220). Strict causation is the law governing the natural world. Understanding the spiritual world means grasping intentional motivation and the rational laws governing the domains of feeling, valuing, willing and acting (Stein 1989, 97; GA 5 114). For Stein, this means that the human sciences

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[10] Stein, furthermore, insists in her *Aufbau* that the human sciences should not reduce the individual exemplar to the general type. Zoology can study animals as exemplars of a type but anthropology, psychology, must study the individual human essence (Stein 2004, 23) or 'singular person' (*Einzelperson*, Stein 2004, 25).

[11] There are of course 'irrational' motivations based on feelings and associations that are not rationally motivated. Husserl in particular is concerned only with rational motivations. Husserl is critical of Kant's formalism which does not take into account the determining factors on a person's desire and will.

require understanding through appreciating the relevant motivations, a "comprehension that relives history" (Stein 1989, 93; GA 5 109).

Already in her first book, *On the Problem of Empathy* (1917), Stein claims that human feelings disclose a new objective realm, namely, the world of values (*die Welt der Werte*, Stein 1989, 92; GA 5 108). Stein writes similarly in her *The Structure of the Human Person*: 'We gain access to the world of values, as to the entire objective world [world of objects], through our spiritual life' (Stein 2004, 114). In *Empathy*, she writes furthermore:

> Spiritual acts do not stand beside one another without relationship, like a cone of rays
> with the pure "I" as the point of intersection, but one act experientially proceeds from the
> other. The "I" passes over from one act to the other in the form of what we earlier called
> "motivation." (Stein 1989, 96; GA 5 114)

Stein writes that the person as nature is subject to the laws of causality, and, as spirit, to the 'laws of meaning' (*Sinngesetzen*, Stein 1989, 112; GA 5 129).

Stein on Persons and 'Life-Power' (*Lebenskraft*)

Human beings, as embodied, belong to nature and are, in Stein's terms, 'bodily-bound' (*leibgebunden*, Stein 1989, p. 100; GA 5 118). Husserl and Stein both call human beings 'psycho-physical' or 'physico-psychic' entities (Hua IV 64). Indeed, Husserl and Stein in particular, acknowledge that psychophysical 'conditionality' (*Konditionalität*, Hua IV 64), i.e., health, life-energy (*Lebenskraft*), physical constitution, and capacities, can influence one's psychic states (what Husserl and Stein call 'soul', *die Seele*). A person's specific drives, interests, and abilities are dictated by their given bodily, psycho-physical constitution. This is facticity. People just are drawn to, like or dislike, certain colors, tastes, sounds or movements, Husserl

says. It is one's peculiar embodiment that mediates and filters one's being-in-the-world. Both Stein and Husserl believe that we are motivated 'from below' (by psychophysical conditionality) and 'from above' (moved by spiritual values): "the spiritual life of the human person rises from a dark ground" (Stein 2002, 364; GA 11/12 310). Elsewhere, she says that the soul sinks its taproot into nature. Persons are material beings as well as possessing psychic and spiritual natures.

Going beyond Husserl, Stein introduces her own novel notion of 'life-power' (*Lebenskraft*, Stein 2000, 22; GA 6 22ff), a modification of a concept that she had encountered in Theodor Lipps and Henri Bergson.[12] Life-power is parceled out in different amounts in different individuals and waxes and wanes, can be depleted or replenished, but is always finite. It determines our psychic responses to stimuli (e.g., when one is tired, a slight noise can distract one, which one might not notice in a more energetic state). Everyone only has a given amount of life-power. There is both physical and psychic life-power, for Stein. It is this life-power that can nourish the will of an exhausted person to struggle on. For Stein, it represents the deep individuality of one's 'union' (*Verbindung*) of body and soul.

Stein is clear that my ego is experienced as not actually identical with my body. I can put myself anywhere in my body but some parts seem nearer than others (Stein 2004, 84). My hand is 'nearer' to me than my foot although this experienced nearness is not the same as spatial distance (Stein 1989, 42–43; GA 5 58–9). In fact, Stein says I have a 'personal body' (*ein persönlicher Leib*, Stein 2004, 84) in which the 'I' lives and which can be personally shaped by the I. The ego is not the whole of consciousness. Following Husserl, she distinguishes the 'soul' or 'psyche' (*die Seele*) from both the pure ego and the person. The soul is not the same as the

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[12] Theodor Lipps speaks of 'psychic power' (*psychische Kraft*), in his *Leifaden der Psychologie* (Lipps 1909, 80, 124) that Stein identifies broadly with her *Lebenskraft*. Husserl does not have this concept but it is not clear that he would have rejected it. On life-power in Stein, see Betschart 2009. Stein is also influenced by Bergson's concept of *élan vital* here (Stein's friend Roman Ingarden wrote his doctorate on Bergson with Husserl).

egoic stream of consciousness. Our soul is the center of our experiences, it includes the acuteness with which I engage in perception or the liveliness of my behavior. It accounts for the intensity of my feelings (Stein 1989, 39–40). There is a deep psychic source for consciousness that is deeper than the ego. Similarly, spirit lifts the ego beyond itself. Stein gives the example of working on a problem but feeling too dull to solve it. This feeling of dullness is different from the awareness of the ego (Stein 2002, 365; GA 11/12 312). As she writes in *Finite and Eternal Being*: "The human ego, in short, is not only a pure ego, not only a spiritual ego, but also a bodily ego" (Stein 2002, 367; GA 11/12 313).

Husserl on the Person and the Personalistic Attitude

The I is not just a point-of-view or center for acts and experiences but the I is first and foremost an embodied, spiritual person. Husserl uses the term 'person', following Kant, and others, to mean the individual human subject in its full concreteness, especially in its social relations with other subjects, and in terms of agency, willing, judging, valuing, and generally exercising rational 'self-responsibility' (*Selbstbeantwortung*, *Ideas* II § 60). Scheler similarly believes he is expanding on Kant's formal notion of the person by including the person as sensitive, valuing agent. Stein is able to being this broadly Husserlian-Schelerian conception of the person into alignment with the traditional Neo-Thomist conception of the person.

In the late *Crisis of European Sciences*, Husserl tries to capture the uniqueness of our personal experience by speaking of 'the I of personal pronouns' (*Ich der personalen Pronomina*, Hua VI 270). In his early *Logical Investigations* (1900/1901, Husserl 1984; English translation Husserl 2001), it is noteworthy that Husserl does not mention 'persons' and his focus is primarily on individual episodes in a single stream of consciousness, in a single 'ego' (In the First Edition,

there is even little mention of the ego). Husserl's first discussion of 'persons' in print is found in

his 1910/1911 *Logos* essay, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science" (Husserl 2002),[13] where persons

are treated as unities not identical with their material bodies. The longest discussion of persons is

in Husserl's posthumously published *Ideas* II (§§ 49-51), written initially in 1912, and edited by

Edith Stein in the period around 1918 to 1920.[14] For Husserl, at least according to *Ideas* II,

persons approach the world primarily through the 'personalistic attitude' (*Ideas* II § 34) which

considers human beings in terms of their inner, subjective, mental life and motivations.[15] The

'personalistic attitude' is Husserl's unique phrase (to my knowledge, the term does not appear in

Stein or Scheler) for the attitude human beings take towards themselves and others *as* persons (in

which they treat each other as 'I', 'you and 'we', see *Ideas* II § 49), in specifically personal

interactions, in talking to one another, shaking hands, etc., humans adopt the personalistic

attitude.[16] Husserl defines it as:

> … the attitude we are always in when we live with one another, talk to one another, shake
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> hands with another in greeting, or are related to another in love and aversion, in
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> disposition and action, in discourse and discussion. (Husserl 1989, 192; Hua IV 183)

It is an interpersonal attitude. In the *Crisis* Husserl further explicates personal life:

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[13] In his "Philosophy as Rigorous Science" (1910/1911) Husserl speaks of experience as a 'personal habitus' (Husserl 2002, 284) involving the self being influenced to take positions, motivated by its experiences, accepting or rejecting the experiences of others.

[14] Later persons are treated as 'monads' in *Cartesian Meditations* § 32 (Husserl 1950). The person is discussed in Husserl's 1919 *Nature and Spirit* lectures (Husserl 2002a), see also his 1927 lecture series *Natur und Geist* (Husserliana 2001a), as well as his *Ethics* lectures (Husserl 1988a, Husserl 2004), his *Kaizo* articles, and again plays a role in his *Intersubjectivity* volumes (Husserl 1973) and in the *Crisis* (Husserl 1954; Husserl 1970). See Goto 2014.

[15] Husserl speaks of the 'personalistic attitude' in *Ideas* II Sections 34 and 49. I have not found the expression in other Husserliana volumes.

[16] In *Ideas* I, Husserl does not speak specifically of the personalistic attitude but includes in the 'natural attitude' our normal relations to others as persons and in their social roles.

Personal life means living communalized as an "I" and "we" [*als Ich und Wir*] within

community horizon, and this in communities of various simple or stratified forms such as

family, nation, supranational community [*Übernation*]. (Husserl 1970, 270; Hua VI 314)

For Husserl, the personalistic attitude is a basic *sui generis* attitude, perhaps the most original

and fundamental human attitude to others. Husserl even thought that the personalistic attitude

had genetic primacy: people were animistic in the past about events in the world. As he writes in

Ideas II § 34:

That which is given to us, as human subject, one with the human body, in immediate

experiential apprehension, is the human person, who has his spiritual individuality, his

intellectual and practical abilities and skills, his character, his sensibility. (Husserl 1989,

147; Hua IV 139)

Note that here Husserl claims that humans have spiritual and not just bodily individuality. Stein

goes further to posit a spiritual matter that individuates human beings.

In *Ideas* II Husserl sees the natural attitude as founded on and subordinated to the

personalistic attitude. Indeed, for him, one only arrives at the natural attitude through the

'self-forgetfulness' (*Selbstvergessenheit*) of the personalistic attitude (Husserl 1989, 193; Hua IV

183). The subject, apprehended as a person (a conscious, free, self-responsible, sense-making

agent) is not visible to someone in the naturalistic attitude that sees physical entities as objects of

nature (*Ideas* II § 51). In *Ideas* II § 62, Husserl speaks of the 'interlocking' (*ineinandergreifen*)

between the natural and personalistic attitudes, but he explicitly differentiates the personalistic

attitude from the natural, and indeed maintains that the natural attitude is in fact 'subordinated' to

the personalistic attitude (*Ideas* II § 49).[17] The natural attitude is actually reached through a

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[17] Here I depart from John J. Drummond (2008, 155), who claims that the personalistic attitude is a species of the natural attitude. In my view, the personalistic attitude is the whole that contains the natural attitude as a part.

self-forgetting or abstraction of the self or ego of the personalistic attitude, through an abstraction from the personal which presents the world in some kind of absolutized way, as the world of nature.

The Interpersonal World of Interlocking Subjectivities

Persons are unique individuals, yet they are also *communalized* in a world of interpersonal relationships.[18] For Husserl, we are always persons, with and for others, in permanent relations with others as friends or foes (Husserl 1989*,* 192; Hua IV 183). Persons, furthermore, are embedded in 'surroundings' (*Umgebung*) and a 'surrounding world' or environment (*Umwelt*) that is personal and interpersonal. The person is the center of her surrounding world (*Ideas* II § 50):

> … to each person belongs his surrounding world [*Umwelt*], while at the same time a plurality of persons in communication with one another, have a common surrounding world. (Husserl 1989, 195; Hua IV 185)

There is an intermeshing between personal world and interpersonal common world. This world is the *horizon* for my actions as I perceive and understand them. Horizons offer openness and closure. Thus, Husserl claims, the person who knows nothing of physics does not have physics informing their surrounding world (Husserl 1989, 195; Hua IV186).[19] This common surrounding world is 'constituted in experiencing others, in mutual understanding and mutual agreement' (Husserl 1989, 203; Hua IV193). Persons form a 'communicative community' (*Mitteilungsgemeinschaft*, Husserl 1973, Hua XV 461), constituted through 'social acts' (Husserl

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[18] Husserl speaks of 'communalization' (*Vergemeinschaftung*). See Hua XV 20, 46, 57, 518. It arises initially instinctively through habit but later there are explicit deliberate forms of community. See Caminada 2019.
[19] According to *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry on 'personalism' this would make Husserl a strict personalist – one's sense of the world emerges from an intuition about oneself.

1989, 204), where one addresses and recognizes others and they reciprocate through responses that recognize the address. Being a person is also an intrinsically social matter involving interpersonal relations with others. We belong to a 'nexus of persons' (*Personenzusammenhang*, Husserl 1989, 213; Hua IV 203). Similarly, in 'Philosophy as Rigorous Science' (1910/1911), Husserl says 'the personality belongs to a cultural community and an age' (Husserl 2002, 285).

Soon after it was published Edith Stein carefully read Heidegger's *Being and Time* and wrote an unpublished critical evaluation of it (Stein 2006a, 445–500; English translation, Stein 2007). Stein has criticisms of Heidegger's insistence on human finitude and his highlighting of anxiety as a fundamental mood but she agreed that human beings are beings-in-the-world (Stein 1996, 177). In *Aufbau* she maintains: "existence is existence in a world; its life is life in community [*Dasein ist Dasein in einer Welt, sein Leben ist Leben in Gemeinschaft*]," Stein 2004, 134). We find ourselves as already members of social groups (e.g. family), larger societies (language-using groups), and institutions. In that sense we are 'thrown' into community. However, our primary experience is not nothingness but the sense of 'fullness'. We are fulfilled through others. For Stein, spiritual worlds are worlds that are subjectively experienced by the persons themselves. It is always a world 'for me' (as we saw also with Husserl) while it also has the sense of being a world shared or shareable with others.

"Individual and Community," (Husserl 2000, 129-314), the second part of Stein's *Beiträge*, published in Husserl's *Jahrbuch* in 1922 is a deeper exploration of the nature of community (*Gemeinschaft*) and society (*Gesellschaft*). In particular, she follows Husserl in recognizing the 'social acts' through which individuals relate to each other (Husserl 2000, 210) as well as the affective attitudes we take to one another (love, trust, gratitude, Husserl 2000, 211). Stein highlights love as a central uniting bond between humans.

The Person as Taker of Positions

To be a person, first and foremost, for Husserl, Scheler and Stein, is to have the capacity freely to adopt attitudes or 'take stances' (*Stellungnehmen*). Scheler had spoken of the person coming into being by performing intentional meaning-creating acts. Husserl speaks of position-taking as an active, free decision of the ego. For Husserl, all life involves position-taking. Positions can also be altered and the ability to take different stances towards a belief is part of the nature of human consciousnessFor Husserl, the concrete, free person is built up gradually through 'position-takings' (Arango 2014), stances I take toward matters that interest me. These do not have to be intellectualistic, and, indeed, the personalistic attitude is generally speaking not a theoretical attitude ("personal life is generally non theoretic [*kein theoretisch*]," Husserl 1970, 318; Hua VI 297). I am instinctively drawn to certain people and I make them my friends. Husserl describes this kind of practical stance-taking as *habitual*, as a 'pre-theoretical' attitude; it is primarily experienced in our emotional life that is oriented to values and in practical choosing and willing. But my stance-taking is decisive for me (Hua IV 231)

In his lectures on ethics, Husserl wants persons to become more self-aware (he even speaks of 'ego-splitting', *Ich-Spaltung*, Hua I 16) and 'responsible' in that they are required to recognize and give priority to *rational* motivation other and above instinctive, affective, habitual drives. A person develops as a person through specifically 'spiritual acts'. Persons are under a moral obligation to develop and perfect themselves (see Loidolt 2021). Especially in his ethics lectures (Hua XXVIII; Hua XXXVII), and in his *Grenzprobleme der Phänomenologie* (Hua XLII, Husserl 2013), Husserl discusses persons as both instantiating value and creating values and as committing themselves through their choices to the 'absolute ought' of developing their

personhood to the full. Husserl says in his *Grenzprobleme* that one has to strive to achieve the unity of one's person, to set oneself goals and carry them through. For Husserl, as his thought developed, the person is more and more viewed as an entity that is not only the 'subject of acts of reason' (Hua IV, §60) but is also sensitive to feeling and oriented to value. Human beings are also attentive to what Husserl calls 'love values' (*Liebewerte*) and have a sense of their lives answering to a call. As Husserl writes in *Grenzprobleme*:

> A distinctive feature, however, is that the I is not only a polar and centering inwardness, thereby accomplishing meaning and value and deed out of itself, but that it is also an individual I, who, in all its presenting, feeling, valuing and deciding, has a deepest center, the center of love in the distinguished personal sense; the loving I who follows a 'call,' a 'vocation,' an innermost call, which strikes the innermost center of the I itself and which is raised to new decisions, new responsibilities and justifications of the self. (Husserl 2013, 358-59; Loidolt 2021)

Ultimately, for Husserl, persons inhabit a 'community of love' (*Liebesgemeinschaft*) where persons support each other in becoming who they are (Hua XIV, 172–75; Husserl 2013, 301–17, 512–15). Husserl in his *Grenzprobleme* also (along with Scheler) attributes the highest worth to persons:

> The highest values are everywhere those of subjectivity as such, which is directed towards value creation and the attribution of value and which is directed, at the very highest level, towards the best that is possible. (Husserl 2013, 316).[20]

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[20] Die höchsten Werte sind überall die der Subjektivität als solcher, die auf Werterzeugung und Wertzueignung gerichtet ist und zuhöchst gerichtet ist auf Bestmögliches." (Hua XLII 316).

Similarly, Stein thinks the person has a responsibility to develop oneself and arrive at 'fullness of being' (Stein 2004, 87). Stein is clear that attitudes are adopted habitually and not simply chosen. We built on a platform of habit.

Husserl on the Apprehension of Values

For Husserl, besides our 'outer perception' (*aussere Wahrnehmung*) of objects, and 'inner perception' (*innere Wahrnehmung*) of our own states, we have an immediate, intuitive *apprehension of values* (*Wertnehmung*) that operates through our feelings.[21] I intuitively apprehend through feeling something *as* beautiful, *as* true, important, useful, and so on (Husserl 1988, 277). At the outset of *Ideas* II, Husserl distinguishes between the theoretical attitude (of the natural scientist) and the axiological and practical attitudes (Husserl 1989, 9; Hua IV 7). He speaks of valuing acts and of the discipline of axiology,[22] and in his ethics lectures, he regularly discussed the nature of 'value' or 'worth' (*Wert*) (see Hart 1990). Admiring the blue sky as beautiful is a felt experience distinct from theoretically appreciating a blue sky. The theoretical attitude can certainly grasp values, but it does not *live through* the experience of them. One must distinguish between being moved feelingly by the tone of the violin and appreciating intellectually that the tone is beautiful without being actually moved (Hua IV 186–87).

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[21] Von Hildebrand in his Habilitation thesis, "Sittlichkeit und ethische Werterkenntnis," (Hildebrand 1922, 462–602), says that *Wertnehmen* is Husserl's term of art whereas *Wertfühlen* is Scheler's preferred term (*Hildebrand 1922,* 468). Hildebrand speaks of 'value grasping' *Werterfassen* and 'value knowing', *Werterkenntnis*. Hildebrand says we see value as an objective entity of things, states of affairs, and persons, just as we see colors and hear sounds. Initially, we have an intuitive apprehension of the value. He further distinguishes between 'seeing a value' (*Wertsehen*) and actually *feeling* it when it strikes us (*Wertfühlen*). There is, in phenomenology, a general discussion about how values are intuitively apprehended. We are immediately struck by the values of things (based on the properties of those things). Hildebrand distinguishes different kinds of familiarity with values – from 'knowing' (*wissen*) to 'familiar acquaintance' (*kennen*). Hildebrand thinks we need an attitude of passive reverence or acceptance to fully grasp the nature of value which speaks a 'word' that demands a response in us unless we are 'value blind' in which case we will be simply unmoved.

[22] Axiology was also discussed by Husserl's younger contemporary Nicolai Hartmann (1882–1950). Husserl defines axiological reason as a "consciousness which constitutes value objectivities" (Husserl 1988, 266).

In *Ideas* II Husserl underscores that he had already introduced the concept of 'valuation' or 'value apprehension' (*Wertnehmung*, Hua IV 9, 186) before Scheler. Values are ideal objectivities, for Husserl (Hua XXVIII 277), as for Scheler, but their exact ontological status is difficult to specify.[23] Scheler maintained there was an objective hierarchy of values and that they have 'act-being' (*Aktsein*). Values are intuitively given; value-graspings (Stein speaks of 'the grasping of values', *Erfassen der Werte*), are intentional acts directed at objects, primarily in feelings and emotions. For the mature Stein, this hierarchy of values is an order of being, it belongs to ontology (Stein 2004, 25). Persons are intuitively sensitive to and oriented to *values* (beauty, truth, usefulness). Initially what is apprehended is the object and its non-evaluative features and this object produces an affective reaction that presents a value.

The experiencing of finding something beautiful seems to be a higher-order or founded act depended on a perceptual act (seeing the sun set) and then an accompanying feeling – a *being moved* to experience it as beautiful. The being moved is a *passive* experience. I simply feel myself being drawn to the beauty of the sunset. But there are many different strands to this experience. Feeling the value and responding to it are different.

In *On the Problem of Empathy* Stein also talks explicitly about *Wertnehmen* as an original apprehension of values (GA 5 11, 33, 34, 35) and she expands on this discussion in her *Beiträge*.[24] The apprehension of a value motivates a feeling response. Moreover, an act of valuing can also motivate an act of will (Stein 1989, 108; GA 5 126). For Stein, where oriented theoretically we see 'mere things' (Stein 2000, 160; GA 6 135). Every objective thing is also a value: "every fully constituted object is simultaneously a value object [*Wertobjekt*]" (Stein 1989,

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[23] Scheler has been accused of Platonism on values posited as independent objective entities. See Blosser 2012. Husserl was deeply influenced by Brentano on value. For a discussion of Brentano's value theory, see Baumgartner & Pasquerella (2004).
[24] See also Stein 1989, 31; GA 5 48; 1989, 33 GA 5 50.

160; GA 6 134). An act of valuing is primarily a felt experience, for Stein. However, a genuine

act of valuing can be based on a *non-actual* experience, such as a memory or an imagining. Stein

recognizes that we can be intuitively drawn to a lower value which we feel more than a higher

value (Stein 1989, 105; GA 5 123). I grasp a value in a special act of feeling. This initial feeling

is different, for Stein (who is following Hildebrand here), to the response or 'answer' (*Antwort*)

that the value calls for in me.

In her 1922 *Beiträge*, following Husserl, Stein carefully distinguishes between the

non-axiological (extra-egoic, *ichfremd*) properties of the beautiful things (their color, shape, etc)

and the feeling of being moved that the specific value of beauty evokes. The evaluative

properties of the thing are not sensuous or material – I could, for instance, grasp the 'elegance' of

a mathematical proof or the value of an inner act of pardoning (Stein 2000, 160; GA 6 134).

They are higher order properties found on the sensuous but not identical with them. I could see

the thing physically without grasping its value (Stein 2000, 162; GA 6 136). But when I grasp a

value, I have a feeling that provides the matter or 'stuff' (*Stoff*) for the value-grasping

Wertnehmen (Stein 2000, 160; GA 6 135). These are feelings that are felt and can never be fully

articulated in words. If there is no feeling in the value-grasping (*Werterfassen*) then there is no

stuff on which to base a value reaction. This feeling in turn can lead to 'surrender' in me and I

feel 'gladness' (*Freud*) at the beauty, or I can be left 'cold' (*kalt*). This, for Stein, is analogous to

an empty intuition in perception, when I grasp a thing without fulfilment of intuition (as in

'hearsay'). To grasp a value, we need both the self-givenness of the thing in some kind of

intuition but also there must be the appropriate 'inner condition' (*innere Zuständlichkeit*, Stein

2000, 162; GA 6 136) of the subject. For Stein, as for Hildebrand and Scheler, one can suffer

from 'value-blindness' (*Wertblindheit*, Stein 2000, 162; GA 6 136). One can see an object and

simply not be aware of its value. Or one can glimpse the value (as a kind of place holder that is not intuitively filled in but is given 'emptily', Stein 2000, 162; GA 6 136) but not be personally affected by it (Husserl mentions this case too).

Edith Stein on the Nature of the Person

Edith Stein elaborated her distinctive view of persons consistently over the course of her writings from 1917 to her death. Her detailed and fine-grained conception of the person draws on Husserl, Scheler, Reinach, Hildebrand, and her former teacher, the psychologist William Stern,[25] among others, but, after 1922, she fused her phenomenology with a Neo-Thomist philosophical anthropology (in her writings from 1932 to 1942). She explicitly addresses Scheler already in her dissertation on empathy, but there is also the influence of Husserl's *Natur und Geist* lectures (that Stein acknowledged in her *Life in a Jewish Family*) and by *Ideas* II (on motivation) that she was helping to edit.[26] In the *Beiträge* she is also directly influenced by Dietrich von Hildebrand on value[27] and in terms of his analysis of the nature of the will.[28]

The fourth chapter of Stein's dissertation, entitled "Empathy as the Understanding of Spiritual Persons [*Einfühlung als Verstehen geistiger Personen*]," Stein 1989, 91; GA 5 108),

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[25] William Stern (1871–1938) was a famous German psychologist, a student of Ebbinghaus in Berlin, who invented the 'intelligence quotient' (IQ)) measure. He wrote studies of child psychology based on observations of his own childten. He was devoted to personalistic psychology and published his *Person und Sache* (Stern 1906). He taught at the University of Breslau but moved to Hamburg in 1916 until 1933, when he was forced to emigrate to the USA, where he taught at Duke University until his death in 1938.

[26] The term 'personalistic attitude' does not appear in Stein's 1917 work, *Problem of Empathy*, presumably because she began editing *Ideas* II only after she had completed her dissertation in 1916. She does speak of the 'natural attitude' (Stein 2000, 227; GA 6 190) and the phenomenological attitude.

[27] Stein references Dietrich von Hildebrand's *Die Idee der sittlichen Handlung* (Hildebrand 1916) on values as having an extramental existence as transcendent objects, but involve an intramental or intra-egoic (*ichlich*) content, see Stein 2000, 7; GA 6 18). Stein notes that she uses the term lived experience for both types of experience.

[28] Stein references approvingly von Hildebrand's *Die Idee der sittlichen Handlung* (Hildebrand 1916) on the three-fold meaning of 'willing' (*Wollen*) as 'aspiring' (*das Sichbemühen*) e.g. to be good; 'resolving' (*Vorsatz*) to do something, e.g. going for a walk; and desiring (*Wollen*) to realize a state of affairs (*Realisierung eines Sachverhaltes*), as opposed to a mere subjective wanting (Stein 2000, 55–57; GA 6 48-49).

discusses the constitution of the person in emotional experiences and the apprehension of persons in empathy. She also discusses 'the being and value' of the person and the various ways persons are divided into 'types'. Throughout the dissertation, Stein constantly speaks of persons and of 'personality' or 'personhood' (*Persönlichkeit*);[29] she speaks of experiencing a *person's* grief, and acts of honesty or dishonesty of *persons*. She speaks of the 'understandings of foreign personhoods' (*Verständnisses fremder Persönlichkeiten*) and of understanding or interpreting 'historical personalities' (*historische Persönlichkeiten*), e.g., I can think of Caesar in his house in ancient Rome or think of him as placed in the twentieth century. But for Stein it is the one identical, individual Caesar that I am thinking of (Stein 1989, 110; GA 5 128). I grasp the unchangeable 'core' (*Kern)* of the personhood of Caesar.

For Stein, persons are individual unities and each person is correlated to a 'value-world' (*Wertewelt*, Stein 1989, 108; GA 5 126; cf. GA 6 174, 183, 184; "a world as pleasure and pain, as noble and common, as beauty and ugliness," Stein 2004, 81). Emotions always involve an evaluative element. Emotions are object entities but also possess subjective significance according to which these values are grasped at different depths by individuals. Feeling and emotions apprehend matters as positively or negatively significant. There is also a certain passivity ('being seized', *Ergriffenwerden*) and activity (freedom, Stein 2004, 82). Values demand a certain posture of will.

Stein writes (referencing Jaspers) that it is an old psychological tradition that the "I" is constituted in emotions (Stein 1989, 89; GA 5 109). Her 1922 *Beiträge* extends her discussion of persons, developing a layered ontology of body, soul, and spirit, and discussing her concept of

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[29] Stein speaks frequently of '*Persönlichkeit*' (usually translated as 'personality'), but she does not mean empirical psychological 'personality'. She means what makes a person uniquely a person. Each person is unique, irreplacable and invaluable. Each person has as distinct character that grows, develops and is shaped during life. It does include one's fundamental outlook (optimism, brightness, etc.) in so far as it is essential to one. At the basis of one's personality is the 'core' (*Kern*) which makes the person the unique individual they are.

life-power (*Lebenskraft*) in detail. In her later works, Stein embeds her phenomenological account of conscious, embodied psychic life (developing Husserl and Scheler) into a more metaphysical (inspired by Thomas) –and at the same time concrete and existential – conception of the person. God as absolute being is an infinite person; angels and humans are persons of different orders. Persons are substances; they are self-standing. They have 'existence-for-themselves' (*Für-sich-selbst-Dasein*, Stein 2009, 222; GA 10 148)

Stein elaborates on how persons relate to each other. I look at another person and see into his 'innerness' (*Innerlichkeit*) – he can open up himself or shut himself (Stein 2004, 78). One's value as an individual person is, interestingly, for Stein, distinct from existence (Stein 2000, 213). Thus, a fictional character can inspire us as much as an existing person. The hero of an epic poem inspires my imagination (Stein 2000, 216) and may act as a model for my ethical deeds. Stein writes:

Persons as well as their properties and actions, and indeed their stirrings of life in the widest sense, are carriers of values [*Träger von Werten*]. (Stein 2000, 216; GA 6 180)

Values, moreover, exist independent of their bearers (this is a position also held by Scheler). One instantiates the value (e.g. honesty) but honesty as a value has independent validity.

I am drawn to persons or repelled by them. I approve or disapprove of the other person; I grasp their 'value or disvalue' (*wert oder unwert*, Stein 2000, 212; GA 6 177). I see someone and I say 'so should one be' (*so sollte man sein*, Stein 2004, 91). But if I love someone – despite seeing a defect or failing – I love them for their whole stock of value, their 'repertoire of being' (*Seinsbestand*, Stein 2000, 212; GA 6 177). The love of a person is based on the *apprehended value* of the loved person; only the lover has access to that value (Stein 2000, 213; GA 6 177). So the lover subjectively apprehends a value in the loved person. On the other hand, someone

never exposed to love cannot experience the depth of their own souls in which love and hate are rooted (Stein 1989, 111; GA V 129). They will remain unfulfilled in their personal nature.

The soul, as bearer of a unified flow of conscious experiences as experienced in the first person (see *Ideas* II § 20) is intrinsically 'bound to the body' (*leibgebunden*) and 'interwoven' with it is a 'psychophysical' unity Stein 1989 40). At the beginning of *On the Problem of Empathy*, Stein says that souls and bodies of human subjects (including her own) need to be suspended and put to one side in the phenomenological reduction (*Ausschaltung oder Reduktion*, Stein 1989, 3; GA 5 11). One is simply focused on felt consciousness. She begins her fourth chapter with a new declaration:

> So far we have considered the individual "I" as a part of nature, the living body as a physical body among others, the soul as founded on it, effects suffered and done and aligned in the causal order, all that is psychic as natural occurrence, consciousness as reality. … Consciousness appeared not only as a causally conditioned occurrence, but also as object-constituting at the same time. Thus it stepped out of the order of nature and faced it. Consciousness as a correlate of the object world is not nature, but mind. (Stein 1989, 91; GA 5 108)

Intentional consciousness operates on a new level – the level of meaning and value, where matters have significance for us. We are now in the world of persons.

In *On the Problem of Empathy*, Stein says that the soul is a 'substantial unity' (Stein 1989, 40; GA 5 56) and she argues for the 'constitution' (*Konstitution, Aufbau*) of the person in emotional experiences, since feelings 'announce personal attributes' (Stein 1989, 99; GA 5 117) and are connected to the 'I' in a way that bodily sensations that are 'foreign to the ego' (*ichfremd*) do not. External perceptions are not 'egoic' as such (Stein 2009, 185); they.

Sensations, on the other hand, are not part of the 'I' and are 'foreign to the I' (*ichfremd*). Stein distinguishes between sensual feelings (pleasant taste, feeling of pain) and general feelings, e.g. vigor (*Frische*) or sluggishness (*Madigkeit*)). General feelings, unlike sensations, are not localized in one bodily locale. General eelings, moreover, are rooted in the depth of the ego and also fill it out entirely. Thus, for instance, my whole being becomes suffused with joy.

From Scheler, Stein took the idea that the person is sensitive to value or 'evaluative' (*werthaftig*, Stein 2000, 227; GA 6 190). Humans have, Stein says, 'permeability' for values in general– not just moral, aesthetic or intellectual values – but all aspects of normative life: 'we see what a person *is* when we see which world of value [*Wertewelt*] she lives in' (Stein 2000, 227; GA 6 190). A concern for truth is evaluative. Our whole sensory, affective and cognitive lives are order to values. Already in *On the Problem of Empathy*, Stein said a person is correlated to a 'value world' (*Wertewelt*, Stein 1989, 108; GA 5 126; or 'world of values', *Welt der Werte,* Stein 1989, 92; GA 5 108). She speaks of the 'feeling of value' (*Wertfühlen*). For Stein, a new object realm is constituted in feeling. This is value. She writes:

> In joy the subject has something joyous facing him, in fright something frightening, in fear something threatening. Even moods have their objective correlate. For him who is cheerful, the world is baptized in a rosy glow; Even moods have their objective correlate. For him who is cheerful, the world is baptized in a rosy glow; for him who is depressed in black. (Stein 1989, 92; GA 5 108–9)

The person is an antenna for value. The person is also an inestimable value in herself but she also creates new values. For Stein also persons express their spirit in their free spiritual acts. In *Finite and Eternal Being*, she writes: "the realm of spiritual life is the authentic realm of freedom" (Stein 2002, 372). The I becomes creative out of the depths of its own self 'in the form of free

acts' (Stein 2002, 376).[30] The whole person, however, is never exhausted in these acts (Stein 2009, 381). One can be honest without actually having done acts of honesty. One has a 'predisposition', e.g. to music or mathematics that may never be actualized (Stein 2000, 199).

Stein continues to deepen her analysis of the person in her later systematic works, especially *Potency and Act* (1931) and *Finite and Eternal Being* (1935) but also in her influential, occasional writings on women's education (Stein 1996). In *Finite and Eternal Being* she speaks of 'person-being' (*Personsein*, Stein 2002, 363). Persons, for Stein, are integrated into both the material and the immaterial, spiritual worlds (Stein 2009, 221; GA 10 147). The person is 'conditioned both from above and from below' (Stein 2002, 364). They have psychic wholes or totalities which must be approached as such. Soul is bound to body; spirit is conditioned by both soul and body as conditions them in turn (Stein 2002, 364). Persons are carriers of their own lives ('having oneself in hand', Stein 2002, 370; GA 11/12 315). The affective, emotional life is the heart of the person. Emotions have the greatest effect on the inner form of the self (Stein 2009, 381), for Stein. The emotions reveal reality in its 'totality and in its peculiarity' (Stein 2009, 96). Each soul has its own disposition that governs how intensely emotions are experienced, the acuteness of sensations, the amount of energy one has available for a task, and so on (Stein 1989, 40). Thus, there is need for education as to the authenticity of sentiments. Pure emotions have to be educated with intellect to become emotions cognizant of values. Intellectual critique is needed to separate the false from the true. According to Stein, the intellect must grasp something to wake the emotions. The intellect lights the path for emotions. The emotions drive the will into action (Stein 1996, 96). But emotions need the control of the will and the light of intellect.

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[30] Stein claims that the human being can and should form itself (*kann und soll sich selbst formen*, *Aufbau*, p. 93)

Stein on the 'Core of the Person' (*Kern der Person*, *Persönlichkeitskern*)

A unique and original aspect of Stein's account, already in her dissertation is her claim that each

has an individual personal 'core' (*Kern der Person*, Stein1989, 109; GA 5 127;

Persönlichkeitskern, Stein 2000, 92; GA 6 80; Stein 2009,183; GA 10 122) that remains

unchanged throughout life, despite the person's life constantly changing.[31] The core discloses

itself in an 'unfolding' (*Entfaltung*, Stein 2009, 209; GA 10 139). This core is 'the original

personal situation' (*die ursprüngliche persönliche Anlage,* GA 6 100) and is one's affective or

'emotional life' (*Gemütsleben*, Stein 2009, 237). The 'core' is a simple whole with no separable

parts. The core 'unfolds' or 'ripens' (*entfaltet*) and can be 'heightened' (*Seinssteigerung*, GA 10

146), but does not 'develop' (*entwickelt*).[32] The personal core is never completely 'disclosed or

disclosable' (Stein 2009, 200). This core has a fixed 'stock of being' (*Seinsbestand*, Stein 2000,

92; GA 6 80) that prescribes how the person develops. The core cannot change its original

'predisposition' (Stein 2000, 233). The person's character properties are its capacities for

apprehending values, and in them the core unfolds itself outwards (*enfaltet sich in ihnen nach

aussen*, Stein 2000, 231). Kindliness as a character trait doesn't just show itself in kind actions; a

person can just be kindly even if he doesn't get to do kind actions (Stein 2000, 231). This core of

the person is what makes the person who he or she is and is also his or her *similitudo dei* (Stein

2009, 219; GA 10 146). According to Stein, the human being, "first of all is potential and that he

himself only very gradually unfolds to actualization" (Stein 2004, 235).[33]

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[31] Stein speaks of the 'core point of the I' (*Kernpunkt*) or the 'I-core' (*Ichkern*) or 'core of the person, '*Kern der Person*'. Hering is the first to have employed the expression core (*Kern*) to designate the set of fundamental proprieties of an individual essence (Hering 1914, 168-169).

[32] This concept of the 'unfolding' or 'blooming' (*Entfaltung*) of the person is already introduced in *Empathy* (GA 5 129). Stein is influenced here by Scheler's *Formalism,* which says a person lives out of a 'mental center' (*geistigen Zentrum*, see Stein 2000, 200; GA 6 166) out of which he or she 'unfolds' (*sich enfaltet*).

[33] In relation to her understanding of the personal core, Stein was influenced by Teresa of Avila, and John of the Cross ('spark of the soul', the 'interior castle'), as well as by Scheler and Hedwig Conrad-Martius (see Hart 2020).

The person's core has 'actual being' (*es ist wirklich*, Stein 2009, 193; GA 10 129); it is *actu ens, aktuell Seiendes* (GA 10 146) or being-in-act. To know a person is to be able to apprehend this core of being even if we cannot grasp it fully.[34] Only God knows each person to the core (Stein 2004 14).

The person is constituted in layers, what Stein calls the 'layered structure of the human person (*Schichtenaufbau der menschlichen Person,* Stein 2004, 96). The person 'has' a body and a soul. But being a person seems to depend on how much we live out from the soul. The soul is the true 'inner' of the human, she writes in *Aufbau* (Stein 2004, 104). There is a genuineness and originality in living according to one's core (*Ursprünglichkeit und Echtheit des »kernhaften« Lebens*, Stein 2000, 235; GA 6 197). People can live at different depth dimensions; and they can act from their soul-centers or not. External impressions have little personal involvement (Stein 2009, 185) and do not penetrate deeply into the soul. However, if, for instance, a noise disturbs me when I am concentrating on work, then it does penetrate my person and affect me inwardly. There are 'depths of the I' (*Ichtiefe*, Stein 2009, 186; also discussed in *Empathy* (GA 5 120) and *Beiträge* (1922).[35] A lot of intentional relations with the object are superficial. The same sound can slip by me, but if I am concentrating, it can disturb me and make me angry (Stein 2009, 187). There are differences between people: "some live mainly at depth" (Stein 2009, 188). Humans have different degrees of vital strength – bodily power and spiritual power (Stein 2004, 110). Human beings are not just constituted 'from below' by material corporeal powers. They also

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Many of Stein's remarks are reminiscent of Meister Eckhart's 'ground of the soul' (*Seelengrund*), and so on. She speaks of the 'ground of my soul' (*Grund meiner Seele*, Stein 2004, 85). This ground, she says, is where every worry lives. She sharply distinguishes it from the qualityless nature of the pure I.

[34] Not everything in the person comes from the core. There are emotional and other sentient traits that are 'indifferent' to the core (Stein 2000, 228–29); they do not matter to the core. There are experiences that do not issue from the core and yet pertain to the identity of one's psyche. There are experiences that are 'proper to the I' (*ichlich*) as opposed to external contents (e.g. sense data) that are 'foreign to the I' (*ichfremd*, Stein 2009, 186).

[35] Husserl in *Ideas* II also acknowledges depths to the ego: there is "in the obscure depths, a root soil" (Husserl 1989, 292; Hua IV 279).

have spiritual sources of power. Each person has different degrees of depth, breadth and power to engage with the world (Stein 2009, 192). Every free decision is performed from 'the center and depth of his being' (Stein 2009, 206).

Stein thinks of the ego as rooted in a soul and this soul has a character and individuality, or 'peculiarity' or 'particularity' or uniqueness [*Eigenartigkeit*] of its own

> The innermost center of the soul is the 'how' of the essence itself and as such impresses its stamp on every trait of character and every attitude and action of human beings, it is the key that unlocks the mystery of the structural formation of the character of a human being. (Stein 2002: 501–2)

Conclusion

The classical phenomenologists (Husserl, Scheler, Hildebrand, and Stein) all give primacy to the concrete, embodied, historically embedded, individual human person as the primary 'value-being' (*Wertsein*), the source of moral agency, who lives primarily in a spiritual world with other persons. All these phenomenologists hold that persons relate to one another in the world of spirit understood as a 'value-world' (*Wertewelt*). For Stein: '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' (Stein 2004, 78). All three claim that persons have direct apprehension of values in their feelings and emotions. Stein, in particular, offers a detailed philosophical anthropology and psychology that explicates in detail how the affective life operates in the making of decisions and the adopting of stances towards oneself and others. Ethical life involves the person as a whole – intellect, affectivity ('the heart'), will. One's character is a unique essence that is given to one from the start and which unrolls through life.

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