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A Pedagogy of Grace: Love and Care in Edith Stein's Thought

Pedagogika łaski. Miłość i troska w myśli Edyty Stein

Abstract: The critical comparison with Heidegger's existential analytics is of utmost importance in Edith Stein's examination of the structure of the person. Within this framework, the philosopher highlights the necessity of reconsidering human finiteness and temporality as a means of transcending and partaking in the eternal. The fundamentally pedagogical nature of Stein's thought is shaped by the possibility of attaining fullness and realisation of the essence of human being. The notion of existence itself, regarded as a transformative and educational relationship, enables her to revisit the phenomenological categories of care, anxiety, and freedom. The primary foundation of this pedagogical paradigm, which encompasses the entire ontic framework of the person, lies in the relationship of Grace as a manifestation of divine love.

Keywords: beingness; care; anxiety; *paideia*; Grace.

Abstrakt: Krytyczne porównanie z egzystencjalną analityką Heideggera ma ogromne znaczenie w badaniu struktury osoby przez Edytę Stein. W tych ramach filozofka podkreśla konieczność ponownego rozważenia ludzkiej skończoności i tymczasowości jako sposobu na przekroczenie i uczestnictwo w tym, co wieczne. Zasadniczo pedagogiczny charakter myśli Stein kształtowany jest przez możliwość osiągnięcia peł-

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ni i urzeczywistnienia istoty bytu ludzkiego. Sama istota egzystencji, traktowana jako transformująca i edukacyjna relacja, umożliwia jej ponowne przyjrzenie się fenomenologicznym kategoriom troski, niepokoju i wolności. Podstawowym fundamentem tego paradygmatu pedagogicznego, który obejmuje całą ontyczną strukturę osoby, jest relacja łaski jako przejaw Bożej miłości.

Słowa kluczowe: bycie; troska; lęk; *paideia*; łaska.

1. A pedagogical comparison between Edith Stein and Martin Heidegger

In 1936, from Carmel in Cologne, Stein thoroughly examined Martin Heidegger's seminal work *Being and Time*, while simultaneously composing her influential masterpiece, *Finite being and Eternal being*. In this comparison, Stein successfully actualised her analysis of the person's existential structure and their connection to the fullness of existence, which she defines as 'love.'

Notably, Stein's commentary, presented in the Appendix under the title *The problem of existence in Martin Heidegger*, serves as the publication's conclusion. First, the author carefully revisits *Being and time*, then proceeds to analyse *Kant and the problem of metaphysics*, *The essence of foundation* and *What is metaphysics?* Perhaps even more than her relationship with her mentor Husserl and with phenomenology, it is a critical and severe comparison with Heidegger's thought, albeit limited to these writings of the 1930's, that allows Stein to unfold and ground one of the distinctive passages of her thought: the legitimisation of a Christian philosophy through a non-disjunctive relationship between contemporary speculation and the metaphysical tradition.

More specifically, the emphasis placed on the human figure in existential analytics provides Stein with an opportunity to delve deeper into her examination of human nature. The aforementioned topic was already addressed in the essay, *The ontic structure of the person and the problem of its knowledge*, unpublished during her lifetime. However, it is only through existential analytics that Stein is able to illuminate the possibility of its *complete* realisation (Ales Bello, 1991).

Stein identifies the absence of this possibility as a crucial omission in Heidegger's thought and, consequently, in all derivative negative thought.

According to Stein's analysis, within Heidegger's concept of *Dasein*, the individual absoluteness hinders its realisation, resulting in the reduction of the human's dimension to that of an existent incapable of truly comprehending its finitude. Consequently, the individual remains unable to transcend the self, open up to temporality and ipseity, and respond to the eternal and communal call to existence.

In contrast, Stein effectively articulates and develops the explicit and implicit pedagogical worth of her entire reflection from this potential for transcendence. That is to say, when considering the being of the person in relation to its genuine fulfilment, in its inherent and transformative inclination towards the 'complete possession of its essence,' in its readiness to 'embrace all that is presented to us' (Stein, 1993, pp. 197–198).

The inauthentic sense of finitude observed by Stein in existential analytics, or more accurately, the insufficient authenticity that we are capable of experiencing in relation to time, not only presents a partial understanding of humanity but also undermines its educability (Musaio, 2016, pp. 122 ff.), as well as the active and loving connection between individuals and truth that calls, moves and draws forth (from the latin *e-ducere*) individuals to transcend their state of inauthenticity in their worldly existence. This concept is prominently expressed as a fundamental dimension of pedagogy in the philosophy of Edith Stein.

2. Heidegger and pedagogy

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of Edith Stein's critique of early Heideggerian thought, specifically from the 1927 masterpiece to the texts that pertain to the so-called 'turning point' and the pedagogical re-reading suggested in this work, it becomes essential to provide a succinct reconstruction of the philosopher's connection with pedagogy.

Heidegger, in his exploration, examines the correlation between the essence of humanity and truth adopting a pedagogical standpoint (Groys, 2023). The years in question provide us with a comprehensive exposition of his stance in *The essence of truth. The myth of the cave and Plato's 'Theaetetus'*, a reworking of Heidegger's university course taught in Freiburg in

1931/32. It is contemporaneous with the works analysed by Stein and was published in the *Gesamtausgabe* only in 1988.

The title of the fifteenth paragraph of Part I is *The question of the essence of truth as a question of the history of the essence of man and his παιδεία*. In this particular text, Heidegger offers an elucidation of the link that exists in Platonic philosophy between the pursuit of the ultimate ideal, the concept of goodness, and man. The liberation of mankind from the cave of ignorance towards the illumination of knowledge is περιαγωγή, conversion, signifying a profound change of direction that ‘draws out’ man’s true essence. Nevertheless, this *periagogè* is unrelated to the possession or absence of particular concepts by individuals, nor does it pertain to the methods and procedures involved in imparting knowledge and understanding in a person’s mind. It, rather, ‘confers to the essence itself the capacity to be what it is, in its relationship to the entity as such and [through which] man exists as an entity in turn’ (Heidegger, 1997, pp. 140–141).

Following this profound redefinition of educational-pedagogical action, Heidegger promptly introduces an even more momentous and revolutionary concept, drawing from an excerpt in Book VII of the *Republic* (514 a 1 ff.):

Picture to yourself [namely the following image as given in the cave allegory] our human nature [τὴν ἡγετέραν φύσιν] in relation to its possible positionedness [παιδείας, *Gehaltenheit*] on the one hand, or lack of bearings [ἀπαιδευσίας, *Haltungslosigkeit*] on the other hand.

The philosopher promptly comments on the translation stating the famous sentence, ‘Παδεία does not signify formation (*Bildung*).’ The choice of the word *Gehaltenheit*, which encompasses concepts such as positionedness, composure, and equilibrium, immediately refrains us from viewing *paideia* as a straightforward and progressive process with its own inherent objectivity. Instead, we promptly establish its relation to the opposing concept described in the Platonic passage; the ἀπαιδευσία, which denotes ignorance or, as Heidegger suggests, lack of demeanour, instability, and indecision.

The two moments should be considered together, as

It is not a matter just of παιδεία, but παιδείας τε πέρι καὶ ἀπαιδευσίας [of education and lack of education], of the one as well as the other, that is, of

their confrontation or setting-apart, of what is *between* both and out of which they both arise, so that they may then assert themselves against each other. Παιδεία is the *positionedness* of man, arising from the 'stance' (*Haltung*) of the withstanding that carries through wherein man, in the midst of beings, freely chooses the footing for his own essence, i.e. that whereto and wherein he empowers himself in his essence (Heidegger, 1997, p. 142).

The concept of *Paideia* emerges when man freely chooses to embrace it, in the midst of entity to preserve his true essence, facing the ongoing tension between knowledge and ignorance. The *paideia* addresses the essence and *nature* of man, but the tradition surrounding these terms overlooks the true meaning of the Greek phrase ἡ ημετέρα φύσις, which refers to our unfolding and standing-in the open. So, the question about the essence of man arises and develops as a result of the question concerning the essence of truth. The statement made by Heidegger regarding the position of pedagogy as a science concerning the thinking of being should be understood in this pregnant sense:

However, now we know that the questioning of the essence of man *precedes* pedagogy and psychology, anthropology and humanism. The question that arises and develops from the question about the essence of truth is none other than this very question itself ... Therefore, when reconstructing the entire interpretation, it is crucial to once again grasp the fundamental significance of this one concept: the inquiry into the essence of truth is inseparable from the examination of the historical evolution of the essence of man and vice versa (Heidegger, 1997, p. 142).

In relation to this matter, Giancarla Sola observes that:

the relevance of pedagogy is significant in establishing the relationship between the question about the essence of man and pedagogy. [Heidegger] emphasises – with epistemological acuteness – that the problem concerning mankind provides the foundation for pedagogy, rather than the other way around (Sola, 2008, p. 33).

In general, this signifies a strong indication of the validity of pedagogical thinking, which precedes the advancement of human sciences from an epis-

temological standpoint and from a gnoseological perspective. Among these sciences is the educational dimension, primarily understood through its relational manifestation and its methodological and didactic outcomes. The question of pedagogy is what truly defines the essence of man, rather than anything else. The issue arises when we examine the activity of formation within the framework of '*Paideia* is not formation,' as it leads us to confront the problematic meaning that emerges from the very process of the 'formation of man.' According to Heidegger, his philosophy

is not merely a philosophical anthropology, but rather a pedagogy of man who is formed by thinking and forming himself thinks, who engages in self-education through thinking and in his thoughts, by living in a constant formation of thought processes (Heidegger, 1997, p. 11).

By observing the choice of words used by Heidegger to conclude the paragraph, we can truly understand the extent of hesitancy associated with this distinction: the failure to understand thinking as

a profound *questioning* that revolutionises the essence of *Dasein*, of man ... [until then] what is essential remains severed and diminished to the superficiality of modern-day life, with ideas reduced to mere values and παιδεία reduced to mere formation and education (Heidegger, 1997, p. 143).

In his text *The platonic doctrine of truth*, which he composed in 1940 and published in 1942, Heidegger returns to analyse the same passages from the *Republic*. Although the text in question may contain concepts that have strayed from the works of Stein, there is a particular passage that is relevant to our current discussion and deserves attention. Stein's doubts about the tentativeness of certain Heideggerian positions, which were still evident in the 1930s, are confirmed by this.

In this instance, Heidegger again brings attention to the ongoing misunderstanding surrounding the concept of *Bildung*, of formation, emphasising its transformative and dual nature, as he revisits this word in his translation:

This word [*paideia*] cannot be translated. Παιδεία, as Plato defines its essence, means περιαγωγή όλης της ψυχης (*periagogé oles tes psyches*), leading the whole human being in the turning around of his or her essence [the conver-

sion that leads the human being's whole soul to return to its inherent essence]. The παιδεία is thus a passage from ἀπαιδευσία (*apaideusia*) to παιδεία. Due to the inherent nature of passage, παιδεία always remains intertwined with ἀπαιδευσία. Although not a perfect match, the German word *Bildung* is still the closest approximation to the term παιδεία. Indeed, we must restore to this word its original rightful significance (Heidegger, 1987, p. 172).

By providing this additional specification, we can conclude this brief excursion through the Heideggerian texts by placing emphasis on the two concepts that we have retrieved, which will enable us to fully comprehend Stein's perspective: the essence of 'formation' is firmly rooted in the essence of 'truth;' the process of the individual shaping themselves and transforming the entirety of their soul (*periagogé oles tes psyches*) leads to a perpetual state of transcending the absence of formation.

3. Self-care, educational care and Love

By providing a summary of the Heideggerian position greatly aids us in accurately evaluating the originality of Edith Stein's ideas. The summary helps emphasise that, while there may be certain aspects where the two thinkers are not as far apart as she believed, there are still other areas where the divergence is even more profound. Within the context of an authentic pedagogy of Grace, it is the latter aspects that enable us to gather her thoughts on the human person. This pedagogy places a central focus on a reality that she describes as 'joy without end, happiness without shadows, love without limit' and which she ultimately refers to as '*eternal bliss*' (Stein, 1993, p. 198).

It is widely recognised that Heidegger's stance on the concept of 'person' remains undefined (Heidegger, 1971, § 10; Nancy, 2005, p. 45). There are multiple reasons why he designates man as the *Dasein*, but ultimately, it can be traced back to the necessity of emphasising the connection between man's finiteness and the question of being. This is achieved through an expression that immediately reveals the co-original intersection of the ontic and ontological domains within him, known as *Da-sein* or being-there.

However, it is precisely this designation that Stein examines with utmost scrutiny, as she finds that the being of *Dasein* as Care, and thus as being-

for-death, is not sufficiently fitting for her understanding of the human phenomenon. The movement of meaning that *Dasein* defines is ultimately self-referential, which is why in *Dasein* the authentic and the inauthentic are essentially never differentiated. The question arises as to where the essence of the call originates, which serves as a reminder to each individual about their fallen nature and the pursuit of authentic being.

According to Heidegger's conception, the caller must again be *Dasein*. ... From what I can gather, it seems that there is no other essential standpoint apart from the *solus ipse*, which is the foundation and prevailing perspective of the entire work. The *solus ipse* is the being that stands apart from all others, the one from which all inquiries about the being are expected, the ultimate term one can go back to with nothing else behind it. ... The mode of *Dasein* that responds to the call of consciousness is *decision*, which should be comprehended as the ultimate form of *decision* or *being in truth*. This is how the human being assumes their true essence, a *being that encompasses the end*, an *anticipation for death (being-towards-death)* (Stein, 1993, pp. 187–188).

Death is perceived as *the end of Dasein*, and it is approached in such a solipsistic manner that while one asserts to have a continuous experience of their own death, that is, of their own dying or being-towards-death, they simultaneously deny having any experience of the death of others. Stein firmly denies the existence of this paradox.

If the ultimate purpose of *Dasein* must be being-towards-death, then it follows that comprehending death is also crucial in comprehending *Dasein*. But how is this possible if all that is said about death is that it is the end of *Dasein*? Is this not a vicious circle? (Stein, 1993, p. 189).

To break free from this vicious cycle, it is crucial to consider being non only as the being of *Dasein*, but also as the opening and moving force of *Dasein*. *Dasein* can also be referred to as the thing or person that induces one to go out of oneself – from the latin and Greek *ex-ducent* (ἐξάγω, ex-ágōn) or *e-ducant* – and embrace one's own potential being, essentially experiencing a rebirth or a reconnection to one's humanity. Stein demonstrates a strong understanding of this distinction in relation to anxiety as an affective re-

sponse to being-towards-death, which is also a significant aspect of existential analytics, although only partially grasped.

Heidegger's interpretation suggests that anxiety can be experienced in two ways – as anxiety *before* one's being and as anxiety *for* one's being. Is the meaning of *being* the same in both cases? Or to be more precise, is it the same being *before which* (*worvor*) and *for which* (*worum*) one experiences anxiety? What causes us to feel anxiety (*before which*) is the possibility of *non-being*, manifested in the anxiety experienced: it represents the experience of the *nullity of our existence*. The issues *for which* we feel anxiety and on which man's being depends, is being as a sense of *fullness that one desires to hold onto and never let go*. This particular aspect is conspicuously absent in Heidegger's analysis of *Dasein*, yet it is the only means by which it would have been possible to establish a justificatory foundation. If *Dasein* were simply non-being, anxiety *before* non-being and *for* one's own being would not be possible. The possibility of either option arises because humans are engaged in a state of fullness, wherein something constantly eludes them while they also receive something: the duality of life and death (Stein, 1993, p. 191).

Without this movement, this participation in fullness, there would not properly be anxiety. Being-for-death should not be limited to simply anticipating death; instead, *Dasein* is 'not being for an ending, but rather for a new being.'

The reflection on death should help us understand the *authentic* being [elsewhere referred to as: 'in other words *full* and not *empty*'] ... Thus, within *Dasein*, we come across three modes or degrees of *Dasein*, which ... we might designate as natural life, life of grace and life of glory' (Stein, 1993, p. 195).

Living *authentically* means recognising the most suitable opportunities and satisfying the requirements of the *moment* ... This [*moment*] signifies the connection between the temporal and something that exists beyond temporality yet manifests itself within its temporality. ... The fact that we are capable of containing the eternal within ourselves and are able to *hold on to* something (referred to as *Gewesend-sein* [having been, the past] by Heidegger, a preservation), even as our existence remains fleeting, serves as evidence that *our being is not simply temporal* and goes beyond temporality (Stein, 1993, pp. 196–197).

The pedagogical bent of Stein's thought is marked by this finiteness as openness and a constant tension towards fullness. Stein argues that the possibility of deciding for or against authenticity cannot be reduced to an abstract *moment* centred around the vertical man-being axis. Instead, it is intimately connected to one's individual relationship with time and the process of self-realisation. This relationship gives rise to a dynamic educational process, creating a continuous interplay between making decisions and entrusting oneself, choosing and allowing oneself to be chosen, forming a circle of significance. It is important for us to be receptive, to adopt what belongs to others, to mould ourselves, and to acknowledge our own growth.

The complete representation of human existence is thus portrayed through the pedagogical paradigm of an e-ducational and transformative relationship that aims not for being-for-the-end but beingness for a 'new being.' The teleological form of existence is manifested in all its evidence with the end goal being the complete realisation of the human being as such in a gradual passage through temporality, with Stein offering a detailed definition outlining the fundamental evolutionary stages involved. In this educational path, man is not meant to be alone, as he is not autonomous (αὐτόνομος), but is called rather to undergo a *periagogical* conversion and develop a trusting and confident reliance.

In Stein's perspective, Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* can be seen as 'an overly idealised portrayal of a person who is always *decisive*, ... *never wasting time*, and *consistently making time* for whatever the present moment demands.' For Stein, on the other hand, man

will calm himself in the confidence that God protects from error those who have goodwill and lead their unintentional mistakes to a good end. However, he acknowledges his own fallibility and firmly believes that God alone is the *One* who possesses limitless openness (Stein, 1993, p. 197).

It is not an exaggeration to suggest that Stein's understanding of the limitations of existential analytics has a relevant impact that ultimately leads Heidegger to his pivotal 'turning point.' Specifically, he chooses to detach himself from the entirety of *Dasein* in an effort to ex-pose the fundamental inquiry about being from a perspective that is external to *Dasein*, accepting

all the aporias and tautologies that arise as a result of this inversion, which he deems as necessary from the outset (Levinas, 1980).

The limitations of Heidegger's analytics of *Dasein* are the same insufficiency and viciousness that Stein identified in the existential forms of Care and being-for-death. The main obstacle that Heidegger believes still needs to be overcome in the 1927 work is the phenomenological imprint of these limitations, which is essentially their anchoring in a philosophy of transcendental subjectivity. In a similar vein, and yet in a diametrically opposite way, Stein also maintains that she needs to fully embrace the phenomenological lesson by rediscovering the fundamental truths of metaphysics.

In Stein's perspective, the ontic structure of the person is a transcendence (cfr. Stein, 1993, pp. 206 ff.), characterised by a finiteness that is intentionally created for good and is not self-opened but rather offered by God. Through this relationship, individuals are exposed to a dimension that is both formative and transformative, that aims to the fulfilment of the human being, unlocking their humanity in a journey of development, growth and fulfilment.

Our earthly *Dasein* is insufficient to realise all our possibilities and receive what is offered to us. ... The inability of our temporal being to fully develop our essence, to make use of what is offered to us in our being in order to accept it and *take hold of it*, shows that the *authentic* being, of which we are capable in temporality ... is not yet fully our ultimate authentic being (Stein, 1993, p. 197).

In this context, we are defining the educational dialectic as the interplay between the temporal and the eternal, which Stein is already dedicating herself to in order to write her significant piece of work. This dialectic movement is what primarily flows through human beings and forms them, making them alive, in-formed, and edu-cated. By incorporating the dialectic (δια-λεκτικός) concept, Stein offers us an opportunity to delve deeper into the *subjectivity of educational action*, a fundamental issue in pedagogical thinking (Musaio, 2016, pp. 107 ff.). Who is the subject of education? Who acts education out? Throughout the 20th century, pedagogical thinking has deepened the *reflexive* nature of pedagogical action, while simultaneously acknowledging the importance of its *mimetic* nature. The human being's education is achieved through recognition (Rogers & Stevens, 1987; Scheler,

2011). The subject's self-awareness as the object of educational care is what defines the subject of education.

Stein's analysis skilfully captures the ambivalence surrounding Care by reexamining the existential analytics category. Man's being depends on it, and due to this, man is defined as Care. Simply stating this is not enough, though.

Heidegger's choice of *Cure* [as a means to illustrate the fundamental mode of being of *Dasein*] is not a coincidence; rather, it is a deliberate decision that excludes the elements of joy, happiness, and love, which give fullness to the human being, from his analysis. He reduces *Dasein* to a race that leads nothingness to absolute nothingness. Yet only fullness allows us to understand why man's being depends on it. ... Joy without end, happiness without shadow, love without limit, and a life filled with intense activity without any relaxation, acting to the utmost of one's strength, while also experiencing complete peace and a complete abandonment of all tension: this is *eternal bliss*. This is the being on which man's existence depends. He relies on his faith that guarantees him all of this because this promise aligns with the core of his being and grants him a profound understanding of his essence. He *will be truly fulfilled* once he *will completely embrace his essence* (Stein, 1993, p. 198).

The future tense of the propositions is a strong indicator of the pedagogical value of this view of the human being, and it is important that this should not be interpreted as open-ended and undefined concept. The value of the human being, especially the *person*, as an ongoing process that is never fully finished, has frequently been emphasised in pedagogical thought influenced by phenomenology, and rightfully so (Iori, 1988; Malavasi, 1992; Bertolini, 2001; Musaiò, 2009; 2010). On one hand, according to Stein, this tension and promise in *Dasein* directs it entirely towards the future, while on the other hand, it is deeply rooted in its own *essence*.

To ensure that the transformative dimension of pedagogical action is not limited to a mere formal and self-referential movement, it is essential to incorporate both objective and subjective elements of recognition. Subjectivity reaches its full form when it fully objectifies itself as something that one completely possesses, which means that one recognises oneself within their subjectivity (Sini, 1990). If subjectivity fails to recognise itself as the object of its own possession and remains trapped in its own self-movement, then

true transformation and authentic subjectivity are unattainable. The idea put forth by Stein, which is widely regarded as one of her most exceptional contributions to the concept of *educability* in modern pedagogical thought, emphasises the importance not only of recognising the infinite potential of individuals, but also being able to identify the factors that give their existence true purpose and significance. When there is no possibility of possessing or fulfilling something completely, then using the term 'transformation' is the same as variation of the same thing. For a transformation to truly happen, it is necessary that its fulfilment is also achieved.

For the entity that has come to fully possess its being, there is no depletion of its being. Conversely, as it moves away from a forced tension of Care for self-preservation to the blissful state of passionate selflessness in eternal existence, its temporal being becomes infused with eternity. ... Heidegger places strong emphasis on the meaning of *future*, which can be understood in two ways. Firstly, as Heidegger himself explains, it pertains to the Care for one's own preservation, which stems from understanding the transitory and meaningless nature of one's existence. Secondly, as a *striving towards a fullness that is still pending*, a transition from the dispersion of temporal being towards the unification of genuine, uncomplicated being that is imbued with eternity (Stein, 1993, pp. 199–200).

It is of utmost importance to carefully comprehend the characteristics of the transformation being described here: 'acting to the utmost of one's strength, while also experiencing complete peace and a complete abandonment of all tension,' moving away from 'a forced tension of Care for self-preservation to the blissful state of passionate selflessness in eternal existence,' and 'from the dispersion of temporal being towards the unification of genuine, uncomplicated being that is imbued with eternity.' Stein views the ultimate possibility of human fulfilment as a state of complete surrender and reception, in contrast to the prevalent negative philosophy that often emphasises mere passivity. The pedagogical value, once again, is what determines the essence of it. The thing that the human being receives not only fills them but also completes them, providing them with their essence – an intrinsic possession that they lack but require and can only obtain through receiving. The subjectivity of the educational care given to the human being is that of being *subject to* a cure that aims to transform and fulfil him as a *beloved being*.

In the aforementioned essay titled *The ontic structure of the person and the problem of its knowledge*, Stein effectively offers insight to the above statement:

The soul can only discover its true self and inner peace within a realm where its master does not seek it solely for his own sake, but rather for the soul's sake. We call it the realm of Grace on account of its abundant fullness that does not seek to possess, but rather overflows and bestows upon others (Stein, 1997, p. 61).

4. Metaphysical anxiety and Grace

Prior to discussing the final concept of the relationship between Grace and freedom in the dimension of human educational fulfilment, it is important to highlight the reference to the content of Christian Revelation, which Stein's thought explicitly upholds over Heidegger's nonconfessional thought. With great care, she ensures that the threshold is not left implicit, emphasising the restoration of a tradition and doctrine that she believes addresses the problematic issues that her contemporaries attempted to understand independently.

I cannot think of a more precise expression to understand the mode of being that he [Heidegger] refers to as *Dasein* and presents as the ultimate form of being than *unredeemed being* (*unerlöstes Sein*). Unredeemed is equally defined by Heidegger as fallen and everyday existence as by his perception of authentic existence. The initial instance concerns the flight in face of the authentic existence, evading the query of existence itself – to be or not to be. The other instance is the decision for non-being and against being, a rejection of the *true* and authentic being ... The description of *Dasein* is not only wanting and inadequate ..., but it also distorts the subject matter by isolating it from its inherent context of being, thereby failing to elucidate its true significance. The presentation of *everyday* existence as ambiguous can lead to the misunderstanding that social life is inherently *decadent* and that *authentic* being is synonymous of solitary being. Conversely, both solitary and communal lifestyles can manifest authentic and inauthentic forms of expression (Stein, 1993, p. 200).

These references could also be instrumental in illuminating Stein's limitations and inflexibilities in interpreting the Heideggerian text, in which the concepts of community and being-with (*Mitsein*) assume a central role instead (Nancy, 1992; 1993; 2013; 2017; 2020). Nevertheless, these matters are not the main concern of this article, except to illustrate the educational relevance of our chosen topic.

Stein recognises the pedagogical function as vital in facilitating the "individual's awakening to their authentic existence" within the dimension of community (Stein, 1993, p. 185). The community is the initial setting where individuals are immersed and introduced to the inauthentic life of the *They*, of the indefinite circle, and of conformist obedience. In these pages, Stein delineates the concept of community, devoid of rhetorical ornamentation (specifically, one of its potential configurations). In this context, community is portrayed as a moment of inauthenticity where *Dasein* among others, as Being-with-others, transitions into an *inauthentic* being, thereby enabling the possibility of awakening to their responsibilities and freedom.

The first *Dasein* into which the human being is *thrust* is not an individual one, but a collective one: *being-with*. By their very nature, human beings are both individual and communal beings. However, their individual and conscious existence begins later in time compared to their communal life. Their actions are influenced by observing others and conforming to their behaviour, thus relying on their guidance and support. As long as no additional tasks are demanded of them, everything remains in order. It is necessary to reach out to a more inherent and authentic being. ... The person is called to be both a member of a group and an individual and to do so in *their* unique manner, from their *deepest* self, they must first *step out* of the group for once (*Gefolgschaft*) where they belong and must live initially. The inherent being needs to be prepared by being-with-others and is obliged to assume a pivotal and productive position for the benefit of others (Stein, 1993, p. 184).

According to Stein, the essential nature of human beings is characterised by a dynamic of *development* that unfolds within the context of the individual's relationship with the community. Within the community, certain individuals fulfil the specific role of *educators*, for whom Stein employs somewhat unexpected terminology, namely that of *guides* with the competence to 'discern what can contribute to an authentic formation of the spirit (*Geistes-*

bildung)' (Stein, 1993, p. 185). Stein places equal emphasis on the educational obligation attributed to the communitarian *They*, particularly in terms of tradition, i.e. preservation and transmission of knowledge. She alludes to the 'residue of understanding ... that every community must protect [as an] ancestral heritage of wisdom, beyond the reach of the individual's limited experience and narrow insight, whose relinquishment would cause great harm' (Stein, 1993, pp. 185–186). Through this approach, Stein examines the perilous consensus dynamics of mass societies and the ethical and political significance of education during the early 1930s in Germany:

However, *dejection* arises when *those who set the tone* do not possess the requisite expertise and express their groundless opinions in a loud and irresponsible manner; and on the other hand, when the general population recklessly surrenders to the judgment of the unqualified and permits themselves to be influenced even in situations that demand autonomous and responsible conduct (Stein, 1993, p. 186).

Stein sees a strong connection between educational irresponsibility and communal inauthenticity. The link between *paideia* and absence of *paideia*, as previously noted by Heidegger, acts as the link between judgmental autonomy and responsibility, as well as between the individual and community. Freedom is the point where the authenticity of the individual and responsibility converge, making it the focal point of education, recognised as both an individual and collective concern. The *call of conscience* (Stein, 1993, p. 186) represents the underlying political nature of educational action. 'Awakened to free spirituality, the subject finds itself in the realm of natural reason. ... Entering this realm implies spiritual freedom, but it also results in the subject being removed from it and placed within himself' (Stein, 1997, pp. 64–65). Once again, Stein's thought highlights the significance of this educational movement – the subject must be drawn out of himself in order to truly exist. Similar to the previously analysed dynamic between the individual and community, it was necessary to *step out* of the group for once, as in this case. In the relationship between the individual and freedom, the movement of self-realisation demands that the subject be exposed out of himself, subjected to what exposes him, in order to attain free self-realisation.

In this pedagogical paradigm, the relation of Grace is the ultimate reference that informs and shapes the entire ontic structure of the person. 'In order for Grace to be fully embraced by the soul, it is necessary for Grace to both reside within it and actively manifest itself within it' (Stein, 1997, p. 67). In the connection between soul and Grace, Stein thoroughly traces and reconstructs every phase of the educational relationship: from encounter, attentive listening, (character) crisis and transformation (of individuality).

The complete *character* of a person, including their unique natural predispositions separate from their psychic individuality, can be destroyed. Through the separation of the soul from its original character, its individuality can be maintained intact. The notion of individuality is intangible [*intangibilis*]. Individuality imbues what enters or exits the soul. Grace is embraced by each soul in accordance with its unique *individuality*. The spirit of light does not destroy its individuality, but rather reunites with it, resulting in a genuine *re-birth* (Stein, 1997, p. 68).

The transformative process in question, which encompasses the entirety of the individual, showcases its dramatic and agonal nature. This distances Stein from any psychologistic or reductionist interpretation of educational processes, instead aligning her with the radicality of existential analytics. For the human being, their being depends on this self-realisation. The recurring redundancies and echoes found in phenomenological and 'existential' thought resurface with great intensity, driving Stein towards a decisive personal reinterpretation.

Only those who embrace Grace unconditionally are able to partake in its offerings. This appears peculiar as the care (*Sorge*) for one's *salvation* typically leads the soul towards Grace. In what way can the soul balance self-care and detachment from itself? Indubitably, it is inconceivable as long as the care (*Sorge*) is truly authentic. Nevertheless, there are hidden aspects behind this term. The act of *caring for* assumes a state of being engaged with the object of one's care. *This* form of care does not directly result in salvation, as it keeps the object in close proximity. Differentiating from this type of care is another aspect also referred to as *care*, which is not even close to care *for*, and does not involve any interest towards the object of care. It is profound *anxiety* (*Angst*) that consumes the soul of the insecure (Stein, 1997, p. 70).

Stein's profound ideas reach their culmination in the stringent (anxiety, from ἄγχω, which means 'tighten' or 'strangle') and finite conditions of the earthly soul, which are illuminated anew in the context of faith: 'Sin (*peccatum originis* – original sin – and *peccatum actuale* – actual sin) is the underlying cause and manifestation of the soul's anxious state' (Stein, 1997, p. 70). According to Stein, Christian Revelation already contains all the thoughts that the philosophy of finiteness has strongly articulated (Vigone, 1991). In her 1936 essay she reaffirms: 'However, it is necessary to acknowledge that the Church's doctrine on original sin provides the resolution to the perplexity that arises from Heidegger's depiction of the fallen being' (Stein, 1993, p. 187). In this state, the soul is unable to extricate itself, even when it acknowledges its *metaphysical anxiety* and its correlation to sin through rational understanding or inner feeling. 'Undoubtedly, once the soul genuinely experiences anxiety and sinfulness, it becomes unable to extricate itself, even when it wishes to and immerses itself and its desire fully into *peripheral life*' [i.e., 'into activities that offer an escape from what causes their anxiety, or in a wholeheartedly commitment to the external world, using the resulting emotions to conceal their anxiety'] (Stein, 1997, p. 71).

Salvation becomes unattainable without Grace, as we shall come to understand, which does not invalidate the soul's free will. It is now essential to acknowledge that Stein, herself, does not resolve the aporias she identified in *Dasein*, except through Revelation, an 'other beginning' that can only reflect its own truth without providing foundation for it. The assessment of which path of thought, either Heidegger's or Stein's, more comprehensively investigates the aporia of foundation remains unresolved in this context.

It is true that in Stein's writings, the ambiguity surrounding authenticity and inauthenticity is resolved through an educative relationship between mankind and the God, specifically a liberating and transformative relationship that has the power to *recreate the individual, this time in collaboration with themselves*. The 'metaphysical' nature of this claim, as well as the ethical ambiguity inherent in the domain of *paideia*, particularly in regard to the 'positionedness and lack of positionedness' that Heidegger challenged us with, cannot be explored at this moment.

The *prevenient* Grace is consistently discussed as the necessary condition for voluntary acceptance and access to its domain. There are several different

possible attitudes towards it that are free. The soul can choose to close its eyes in the presence of Grace. ... It can confront Grace directly, stand in its presence, and still choose to shut itself off from it. ... There remains a final option: to surrender unconditionally to Grace. The soul's most decisive departure from its own being is its most complete surrender. Nonetheless, to surrender in such a manner, it must firmly seize hold of itself and allow itself to be enveloped by the inner core with such intensity that it becomes incapable of losing itself. The act of abandonment is the purest form of exercising freedom. The one who, without any regard for his own freedom and individuality, fully surrenders themselves to Grace, gains profound insight into it, remaining entirely free and true to themselves. The descent of Grace into the human soul is a free act of divine love, unrestricted in its reach (Stein, 1997, pp. 71–75).

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