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Paper proposal for Lonergan on the Edge

Paper Title: Edith Stein's Contribution to Lonergan's Account of Individual Bias

In this paper I show how Edith Stein's account of intersubjectivity in her *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* can enrich Lonergan's account of 'individual bias' (i.e., the bias of the egoist) as presented in Chapter 7 of *Insight*. Lonergan there diagnoses individual bias primarily as a lack of intellectual development, for the egoist sustains his self-interested perspective only by refusing to raise the questions that would render it inadequate. While Lonergan's analysis is arguably both accurate and important, I incorporate Edith Stein's work on intersubjectivity to show that the egoist's resistance to relevant questions is only possible insofar as he dulls his affective responsiveness to the subjectivity of others. I use Stein to show that individual bias essentially involves a refusal to cultivate our capacity for sympathy, and as such, it involves a lack of development that is affective/intersubjective as well as intellectual.

Lonergan himself indicates that egoism involves a refusal of affective/intersubjective development when he claims that egoist position can only be maintained by overcoming the drive of intelligence *as well as* the "spontaneous demands of intersubjectivity" (246). But it is precisely the nature of spontaneous intersubjectivity, what its demand is, and the sense in which its demand can be overcome, that I employ Stein to help elucidate. The ambiguity on these points, I believe, rests on the unstated relationship between Lonergan's observations that: 1) each individual's desires have an insistence for her that the desires of another can never have and, 2) each individual's desires spontaneously resonate with the desires of others. Because Lonergan affirms that we are by nature social animals, he thereby insists that one's spontaneous desires can never be *purely* egoistic. Still, he leaves unexplained just how and why some have a wider sympathy than others, and just in what sense and to what degree our spontaneity is intersubjective.

Thus, a central objective of my paper is to draw upon Stein's phenomenological analyses of the psychic/sentient and mental dimensions of human persons in order to delineate the ways in which we are unavoidably responsive to others, on the one hand, and the extent to which we can develop or hamper this natural responsiveness, on the other. I then show the extent to which the egoist's spontaneity must be intersubjectively influenced, but I also show that the egoist essentially cannot allow the kind of spontaneity involved in the conscious sharing of life that occurs between those who are fully open to one another's subjectivity. More specifically, I show that it is only by disallowing another's subjectivity to fully register within his own life that the egoist can ignore the relevant questions with relative calm. I conclude by arguing that the egoist's spontaneity and intelligence work together to maintain individual bias: it is an ill-formed, self-oriented spontaneity that ties the egoist's intelligence to a restricted sphere, and it is the detached stance afforded by intelligence that the egoist uses to "objectify" others so as to manipulate them for his own ends, thereby limiting the scope of his spontaneous/affective responsiveness.