

# RELATIONAL NATURE OF HUMAN PERSON: An Analysis of St Edith Stein's Perspectives towards Ethical Community

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**Abstract:** The essay analyzes and presents the nuances involved in the phenomenological themes of empathy, ethical concerns and human existence and explicates their theological implications in understanding the nature of human existence as Divine vocation in the light of Edith Stein's theological reflections on them. The empathic inter-human relation, according to Stein is a locus of Divine Grace wherein one along with the other involve in an attempt to orient themselves for higher values for which they are originally called by God in the order of Creation. This orientation as opening to the other is given to humans by God. In the light of Stein's views on human existence as Divine Vocation, this study argues that by pointing out self's fundamental opening as self of love and responsibility for the other, one can realize oneself as always and already otherwise-than-being.

**Keywords:** Divine Vocation, Edith Stein, Empathic Inter-Subjective Relation, Ethical Relation, Human Existence, Emmanuel Levinas, Merleau-Ponty, Otherness

## 1. Introduction

Recent research and studies on Edith Stein's Phenomenological views on human existence shows added attention in her theological perspectives on the ontological structure of human nature and its lived-experience as the outline of a quest for ultimate meaning of life, that is Divine in sense, which is shared by both individual persons and their quest for community life as well (Kovacs 263-282). Edith Stein's philosophical and theological enquiries into the structuring of human community and its roots to her earlier views on empathic

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and inter-subjective human relations and her later discussions on the specificities of human nature are investigated in this essay, specifically addressing the theme of ethical formation of a human community that is sprouting from the human nature and its intentional structuring of human experiences. Presenting Stein's views on community as ethical is philosophically possible even if we adopt the position that there is continuity in Edith Stein's Phenomenological views on human nature and its quest for constituting community in all of the phases of her thinking career whether it is marked with Husserlian, Heideggerian, or later with Thomistic concerns (Shudt 1-16). This position points out the fact that Stein's views on community as ethical not only brings to our attention the observation that Edith Stein's Philosophy was always phenomenological in nature, but that her theological positions reformulate her views on philosophizing in general as well. The methodological model of Stein's Philosophical endeavours in its later period demonstrates how phenomenology could welcome spontaneously to its bounds the theological pleading for advancing the enquiry about human nature in its complex specificities.

This study enquires about three Phenomenological themes that are prominently discussed today in Philosophy and Christian Theology in relation to Edith Stein's studies on Philosophy and Theology. They are empathy, ethical concerns, and human existence. It tries to connect these themes with the theological idea of human nature as Divine vocation that she had indicated in her Doctoral dissertation under the guidance of Edmund Husserl, one who had shaped the orientations of phenomenology in its initial stages. This essay presents the theological idea of vocation as the ethical concern of the self for the other in the spatio-temporal context of human existence which is structured in multiplicity in the context of a community.

## **2. To Be Human Is to Be Ethical**

It is generally observed that in her Phenomenological enquiry on human person and its empathic experience, Edith Stein dissociates her views on them from that of Husserl significantly (Sawicki 103-111). In Husserlian view point, the other person with all her specificities - physical, mental, emotional, sential and motivational - is reduced to the subjective intentional structuring of the ego and there

is no connecting canal that helps the transcendental ego to reach the other as other, but rather the other finally is constituted by ego's intentional strictures alone. Edith Stein's endeavour to investigate the relational canal that leads the ego to the other as subject of inter-subjective mode, not as object of the intentional ego, helps her to place the fundamental structure of human person as primordially relational in nature without its egoistic bent to incarcerate the other as its object (Sawicki 104). This is the point of departure in viewing Steinian thinking on human nature as ethical.

One can justifiably raise the question that why primordial relational structure of human existence is ethical in nature. If ethics is first and foremost engaging with the questions of right and wrong of human actions, then it must accept unconditionally the freedom of the subjects involved in human relations and actions. The subject-subject relation is a pre-condition of any ethical interaction. In Edith Stein's phenomenological enquiry about human person the significant question is about ego's relation with other subjects, the world around it and its experiential interactions with it (Stein, *Psychology*, 200). Am I the observer, or am I the custodian of my brother/sister? What is the nature of my relation with the other? Am I subduing the other into my own rational structures?

In the later history of Phenomenology, it is conferred that these questions had been vividly asked by Emmanuel Levinas in his critique of Phenomenology and presented ethics as the first philosophy. This article raises some issues with the Levinasian presenting of ethical relations between self and the other as the primary relation. It argues that in his philosophy of ethics, Levinas gives upper hand to the other over the ego. The ego is the loser there. It is true that Levinas is rightly observes the fundamental ethical structure of human existence. But in order to highlight this position he disengages the fundamental element of freedom of the involvers in the primary relation between ego and the other. At the final step of his thinking on ethical relation, the babe is thrown out with water! We shall come to Levinas soon to see how Edith Stein's views on empathy could help reading him in newer nuances.

Edith Stein studies the fundamental nature of relational aspects of human person phenomenologically by examining the fundamental layers of human existence. In a striking metaphor Marianne Sawicki, one of the contemporary Steinian scholars presents these basic layers

of human existence as it is explicated in Stein's *Philosophy as I with serifs* (Sawicki, 154-155). The bottom line of it as pure *Körper* and its columns are formed by the sential and rational elements and the surface line is marked by the element of individual unique aspect of a person. This surface level is the motivational orientation towards the value elements of lived-experience with others. All these layers together constitute the ego to interact with the world as its realm of experience.

The important aspect one observes in Stein's analysis of human ego and its experience of the world is that, in all these layers of its structural constitution, human person is affected with a dimension of experience that is not originating in its own capacity as a conscious ego. Take for example the bottom line of the metaphor *I with serifs*. The very notion of physicality of body, *Körper*, which is dissociated from its lived-body experience, itself, is not fully observable to a rational gaze of a knowing ego. In her analysis of *Körper*, Stein states that even this physical body is receiving its apperceptive dimensions primarily from the other subject's interventions on it, not by its own effort as a knowing ego. Just imagine a situation where I try to see the back of my body. I never perceive it directly. It is always constituted by the information contributed by the other subjects in relation to me. Similar is the case with other dimensions of *I with serifs*. Even at its column of rational aspects of the ego, I am primarily fissured by the interventions of the other subjects. It is rightly indicated by Edith Stein in her analysis of inter-subjective dimension of empathic experience of ego.

In the occurrence of empathy, the ego of empathic experience, the empathizer, and the subject of empathy, the empathized, are never fused together to lose their own identities. But they remain in a status of their *own* even while they inter-act each other, where an inter-subjective realm emerges unconditionally. This inter-subjective aspect cannot be known by a transcendental ego, according to Edith Stein's phenomenology, because of its non-reductive status of experience. In empathic experience I need not lose my capacity as a conscious ego in order to understand the feelings of the other non-reductively, nor the other need to lose its otherness in the interaction with me. In sum they are inter-acting each other without losing one's own identity in the matrix of relation. Edith Stein takes up this idea of template of inter-subjective relation into new horizons of

phenomenological reflections on human person in her later writings. This perspective of relational structure of human existence is very important also to the re-readings of the later phenomenological developments those were regarded as greater steps to reformulate the Husserlian schemes of phenomenology. Here specific reference to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological thinking on pre-reflective mode of existence as body may be significantly referred to in discussion. Merleau-Ponty's views on body as pre-reflective structure may be reviewed in the light of Stein's phenomenological observations about the status of ego and the other in the background of the prominent phenomenological discussions on inter-subjective relational structure of human existence.

This engaging is significant in the sense that two major strands of later phenomenological reflections on the limitations of the Husserlian phenomenological treatise on the intentional structuring of conscious ego, one that of Merleau-Ponty's and the other of Levinasian, had not mentioned one of the major contributions of the tradition that of Edith Stein's on the primordial structure of human ethical relation. This absence of reference limits their views on fundamental structure of human existence in the sense that they limit themselves from an engaging with one of the vivid phenomenological narratives about the primordial structure of the human existence. In order to point out these limitations in later Phenomenological development on human structure, specific reference to Merleau Ponty's and Emmanuel Levinas's philosophy of fundamental structuring of human existence may be needful to bring out the fuller significance of Edith Stein's phenomenological contributions.

### **2.1. Incomplete Project of Relational Structure of Human Existence: Merleau-Ponty**

Maurice Merleau-Ponty's reflection on body and touch is one of the vibrant examples of the philosophical views of thinkers, who had initiated turning points in the major strands of phenomenological traditions in its contemporary phase. Phenomenological enquiries on touch and body critically engage two fundamental questions about the human nature: i) Is phenomenon of touch an aspect of the knowing structure of the subject of experience? ii) What are the structural patterns of the phenomenon of touch as a human

experience? Merleau-Ponty's extensive discussions on these points are fundamental to think about human nature philosophically and theologically. Phenomenon of touch, in his view is the opening up to the new ways of human existence with the world in its multiple beginnings. *I*, as the distance and the source of experience and the fundamental order of gaze, am the point of departure of phenomenological enquiry about the basic structure of human experience. Touch is the opening to these fundamental strata of human in multiple complexities. Hitherto in philosophy, Merleau-Ponty argued that, human being was considered as the point of departure of thinking about the world. This position placed human and the world in opposite sides of ontology in general. Human beings as rational subjects think about the world as object. They are in subject-object relation. The subject reduces the object as a fact into its all powerful structure of consciousness.

In Merleau-Ponty's view relations between subject and the world are not strictly bilateral in nature: "the world is there before any possible analysis of mine and it would be artificial to make it the outcome of a series of syntheses which link, in the first place sensations, then aspects of the object corresponding to different perspectives, when both are nothing but products of analysis, with no sort of prior reality" (Merleau-Ponty x). In his position the syntheses made in the subject in its relation to the world lose some pre-reflective aspects of human experience of world and it is ignored by the traditions of Philosophy. Reflection is carried off by itself and installs itself in an impregnable subjectivity, as yet untouched by being and time. But this is very ingenuous, or at least it is an incomplete form of reflection which loses sight of its own beginning. Then what is the nature of this beginning? "When I begin to reflect my reflection bears upon an unreflective experience" (Merleau-Ponty xi). This thesis of Merleau-Ponty regarding the human experience of the world begins from/with unreflective experience.

Merleau-Ponty was trying to point out that there are elements in the structures of human existence and of the world, where it inhabits, those are neither reducible to the scientific gaze nor to the major streams in philosophical explanations about human being. To make sensible those fundamental strata of human existence and of the world, phenomenological enquiries are in progress by analyzing

the perceptive experience of human existence. In continuation of this position about human existence he wrote:

I am not a 'living creature' nor even a 'man', nor again even a 'consciousness' endowed with all the characteristics which zoology, social anatomy or inductive psychology recognize in these various products of the natural or historical process. I am the absolute source, my existence does not stem from my antecedents, from my physical and social environment; it moves out towards them and sustains them, for I alone bring into being for myself (and therefore into being in the only sense that the word can have for me) the tradition which I elect to carry on, or the horizon whose distance from me would be abolished – since that distance is not of one of its properties – if I were not there to scan it with my gaze (Merleau-Ponty xi).

The relational pre-reflective space that is opened up by the experience of body and touch is the milieu of otherness. The intentional structure that is emanating from a self-reflective conscious subject is displaced by Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological analysis of touch. Pre-reflective space where otherness emerged is the theme of another thinker who is generally considered as one who belonged to the traditions of Phenomenology – Emmanuel Levinas. He places ethical experiences at the locus of otherness that is again an invitation of conscious self to feel its own realm of disruption.

## 2.2. Otherness and Ethical Concerns: Emmanuel Levinas

According to Levinas, the notion of intentionality in phenomenological tradition reduces knowledge to a notion of increasing self-consciousness, in which anything that is non-identical is absorbed by the identical. In this way self-consciousness affirms itself as absolute being. For Levinas, however, there are non-intentional aspects that precede the milieu of consciousness and knowledge. In his view this non-intentional sphere subsists in duration itself, which cannot be controlled by will. In a foreword to the translation of *Ethics as First Philosophy*, Sean Hand, the editor of *Levinas Reader* observes:

This non-intentionality is an unhappy consciousness that exists without attributes or aims. As a result of the passivity of this *mauvaise conscience*, one affirms one's being by having to respond to one's right to be. This response means that responsibility for

the other pre-exists any self-consciousness, so that from the beginning of any face to face, the question of being involves the (question of) right to be (Levinas, *Reader*, 9).

The notion of substitution is presented by Levinas to picture a self that disturbs the traditional notion of ego assuming the central position in the conceptual frame of knowledge.

In Levinasian Philosophy inter-human relation is considered as that which is rooted in otherness yonder to any intentionality scheme. "Prior to any particular expression and beneath all particular expressions, which cover over and protect with an immediately adopted face or countenance, there is the nakedness and destitution of the expression as such, that is to say extreme exposure, defenselessness, vulnerability itself" (Levinas, *Totality*, 51). Levinasian philosophy calls this extreme exposure prior to any conscious aim, otherness. It challenges ego and its 'right-to-be' for remaining as a conscious ego. In Levinasian view self that is rooted in otherness is ethical. He explains the relation between self and the other, face-to-face relation. It is primarily an ethical relation in which I find myself having already been summoned to responsibility for the one who appeals to me even before I awake to the knowledge about this summon (Levinas, *Being*, 51). Levinas introduces the notion of substitution to address the question of what self must be like in ethical subjectivity. His answer is that at the heart of subjectivity we do not find something 'for-itself' in the ontological sense, but what he calls 'the one-for-the- other'. Self as 'one-for-the-other' is the working definition of Levinasian idea of substitution (Levinas, *Being*, 117).

Cathryn Vasseleu, a contemporary scholar in the field of phenomenology, observes that while Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy can be characterized as a philosophy of ambiguity, Levinas pursues the theme of anarchy or, more specifically *an-arche* in his work. Merleau-Ponty demonstrates the fundamental indeterminacy of self and other in Perception. Levinas makes a critical distinction between phenomenological experience, for which vision remains his paradigm, and an ethical respons(e)bility towards an incommensurably different other (Vasseleu 75). Both in Merleau-Ponty and in Levinas, in its primordial structure, human existence is a *positivity* towards the other. Both were trying to dissociate themselves from the phenomenological tradition of the explication of

the power of an intentional subject that tries to analyze its noema-  
noetic structure in its manifold manifestations of the experiences  
obtained in the modes of intentionality in the field of consciousness.

It is surprising to see that both in Levinas and Merleau-Ponty, the  
pre-reflective sphere and the realm of otherness remain mute though  
complex in nature. The monolithic structure of otherness does not  
indicate any differentiation in it. Otherness seems the sameness of  
otherness that is homogeneous in nature. This study argues that the  
pre-reflective mode of human existence in its inter-subjective mode  
must realise the heterogeneity of the human structure. Edith Stein  
speaks about the heterogeneity of pre-reflective realm of existence as  
that of interactional mode between subject and subject. By accepting  
the differences of subject and otherness they initiate a dialogue as  
interactions. The unanswered questions to Merleau-Ponty – What  
happens then in pre-reflective structure of existence? and to Levinas  
– What occurs to self by substituting itself for the other? – were  
answered in philosophy and theology by Edith Stein. To make sense  
of those answers we need to go through her phenomenological  
explorations of human existence as it is explained in her views on  
empathy

### **3. Edith Stein's Views on Empathy and Community**

Edith Stein's Doctoral Dissertation on the experience of empathy  
discussed certain prominent questions regarding the *givenness* of  
some of the radical experiences of human life in the subjectivity  
(Stein, *Empathy*, 3, 21). Among them the pertinent example is the  
*givenness* of empathy. In her phenomenological analysis of the  
experience of empathy, Stein turns her attention to the specific  
modes of empathy those are distinct from other modes of  
experiences intentionally given to the field of consciousness. As a  
rigorous study that is practicing phenomenological method in its  
most versatile form we can see in this work her strenuous efforts to  
bracket the psychological, sociological and cultural expositions about  
the human experience of empathy. She is sure of the fact that in the  
sensation of empathy, subject as living embodied ego, which is  
spatio-temporally structured is waiting at the sphere of  
consciousness for its recognition by the other conscious subject with  
whom she is interacting.

Generally, empathy is explained as that experience whereby a conscious ego takes the hold of the other and feels one with the other conscious ego. Bracketing this general idea about sympathy out, Stein asks some basic questions which were not addressed in the Husserlian expositions about the mediated insights and directed visions of objects in consciousness. Is empathy a *noematic object simpliciter* or is it a *noematic object as modally determined (Gegenstand in wie seiner bestimmtheiten)*? These two forms of meaning – given situations of an experience are the models those are available for determining the meaning of an object in Husserlian phenomenology. Edith Stein writes critically at the close of the second chapter of her Dissertation that is a detailed analysis of the experience of sympathy:

We see the significance of the knowledge of foreign personality for knowledge of self. We not only learn to make us ourselves into objects, but through empathy with related natures i.e. persons of our type what is sleeping in us is developed. By empathy with difficulty, composed personal structures we become clear on what we are not, what we are more or less than others. Thus together with self knowledge, we also have an important aid to self evaluation. Since the experience of value, is basic to our own value, at the same time new values are acquired by empathy, our own unfamiliar values become visible. When we empathetically run into ranges of value, closed to us, we become conscious of our own deficiency or disvalue (Stein, *Empathy*, 116).

Before Merleau-Ponty and Levinas present their views on indeterminacy of touch and primordial opening of the self to otherness, Stein speaks about the inter-relational structure of intentionality within the Husserlian scheme of phenomenology. Edith Stein's translator Waltraut Stein in her compelling Translator's note to the English translation of Stein's work on empathy renders a lucid exposition of Edith Stein's views on the inter-relational empathic structure of the self and the other (Stein xix-xxi).

According to Stein's position, the conscious 'I' as the nucleus of the *givenness* of meaning is not in solitude with reference to the field of sensation, emotions and orientations. As we have already noted above every aspect of sensation is not given to the strictures of *Gegenstand in wie seiner bestimmtheiten* – *noematic meaning and objects as modally determined*. Stein's views on sensations that are linked to

empathy are one of the most brilliant phenomenological expositions that shaped in new turns of the Husserlian positions on intentional structuring of objects. As sensation has a footing with the transcendental consciousness in general, according to Stein, the lived-body in its multi-layered enunciations in its empathic relation to conscious self, the very conscious self also sees itself in a process of learning to acknowledge layers those are not yet revealed to it in its opaque structures. The process of these mutual revelations of their *not yet* exposed realms as *otherly* being in empathic relation is opened as the spheres of value in Stein's views about empathic touch between conscious self and the other living body. This position adopted by Stein opens up her later theological views on human existence as structures of primordial relationship between subjects. Conscious ego in its inter-subjective relations with other subjects opens up to them and tries to grasp the other subject as it is in itself without attempting to hold on to its position as its own. It is the point of departure for any subject to converse with the other in its freedom. They learn each other and shares the fields of value. Staying in a field with differences and learning from each other exhibit the emergence of ethical concerns in persons of inter-subjective relation. What do I learn from the other is as important as what is my teaching to the other is the central question in any ethical situation.

Edith Stein's observations about empathy function as a model for her phenomenological enquiries into the notion of human community. There are differences of opinion among Steinian scholars about her views on community and its theoretical dependence on her observations on empathy. This article adopts the position that empathic model is at work behind her views on community. According to her, community, differing from human social groups like mass and association functions with a telos and in every community its members are in close relations with each other. In tune with her views on empathy, community also is the sphere of interactions between individual unique persons who are mutually respecting each other and in each one's freedom learn from the community life. The aspect of the freedom of members in a community underlines the ethical stand adopted by each person in community life. One is free to accept or reject the values that function in a community. According to Stein, values are not the aggregate of

the individual choices of the members of a community. Rather they outlive the individual decisions beyond the boundaries of a personal life. In this sense, a community is beyond the limits of personal lives of individual persons in it (Stein, *Finite*, 334, 352-354). This Steinian standpoint on community shows the heterogeneity of value system and ethical nature of a community in its phenomenological notion of temporality. According to this view, the present is situated within the retention and protention of temporality. The past as memory and future as hopeful expectations actualise the present.

#### **4. Human Existence as Vocation to Community**

Edith Stein on 9 February 1917 wrote to her colleague Roman Ingarden:

We are not merely used up as cells are, but we can become aware of our relationship with the wholes to which we belong (I even believe one can experience the operative developmental tendencies) and can voluntarily submit to them. The more lively and powerfully such a consciousness becomes in a people, the more it forms itself into a "state" and this formation is its organization (Stein, *Self Portrait*, 9).

In this letter one can see the orientations obvious in Stein's thinking about the nature of human existence. The empathic inter-human relation is a locus of Divine Grace wherein one along with the other involve in an attempt to orient themselves for higher values of which they are originally called by God in the order of Creation. The orientation as opening to the other is given to humans by God.

Edith Stein's Theological views on human existence as Divine Vocation is explored in her study *The Separate Vocations of Man and Woman according to Nature and Grace* (Stein, *Woman*, 59-85). The fundamental vocation of human life, according to Stein, is articulated in the lives of human beings according to each one's aptitudes in their relations of various modes. These modes of inter-human relations consist of female/male relationship, familial, social, and political ones as the situations of life demand. In the realm of human relations the ethical dimension is genuinely opened up and enlightens the social nature of human life to reach at a graceful sphere for which it is originally destined. The call one receives as vocation is to learn from the other and teach the other with whom one is opened up in ethical relation. The inter-subjective relation is

ethical in the sense that it is primarily oriented towards the quest of individual persons for their ultimate meaning in life. Actions are moral ones if and only if they have value orientations within them. Stein calls this value orientation the life force of individual persons.

### **5. Edith Stein's Views on Divine Vocation**

Edith Stein begins her reflections on vocation by mentioning about the general sense of this term as it is applied in the empirical life of human beings. One is familiar with the linguistic expression about the vocation of a person in relation to her aptitude for a particular profession. She elaborates this empirical experience in the light of the instance of an appointment of a professor in a particular department of teaching. It is the result of a specific call rendered to her, Stein argues, that is made clear from the moment of notification of the posting to the moment of delivering the appointment letter to her for the same. For this appointment she was preparing for long in her life in accordance with her aptitudes. It is given to her even before she makes up the mind for the profession. The procedure of appointment is not an extraordinary one to become aware of because the appointment is the result of her long academic training for it. Her aptitude underlies the effort she adopts for obtaining this profession. In Stein's view, even a vocation in its empirical sense is not the response to a sudden call, rather it is the answer given to a call for which the person is preparing for long. The answer of a person to a call offered to her is linked to her various aptitudes, habits, desires, etc. those are led by an inner urge that is finally revealed to her as her vocation and the definite response to a specific call (Stein, *Woman*, 59-85).

Stein points out that as in the instance of the vocation for a profession in empirical life, each human individual is prepared for attending a call in her life its wholistic sense. This call is an urge for a choice in life that is not suddenly attended rather is a responsible answer to an invitation to a specific modality of life. In her view, life itself is an answer to the Divine vocation. She theologizes the human existence as a response to the Divine vocation given freely to man. It is an opening up to the economy of divine grace (Shudt 105-125).

Stein theologically articulates three stages of human existence as Divine vocation. They are: the order of creation, the order of fall, and the order of redemption. The original order of creation is disrupted

in the order of fall. But it has been reconstituted by the salvific act of Christ. This is explained by Edith Stein as order of redemption (Stein, *Woman*, 59-83). In the life of Christ, the life of humans becomes the responsible ethical concern for each other in the order of redemption. As Jesus gave himself as ransom for many for their salvation, each person for higher values disentangle oneself from the limited scope of life and enters into the community of values which is vicariously aim at ultimate meaning. In redemptive order human beings participate in the life of Christ in their inter-subjective relations. Each one cares for the other as if they touch the resurrected Jesus. They are in Christ for the other.

In his recent work, *Pandemic! Covid-19 Shakes the world*, Slavoj Zizek begins his introduction by quoting the Johannine Gospel on resurrection of Jesus:

*Noli me Tangere*- "Touch me not", according to John 20:17, is what Jesus said to Mary Magdalene when she recognized him after his resurrection. How do I, an avowed Christian atheist, understand these words? First I take them together with Christ's answer to his disciples' question as to how we will know that he is returned, resurrected. Christ says he will be there when there is love between his believers. He will be there not as a person to touch, but as the bond of love and solidarity between people – so 'do not touch me, touch and deal with other people in the spirit of love' (Zizek 9).

Jesus as the Grace Embodied orientates the inter-human relations in all its forms and formulations. It is the human participation in the economy of the Divine will. It is not act of an individual; rather it is the work of the Divine Grace and is the Divine vocation.

## 6. Conclusion

Inter-subjective relations fundamentally constitute the self and the other both as ethical and religious even before I am there to proclaim my faith. I am already at the orbit of touching the other before my conscious structuring by intentionality through its various modes. I am oriented to love the other by being a part of the redemptive order initiated by the Paschal mystery of Christ. By pointing out self's fundamental opening as self of love and responsibility for the other, I can realize myself as always and already otherwise-than-being.

The ethical concerns figured out from Stein's views on Human existence as Divine vocation calls for a new gaze at the social activities prevalent today those gush out from traditional religious feelings. The social expressions of traditional religious sentiments such as charitable works, the caring for the sick, merciful activities etc. demand a re-reading in the light of this thinking on human existence. Ethical concern is an opening up to the infinity rather than a question of mercy from the part of the conscious ego. By participating in the redemptive order initiated by Christ, traditional ego is no more there at the centre of an ethical activity to take a decision for a merciful act. In the new order of Christ every human being is by virtue of Divine call turns to be an ethical concern itself for the other in empathic relations.

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