Review of:

Antonio Calcagno. *Lived Experience from the Inside Out: Social and Political Philosophy in Edith Stein*. Pittsburgh (PA): Duquesne University Press, 2014. 231 pages.

MARIAN MASKULAK

In a clear and engaging manner, Antonio Calcagno presents a systematic account of Stein's early social and political phenomenology accompanied by insightful commentary and critique. He begins chapter one by situating the development of Stein's philosophical endeavours and, in doing so, emphasizes that Stein's phenomenology is "her" phenomenology that draws from Husserl, Scheler, Reinach, Conrad-Martius, and others. Here and elsewhere in the text, Calcagno provides interesting background information, such as areas where Husserl changed or abandoned his earlier thought which had initially influenced Stein, and the first formal use of the term "empathy" (*Einfühlung*) by Robert Vischer. He also delineates several features that distinguish Stein's later philosophical thought from her early phenomenology.

In the second chapter, Calcagno sets forth his propositions concerning empathy: (1) while empathy provides some knowledge of other minds, it gives us the opportunity to learn about ourselves and what it means to be a human person; (2) such self-knowledge and understanding of what it is to be a human being is critical for all knowledge, including scientific inquiry; (3) while empathy can serve as a starting point, social and political entities involve more complex structures of mind than empathy can provide. The author then proceeds to discuss several scholarly interpretations of Stein's view of empathy, pointing out what he perceives to be errors therein. Next, he walks the reader through Stein's treatment of empathy. Stein understands empathy to be a unique act of consciousness in which the immanence of the I is transcended and the I enters into the place of another I. Calcagno includes a discussion of her critique of accounts of empathy proposed by Lipps, Scheler, Mill, and Münsterberg, and each time underscores the insights that Stein's assessment brings to the fore. This gives Calcagno the opportunity to point out phenomenology's unique claim of mining the specific field of knowledge that is irreducible to only empirical or logical facts—lived experience (as accentuated in his book's title).

Calcagno next brings Stein into dialogue with contemporary empathy debates, noting that both analytic philosophy and cognitive science provide neurological evidence for some aspects described in the phenomenal account of empathy. The author then continues the discussion of Stein's treatment of empathy as a problem of constitution. At its basic level, empathy brings the "other" into relief. In its highest sense, empathy provides an understanding of the essence of what it is to be a human being constituted as a unity of body, psyche, and spirit. Subsequently, it is in our shared humanity that we can begin discussing the meaning of having and building a social and political world. This chapter also includes a discussion of the pre-empathic givens acquired by inner perception—the pure I, stream of consciousness, and the soul. These tools guide Stein's investigation of the constitution of the human being and are the fundamental elements of what it means to be human. Calcagno then turns to Stein's thought on the living body, psychic causality, bodily expression, feelings, and the will. Next, he traces Stein's presentation of empathy as such, starting from the most basic level of sensual empathy to higher levels. He includes Stein's discussion of the I's zero point of orientation, explains the importance of indexicality for phenomenology, and conveys Stein's view of "reiterated empathy" whereby one can reflexively think through one's empathic acts again. This self-reflexive awareness gained from reiterated empathy constitutes the condition for understanding another's experience. Here, Calcagno notes that Stein submits two arguments for the external reality of the world. First, the world as perceived and as empathically given, are the same world seen differently at the same time. Secondly, as the basis of intersubjective experience, empathy guarantees the existence of the outer world beyond one's own experience and perception.

A rather interesting section of the second chapter treats Stein's claim that empathy allows one to understand that all individuals have the ability to experience for themselves and in others the following aspects of individuality: voluntary movement, phenomena of life (aging, health, etc.), causality, and expression. The author then moves on to Stein's consideration of empathy and the spiritual person. In her early works, will and motivation comprise the domain of the spirit while the psyche is the domain of nature. The subjective side of spirit that acts and lives produces objects such as works of art, culture, history, etc., the study of which comprises the *Geisteswissenschaften* (cultural sciences). Cultural scientists proceed via a comprehension that relives history, not by causal explanation. For such a comprehension, Stein views empathy, as presentification, as the most intense form of reliving that, by uncovering deep layers of sense, helps the complexity of reality to unfold. Stein also defines spirit "as the world in which consciousness turns back on itself and

begins to reflect freely on that which nature has given it.” (92-3) Noting that this is a classic definition of the spiritual realm found in German Idealism and phenomenology, Calcagno then presents an exposition of Stein’s analysis of the higher spiritual layers of the human person—a stronger sense of the self with a personality and the ability to value. This involves a discussion of emotions, feelings, moods, and a hierarchy of values. As the highest value, love manifests the fullest sense of personhood and is not given by acts of empathy. Calcagno concludes this chapter by challenging a few of Stein’s claims.

In chapter three, Calcagno demonstrates how Stein’s work found in *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* provides a fuller sense of Steinian sociality than that gained by the low-level intersubjectivity made possible by empathy. For Stein, a superindividual consciousness moves beyond empathy to a fuller sense of intersubjectivity. She identifies three kinds of social relationships that suggest three kinds of social bonds typical of human social relations. While such bonds are described by phenomenological modes of consciousness, Stein recognizes that material, geographical, cultural, historical, and economic requirements contribute to a broader sense of intersubjectivity. Calcagno argues that Stein makes a unique contribution in her descriptions of superindividual acts of consciousness by positing a psychological foundation rooted in knowledge of the living body and psychic causality. He sketches out the three stage development of Stein’s analysis of higher forms of intersubjectivity: the essence of intersubjective relations found in the mass, society, and community; how these phenomena are possible from the standpoint of consciousness; and an ontic description of how these relations are experienced. Stein maintains that it is the unity of the bond between members that distinguishes and hierarchizes these different social forms. Calcagno then moves on to two aspects of contemporary social ontology that relate to Stein’s philosophy—the pragmatic and performative nature of language discussed by John Searle and John Austin, and the ethico-commitment approach discussed by Raimo Tuomela and Margaret Gilbert.

Next, the author discusses the psychic and logical foundations underlying the phenomenological understanding of mass, society, and community. Calcagno contends that Stein’s lack of distinction between society and community regarding the psychic and logical substrata is purposeful because all humans share a basic psychic and logical structure. While Stein holds that a community cannot have a collective experience of sensation in which all members experience a sensation the same way, a communal lived experience of a sensation is possible in its generality, “accessible through the commonality of sense-experience that comes to be shared in what Stein calls the flow of the lived experience of community.” (132) Similarly, the capacity for generalization of intentional consciousness makes intentional acts possible within the life of a

community. Categorical acts and dispositional acts are other elements that Stein attributes to lived communal experience, and she further delineates how association, motivation, causality, and acts of the will connect individual lived experiences of community.

Calcagno ends chapter three with critical commentary. In terms of agreement, he finds her use of analogy for the individual and community to be significant in several ways, and her description of how community is experienced in consciousness shows that consciousness, freedom, and will are basic to psychological anthropology. By applying phenomenology to psychology, Stein accomplishes Husserl's intention to use phenomenology to ground other sciences, and her work related to intersubjectivity illustrates that the relation between the self and ego takes numerous forms. Calcagno then poses several unresolved questions pertaining to Stein's phenomenology of community.

The final chapter treats Stein's theory of the state. Calcagno argues that her treatise, *An Investigation concerning the State*, must not be read as a strict phenomenology for she includes her own political sensibilities, and that from her theory of the state, one can extract both an essence of the state as well as Stein's concept of the political as distinct from her view of social relations. Submitting several reasons as to why this treatise does not entirely fit in with her earlier work, Calcagno notes where her work becomes "more polemical, more argumentative, more 'political.'" (164) Stein advocates the viability of the sovereign model and focuses on what she considers to be the highest form of the state—the communal one. Calcagno argues that this is a value judgment that sets aside other forms based on societal, contractual structures. Within his argument, he pauses to discuss Stein's critiques of the contract theories of the state. Calcagno then delineates what he perceives to be the elements of a Steinian concept of the political: the sovereign state is the locus of politics in which the state can self-legislate via the will of a community of state lawmakers; politics and the social are related but distinct; no lived experience or consciousness is peculiar to the political; and, there is support for a personalist, communitarian form of liberalism. Calcagno elaborates on each of these elements, challenging some, and noting Stein's distinct contributions. He views Stein's idea of the state's a priori essence as sovereign law-giver and the a posteriori existence of the community members who must give their *place* for the state to exist and must recognize its essence as a sovereign law-giver as lacking a system of checks and balances. On the other hand, he recognizes Stein's phenomenological contribution of identifying higher-order values that help to foster the higher-order layers of the person. While finding part of her account of social relations inadequate, he sees her treatment as developing a concept of personal relation whereby the relation of persons determines the values and objective structure of the state. Particularly

interesting is Calcagno's conviction that Stein's theory of the state with the primacy of the rule of law draws from certain liberal principles based on her philosophical and personal political convictions. He recognizes her unique contribution to political theory to be her intertwining of insights from her phenomenology of community, her Prussian liberal convictions regarding the importance of freedom and the law, and her own adaptations of certain beliefs of German Idealist political philosophy. Calcagno ends the chapter with a critical appraisal. While recognizing the many modern characteristics of Stein's view of the state, he suggests that a more societal model may be more viable than sovereign solidarity, arguing that Stein's understanding of the state as a community of lawgivers undermines what a societal or contractual model of the state hopes to achieve. He includes various scholarly comments on her social and political work.

For both new and experienced Stein scholars, and those interested in phenomenology, empathy, and social and political relations, Calcagno provides an excellent commentary and engaging insights to accompany the reading and discussion of Stein's early works.