



THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION AND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HUMAN BEING AS A PERSON: FOR AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL- PHENOMENOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CLINIC SUBJECT

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The Spiritual Dimension and the Constitution of Man as a Person: For an Anthropological-Phenomenological Understanding of the Clinic Subject

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La Dimensión Espiritual y la Constitución del Hombre como Persona: para una Comprensión Antropológica-Fenomenológica del Sujeto de la Clínica

Abstract: Every psychological theory, as well as the praxis derived from it, has an implicit philosophical anthropology. Regarding the domain of the clinic, whose guiding axis is the human phenomenon, it is understood that this needs to be based on a solid and rigorous anthropological foundation, capable of embracing the specifically human. Therefore, this study aims to point to the possibility of an anthropological-phenomenological foundation of the clinic, seeking to understand the man in his essential peculiarity, that is, his spiritual character that establishes him as a personal and individual being. A description of the dimension of the spirit was then made from the analyzes undertaken by Edmund Husserl and Edith Stein. The bibliographic sources used were: "Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy – second book: Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution", by Husserl, as well as "Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities" and "Potency and Act" by philosopher Edith Stein. From these analyzes, it was possible to conclude that the subject of the clinic has a spiritual dimension, inaugurated through intentional acts, which puts him as an awake being, conscious, active, free, undetermined and capable of forming himself.

Keywords: Phenomenological Anthropology; Spiritual dimension; Clinic.

Resumén: Toda teoría psicológica, así como la praxis derivada de ella, tiene una antropología filosófica implícita. Con respecto al dominio de la clínica, cuyo principio rector es el fenómeno humano, se entiende que esto debe basarse en un fundamento antropológico sólido y riguroso, capaz de abarcar lo específicamente humano. Por lo tanto, este estudio apunta a señalar la posibilidad de una base antropológica-fenomenológica de la clínica, buscando comprender al hombre en su peculiaridad esencial, es decir, su carácter espiritual que lo establece como un ser personal e individual. A partir de los análisis realizados por Edmund Husserl y Edith Stein, se hizo, entonces, una descripción de la dimensión del espíritu. Las fuentes bibliográficas utilizadas fueron: "Ideas Relativas a una Fenomenología pura y una Filosofía Fenomenológica - Libro segundo: Investigaciones fenomenológicas sobre la Constitución", de Husserl, así como "Contribuciones a la Fundamentación de la Psicología y de las Ciencias del Espíritu" y "Acto y Potencia" de la filósofa Edith Stein. A partir de estos análisis, fue posible concluir que el sujeto de la clínica tiene una dimensión espiritual, inaugurada a través de los actos intencionales, que lo coloca como un ser despierto, consciente, activo, libre, indeterminado y capaz de autoformarse.

Palabras-clave: Antropología fenomenológica; Dimensión espiritual; Clínica.

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Introduction

The constitution of an authentic Psychology requires a consistent anthropological basis. In order to access the singularities of psychic life, this science must be based on a rigorous philosophical anthropology. To paraphrase the notes of Edith Stein (1932/2002) in her *Structure of the Human Person (Der Aufbau der menschlichen person)*, it is conceived that any and all theoretical conception, as well as the practices that derive from them, are founded on a certain conception of human being, even if they are not fully aware of it. From this it follows that every psychological theory has an implicit philosophical anthropology. In view of the exacerbated theoretical fragmentation of Psychology, there is no consensus in this science about what the human being is. The different psychological approaches took on ideas about the human, many times diametrically opposed, which shows in a certain sense the lack presented by Psychology of a rigorous anthropological foundation.

Faced with the naturalistic commitment of Psychology, it is possible to infer that the conception of man on which this science was based presents a reductionist character. Naturalism conceives the human only from its objective elements, disregarding other dimensions. Founded on this physicalist objectivism, the *psi* sciences developed techniques and procedures that can be labeled dehumanizing, since they do not take into account the peculiarities of subjective life. It is in this way that psychological care was based largely on the medical model, adopting a nosographic, statistical and objective view of human suffering. The history of *psi* practices is marked by interventions centered on organic processes and on the disease, instead of the individual, in addition to an asylum logic, the medication posture or even on the hermetic vision of the clinical-individual model (Costa, 2014).

Sticking more specifically to the scope of the clinic, which guideline is the subject in suffering, it is understood that this field needs to be grounded on a solid anthropological basis. As pointed out by Holanda (2014), the clinic designates the “look” for the one who suffers, or in other words, it is the care for the *suffering-being*. It is not possible to establish a clinic without an adequate understanding of the human, or rather, this subject who suffers. In order to be possible to develop a “look” and a care that center in the *suffering-being*, it is first necessary to think and reflect on some fundamental questions: who is this subject of the clinic? What is the human? What dimensions make it up and what makes it specific? In view of such questions, it can be said that the establishment of a well-founded psychological clinic imposes the need for a deep analysis about the human, taking into account the totality and complexity of the elements that constitute it. As noted by Holanda (2014, p.117):

By “clinic”, in this context, we only want to designate the “look” for the phenomenon of the human that manifests himself in suffering. Clinic, therefore, is the care of this *suffering-being*, this caring being an attitude of being-with - or *being-with* (Mitsein), which is a “Dasein-with” or *Mit-da-Sein*, as the phenomenological tradition designates - as a companion, a helper, a reader, an interpreter, a welcoming, or simply a gesture of confirmation, in relation to this existing subject.

The psychological clinic, throughout its historical development, adopted the scientific naturalism advocated by Psychology. As a result, it incorporated deterministic epistemological stances, orienting itself from reductionist anthropological conceptions. In other words, psychological clinics, when admitting the scientific-positivist ideology, assumed a naturalistic imposition so that man was reduced to the principles of natural reality. Their investigations and interventions were based on a deterministic notion, which objective is to reveal the explanatory-causal processes of the human phenomenon. In this perspective, it is pointed out that the philosophical anthropology implicit in clinical praxis does not encompass the totality of the human, as it disregards its essential peculiarities (Goto, 2015).

In this sense, an anthropological reform of Psychology is needed, which aim is to support both psychological theory and practice in an authentic vision of the man, capable of contemplating the qualities of the specifically human. Taking this into account, it is worth highlighting an essential clarification regarding this dialogue between Anthropology and Psychology. In the theoretical-epistemological sense, the need for an anthropological foundation concerns the purpose of precisely demarcating the psychic reality, contextualizing it within the total structure of the human person. On the other hand, such an anthropological basis also provides a basis for psychological praxis, allowing the interventions outlined to be based on a clear understanding of the human. The institution of a rigorous anthropological foundation for the science of the psyche is linked to the Husserlian project of phenomenological Psychology. This has the task of establishing the bases for the foundation of an authentic Psychology, capable of encompassing the specificities of the human psyche (Goto, 2015).



For this reason, the delimitation of a psychological science, as well as the circumscription of its practice, depends on a philosophical anthropology. The vagueness about the psychic is a result in part from an obscure conception of what man is. Throughout the history of Psychology, psychism has taken on different definitions, its eidetic character being disregarded. As an example, there is the case pointed out by Edith Stein (1922 / 2005a) regarding the confusion between the notion of psyche and consciousness. In summary, to paraphrase the philosopher again, it is stated that Psychology, if it does not want to build “castles in the air”, needs to reflect on what human is. Quoting Stein’s statements regarding Pedagogy and transposing this same reasoning to Psychology, we have that:

If the idea of man is of decisive relevance both for the structure of pedagogy and for the educational work, it will be of urgent need for the latter to enjoy a firm support in this idea. The pedagogy that lacks an answer to the question “what is man?” will do nothing but build castles in the air. Finding an answer to this question is the mission of the theory of man, that is, of anthropology. Now, it is far from obvious what should be understood by this term (Stein, 1932/2002, p. 21).

Given this, it is necessary now to reflect on what constitutes this anthropology on which Psychology needs to be based. In the first place, this science of man must not be understood in a naturalistic sense. Taken in this sense, anthropology investigates the human as a species, resembling what zoology does in the realm of animals. However, an anthropological foundation for Psychology must not go this way, as the natural sciences lack an adequate foundation (Husserl, 1931/2019; San Martín, 2018).

For this reason, the anthropology required by psychological science must be that of a philosophical nature. In general, is an essential task of this discipline to answer the fundamental question: what is the human being? Far from establishing a naturalistic understanding, philosophical anthropology seeks to reveal the essential structures that make up the human. Therefore, Psychology needs to be based on a conception of man arising from a philosophical anthropology (San Martín, 2005; 2015). Using Stein’s (1932/2002) reflection on Pedagogy again, it is learned that the “anthropology we need as the foundation of pedagogy will be a philosophical anthropology that studies, in a living relationship with the set of philosophical problems, the structure of man and its insertion in the different modalities and territories of the being to which it belongs” (p. 29).

That said, a new problem is imposed: how should this discipline investigate the essential structures of the human? In order to consider this question, it is necessary to keep in mind Husserl’s statements about a crisis of Philosophy. Given the loss of its analytical rigor, given the context of crisis of reason, a philosophical anthropology understood in its traditional sense is unable to encompass the *eidós* of the human phenomenon. As with other disciplines, philosophical anthropology also lacks a sure foundation, that is, a methodological rigor that can ensure the apodictic legitimacy of its investigations. Faced with the Husserlian project, that is, the attempt to rescue Philosophy as a rigorous science through the constitution of a transcendental Phenomenology, it is clear that only the phenomenological method can give philosophical anthropology a secure foundation. In this sense, there is a need to establish a phenomenological anthropology.

Edith Stein, inspired by the Husserlian method, mastered this intent. Throughout her intellectual career she devoted much of her investigations to a deep analysis of the human being, outlining a phenomenological anthropology. In general, in her investigation the philosopher first highlighted the material dimension of man. Like everything else, the human has a materiality that constitutes it, which is revealed in the material structure of the body (*Körper*). However, man is not pure materiality, he is a living organism. The human person also presents a psyche that animates the body and shows itself in conjunction with it, constituting the living body (*Leib*) (Bello, 2000; 2014; Stein, 1922 / 2005a; 1922/2018).

Man exhibits yet another aspect that differentiates him from other beings, the spiritual dimension, which is something essentially human. When presenting a spiritual life, the human person has the ability to go beyond their bodily-psychic structure, establishing themselves as a free being. As a result, they have a volitional character, expressing free will. As a being endowed with freedom and will, man becomes responsible for his own formation, as he is the agent of his own formative process (Stein, 1932 / 2002a).

That said, this article seeks to reflect and indicate the possibility of a basis for the clinic based on a phenomenological anthropology, seeking to understand the specifics of the human phenomenon, that is, its spiritual and personal character. For this, a description of the spiritual dimension of man was carried out based on the analyzes undertaken by Edmund Husserl (1859 -1938) and Edith Stein (1891 -1942), highlighting the role of this sphere in the constitution of the human person.

The following works were used as bibliographic basis for this study: *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* (*Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften*, 1922) and *Potency and Act* (*Potenz und Akt*, 1931) by Edith Stein; and *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy - book two: Studies in the Phenomenology of constitution* (*Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie - zweites buch: Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, 1952) by the philosopher Edmund Husserl, besides several commentator on this theme.



Intentional acts like the beginning of spiritual life

The psychic self, immersed in the passivity of causal nexuses, is asleep, since despite presenting a *continuum* flow of states and psychic qualities, it is not aware of them. On the contrary, the dimension of the spirit founds a spiritual self, active, awake and capable of addressing what is outside of it. This directionality, that is, the *intentio*, inaugurates a new class of experiences in the stream of consciousness, called both by Husserl (1913/2006) and by Stein (1922 / 2005a) of *Acts*, through which begins the spiritual life of the self-empirical. In the words of the phenomenologist:

The move towards something, which is what we are now referring to, the *intentio*, which stands as the foundation of the immanent data, indicates a new genre of experiences, of units, that are constituted in the current: the class of “apprehensions or acts”. Spiritual life begins with them (Stein, 1922 / 2005a, p. 252).

Husserl (1901/1982) presented in the fifth investigation of his *Logical Investigations* the intentional character of consciousness, that is, its attribute of always being directed towards some object. In the sense attributed in the philosopher’s inaugural work, acts are descriptively characterized as intentional experiences, in a way that phenomenologically the conscience is conceived as the set of all kinds of intentional experiences. The intentional experiences, or rather, the acts, considered in their eidetic properties, are always directed to a content and therefore they are founded as “intentionally referred to”. Intentional life is precisely the distinction between the subject-object polarity, in which the (awakened) self moves from itself towards something outside it, establishing a link between the subjective and objective ends of the lived.

Intentional life is qualified as an act, so that before a perceptive act the subject will invariably be oriented towards a perceived object. In the same way, in an imaginative act there will be a directionality towards an imagined object and so on. The acts correspond to interruptions or fissures in the flow of consciousness, since although they appear in the course of the current, they do not end in it. They always imply letting go, tending to something that is not part of the current.

In her work *Act and Power*, the phenomenologist sought, in view of the conceptual multivocity, to clarify precisely the concept of act. Generally speaking, the term can be understood both in the sense of actuality and of activity. The first refers to the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition, by which Stein was strongly influenced, which conceives the act as the realization of a power, that is, when what exists merely as a possibility is realized, it becomes an act. The second, in turn, designates an action of the subject, demarcating the distinction between activity and passivity (Stein, 1931/2007).

Although in the modern sense of the term the concept of *activity* predominates, it also encompasses the idea of actuality, since every action supposes that something is in action. In view of this, the philosopher concluded that acts, that is, the activity of the subject that presupposes actuality, designates what is meant by intentionality. In summary, it can be said that acts are carried out in intentional activity and that it founds spiritual life. In the words of Stein (1931/2007), “what subjectively is to be spiritual can be characterized by the subject-object polarity, which we call intentionality” (p.325).

Putting in another way, the *intentio* constitutes the subject as a spiritual subjectivity, which, unlike the psychic level, is characterized by being awake, transparent and active. The fissure created due to the directionality of intentional acts promoted an opening in the being, which is no longer found in the mere “blindness” of psychic passivity, but in the active domain of the spiritual dimension. It is important to note, however, that, as Husserl and Stein pointed out, the passive sphere also exhibits an intent, a kind of proto-intentionality. However, it is still “asleep” and only appears in the strict sense of the term in the context of spiritual activity.

Motivation as a fundamental law of the spirit: reason and meaning

However, if the spiritual life begins with the subject’s activity manifested by intentional acts, the following question arises: before the diversity of acts, how do they connect? Could it be said that, similarly to the psyche, acts are also governed by causality, with causal links between them? Stein clarified that in the field of self activity there are other types of connection such as perception, synthesis and motivation that go beyond the causal connection between the lived. Given the limits and purpose of this work, only the motivational link will be discussed here, considering its structural importance for understanding the dimension of the spirit.

According to what was presented by Husserl (1952/2005), “we see, therefore, that under the spiritual or personal self we must understand as the subject of intentionality and that motivation is the law of spiritual life” (p. 267). Acts are not linked by causal relationships, but motivational, since motivation is



the fundamental law of the dimension of the spirit. There are then different spheres with different norms: on the one hand, the psyche based on psychic causality. On the other, the spiritual domain governed by motivational nexuses (Peres, 2015).

Causal relationships have a strictly different meaning from motivation, so that it becomes impossible to begin to understand the spirit through a causalist perspective. This would imply a reductionism that would eventually lead to a disregard or exclusion of *eidōs* from the spiritual dimension. In view of this discrimination, it can be concluded that, epistemologically speaking, in the scientific-natural sphere it is up to the investigator to unveil in a deterministic way the causal nexus of reality (material or psychic). on the contrary, the scientific-spiritual sphere seeks to clarify the motivations involved in the analyzed phenomenon.

Motivation, taken in its broad sense, therefore consists of the link that links the various acts of the chain of consciousness. It is the bond that unites the countless intent of the subject. One act comes from another not because of a cause, but because it was motivated. A perception can, for example, motivate a memorable act and this in turn an affective act and so on. Here a *continuum* is not formed as in the flow of experiences of the stream of consciousness, nor a continuous field in analogy to what happens with the data of the senses. However, in view of the motivational link that enables the emergence of one act from another, units of acts may emerge that are established as a kind of complex, which can emerge and submerge from consciousness. In summary, for Stein (1922 / 2005a):

Motivation, understood in our general sense, is the connection that links acts with one another. It is not a mere fusion, as in the phases of the current of experience, which take place simultaneously or successively, or as the associative connection of the lived; but it is the proceeding of an act from the other, one to be carried out or to be carried out by one in virtue or in reason of the other. We see, therefore, that under the spiritual or personal self we must understand the subject of intentionality and that motivation is the law of spiritual life. The “support” on which motivation is based in some way is always the self. He performs an act, because he has already undertaken another one (p. 253).

For a secure understanding of motivation, it is essential to approach, first of all, its relationship with intentional acts. Every *intentio* involves directionality towards an object. However, this cannot be understood as something empty. As Stein (1922 / 2005a) put it, the acts are not directed towards an empty X^1 , but towards a content of meaning, which can manifest themselves in a complete or partial way. (1922/2005a). When I perform a perceptual act, for example, the conscience does not intend a vacuum, since the perceived is established as a content endowed with meaning. In the words of Husserl (1913/2006), the noetic-nomatic unity of the intentional lived is based here, that is, the correlation between the original donor act and its effective correlation.

Using the example of perception, Stein (1922 / 2005a) sought to explain how intentional acts are motivated. In essence, the perceived object cannot be immediately captured in full, as it appears from different profiles. When I see a piece of data, I first perceive one of its sides. From that I see that there are other profiles and that I can rotate this object successively until I capture its numerous profiles. Thus, the unit of meaning of the perceived object gradually became composed through the motivational connection between the intentional acts. It is possible to conclude, then, that the different profiles, that is, the content of the sense of perceptual intentionality, motivated the various acts that integrated the intentional object of perception.

In the course of motivation, what motivates the motivational link is not exactly the performance of the act, but its respective content of meanings, that is, the “reasons”. Taking the example again, we see that it was the object’s profiles, understood as motives, that motivated the perceptual acts and not the other way around (Stein, 1922 / 2005a). In the same way, it is the arrival of a loved one or the knowledge of a long-awaited news and not their respective perceptions that are established as reasons for an affective state of joy, for example.

Now, as motives exist only as correlates to their acts, it appears that they also participate in the motivational process. In this perspective, one reaches the conclusion that motivation has the following eidetic composition: a *motivating* act, which from a *reason* allows the emergence of a *motivated* act. Considering this essential structure, it is possible to say that before a perceptive (*motivating*) act, I can see a certain photograph (*motive*) that will refer me to a series of memories (*motivated*). It is through these connections of motivation that the acts are happening to each other, composing the unity of the intentional experiences. Furthermore, as a possibility of principle, motivating relationships can take place either explicitly or implicitly. In the first, the reasons are evident. In the second, they are understood. Eidetically, after its realization, all explicit motivation becomes implicit and this, in turn, can become evident in the course of motivational connections (Stein, 1922 / 2005a).

¹ Edith Stein used this expression when explaining the relationship between the act and motivation. The “X” designates a hypothetical direction of consciousness, lacking content. In stating that “acts do not address an ‘empty X’” Stein sought to emphasize that intentional acts are always referred to a content of meaning (Stein, 2005a).



“With acts and their motivations - as we have seen - the realm of meaning and reason begins” (Stein, 2005a, p. 258). By this the philosopher meant that the acts have connections of meaning and that these are governed by rational laws. For this reason it is understood here not the faculty that allows man to judge, evaluate and reason, but the ability to establish relations of meanings between phenomena. Therefore, indicating motivation as a fundamental law of the spirit implies unveiling the connections of meaning, that is, the laws of reason that underlie the intertwining of acts in the stream of consciousness. Motivational relationships can form diverse connections that will delimit a certain sphere of possibilities. In other words, the motivational links between the acts allow the realization of a corresponding number of *motivated* people, so that it becomes necessary to investigate the connections of meanings present between the *motive* and the *motivated*.

In view of these connections, Stein pointed out that the contents of meaning, *i.e.*, the motives, depending on the established links can be discriminated between stimulus and rational motives. These consist of the motivations experienced that have a rational basis. Those, on the other hand, concern connections of a merely understandable nature and which lack a foundation. It is added that in the absence of both a rational and comprehensive basis, there is talk of an irrational connection, that is, that does not exhibit a connection of meaning (Stein, 1922 / 2005a).

For example, if I am hungry and I see a food that I like, it is understandable that I instinctively direct my attention towards it. I perceive the appearance, the smell and automatically desire to taste it. In this circumstance, the motive (desired food) that promotes the connections of meanings between the acts is established as a stimulus. Lacking a rational foundation, it exhibits only one comprehensive aspect. However, if in spite of my physiological need I decide to give this food to someone who is extremely debilitated by hunger, a rational motivation is based at that moment, because the meaning that establishes the motivational link between acts is based on laws of reason. But, if I throw the food away, even though I know that it will satisfy my hunger or someone else's, an irrational type of bonding will be instituted. There is no foundation and neither is there a comprehensive relationship in this unity of acts.

That a noise around me draws my attention, or the fact that I “instinctively” aspire to enter an environment in which I feel at ease, is certainly very understandable. However, this is neither rational nor irrational. Conversely, if I seek the company of people who reject me - and do it precisely because they reject me - then that would not be just irrational, but “foolishness.” When the motivation experienced is based on a rationally based relationship, then we speak of “rational reasons.” On the contrary, when there is only one understandable connection, the reason can be designated as a “stimulus” (Stein, 1922 / 2005a, p. 257).

Therefore, another fundamental distinction of the spiritual sphere is highlighted in relation to the psychic domain. In the psyche, the momentary condition of the vital sphere reactively requires a certain caused event, which is independent of the individual's action. In turn, in the spiritual dimension, motivation poses numerous possibilities without necessarily demanding them, since their realization will depend on the subject's activity. It is noticed then that in the psyche there is a “blind happening”, whereas in the spirit there is a “seer action” or at least its possibility.

The constitution of the spiritual Being: intellect, will and self-configuration

As in the psyche the vital sphere and its different effluvia form the psychic being, in the dimension of the spirit, the diverse motivational connections found the spiritual being. The being present in the psyche, immersed in the causal nexus of psychic vitality, is “asleep”. Despite having numbers of states, it does not perceive them. In other words, it is instituted as a passive, reactive being and is based on a mechanism that regulates in an automatic way.

In contrast, the self expressed in the spirit dimension is “awake”, since its intentional essence puts it, through the performance of acts, always towards something outside of it. The spiritual being presents a kind of openness, a notch that allows him to leave himself and put himself in relationship with the transcendent. Endowed with a “spiritual gaze”, the person immersed in the sphere of the spirit is therefore active, transparent and self-conscious, as he is capable of realizing the performance of his various acts. In its way of being, the spirit can manifest itself in two ways: the subjective and objective aspect. The first, as Stein pointed out, means to *exist for oneself*, while the second means to be for a spiritual subject (Stein, 1931/2007).

In relation to the latter, it is understood that the spirit embodied in objectivity builds a spiritual world that surrounds the subject. In Husserlian terms, in the face of the noetic-nomatic unity of intentional experiences, the noema is the domain of the objective spirit, which corresponds to the object-pole of spiritual life. It is possible to say, then, that the noetic moment of the lived “donates” a spiritual sense to the nomadic polarity. In the words of the phenomenologist, “living spiritually is not possible without having a spiritual world around you, that is, a world brought and conditioned by the spirit” (Stein, 1931/2007, p. 345). It is in this sense that the subject, due to his spiritual activity, is circumscribed by an objective spirit that is based on the connections of meaning of noetic-noemic structures.



On the other hand, the subjective pole of the spirit, that is, the subject, exists for itself and establishes itself as the support from which spiritual life springs. Using Husserlian terminology again, it is understood that the subjective aspect of spiritual living is represented by the noetic moment of intentional experiences. In summary, it is pointed out that the activity of the spirit, undertaken by the subject through his noetic moments, presents noematic aspects as a correlate, which in principle establishes a noese-noema correlation based on the being of the spirit.

According to Stein (1931/2007), the spiritual being means to be in movement from within. Such movement arises from a living being, a spiritual subject who has an inner life and whose autonomy and duration are fundamental characteristics. The first designates the ability to exist. In turn, the second means being in time, or rather, being inserted in the dimension of temporality. It is also added that the spiritual being does not exhibit a spatiality, since it is eidetically structured as a non-spatial and immaterial interiority.

In seeking to understand the subjective human spirit, Stein (1931/2007) highlighted two essential qualities that underlie spiritual life and without which it would become inconceivable: intellect and will. The intellectual faculty concerns the possibility of reaching an understanding of things, which occurs through the performance of acts that are directed to the knowledge of the entities. The class of intentional experiences known as “knowledge acquisition” is founded here in the domain of intellectuality. These enable the individual to capture the phenomena that appear, so that he can accept or reject what was captured. Intellectual life therefore concerns the activity proper to understanding.

Faced with his intellectual or rational character, the spiritual subject establishes himself as a transparent being, aware of himself and open. He has the ability to get out of himself, going towards objects and, also, other subjectivities through his intentional acts. It is possible to conclude with this that, in the intellectual sense, living spiritually means being aware of your own inner life, in addition to being able to move intentionally. In short, given its openness and transparency, the spiritual being can look at himself spiritually and also put himself in relationship with the transcendent, both in his subjective and objective aspects.

The intellect in the human subjective spirit is a temporary and gradual act, since it is limited and structured as a constant transition from a potential knowledge to an act. According to Stein (1931/2007), this potential character of the intellect does not only present the meaning of the possibility of different levels of understanding. It also refers to the realization of different degrees of being, which can oscillate within the extremities that range from not being to pure actuality. The human spirit, as an intellectual being, has levels of intellectuality that represent different degrees of being. This makes it possible to conceive countless types of intellect according to their powers and acts.

Each intellect has its own characteristics, according to its potential and actuality, constituting different individual types. One subject may exhibit a certain facility in acquiring mathematical knowledge, while another has a resource for philosophical questions. One subject may exhibit a certain facility in acquiring mathematical knowledge, while another has a resource for philosophical questions. In the same way, certain individuals have great artistic aptitude and so on. Every intellect has its own original dispositions, from which certain trends are founded, that, if updated, will motivate the emergence of different intellectual typologies. A person who has a “philosophical intellect”, for example, exhibits a natural inclination towards these issues. When in contact with this type of knowledge, this tendency will easily pass from potency to act. The formation of a particular intellectual type therefore involves, in addition to an original disposition, being stimulated so that it can be updated.

In view of the above, it is emphasized that the spiritual life is not constituted only by the intellect, but also by the will, since that is not possible without its action. In addition to his intellectual attributes, that is, his transparency and openness, the spiritual subject is also a free being. Endowed with a will, he can carry out voluntary actions and undertake “taking positions”, which makes it possible to accept or refuse through his free acts what appears to him. In the words of Stein (1931/2007):

The spiritual being is not only transparent (intelligible), an intellectual being aware of himself, because he is at the same time through the spiritual subject a free being, with a will, capable of determining himself. If something touches me internally, I can respond to that call. However, this does not need to be an inevitable necessity (p. 353).

The will refers to the acts in which the being, through its voluntary action, can put into existence what is captured only in potency (Stein, 1931/2007). As an example, it is possible to think that in the face of a dangerous situation, a psychic reaction of fear is triggered. This impels the individual to flee, in order to avoid such circumstance as quickly as possible. However, as a spiritual, volitional, free and indeterminate being, this impulse does not present itself as an inevitable trend. The subject, through his free acts, can accept it or not. Instead of seeking to escape, you can remain even in the face of fear to help others. Thus, a reality that until then was only a possibility, came into existence through an act of the individual's will.



From the volitional plane, a new class of experiences is founded: free acts. Differently from the positions taken, in which the subject is able to consent or reject what is captured, spiritually free acts are characterized by taking place as independent experiences. According to the philosopher, in them the spiritual being not only experiences, but places himself as the master of his own experience. The individual, through his volitional activity, imposes himself as owner of himself, a free being who is not hostage to the game of relations between stimulus and response, being able to go beyond them. But: “What does freedom mean? It means the following: I can” (Stein, 1932 / 2002a, p. 95). The spiritual subject is endowed with freedom and constituted as a being of possibilities, since through his free action he is able to decide on his activity.

It is legitimate to state then that the intellect, in view of its transparency and openness, allows the subject to capture the world, that is, to be in relationship with it, seeking to understand it. In contrast, the will allows the individual the ability to configure the world through the intervention of his volitional acts. Therefore, the sphere of volition is the domain of freedom, of free spiritual acts through which the subjective human spirit can shape the world and itself. In accordance with what was pointed out by Stein’s phenomenological-anthropological analysis, the scope of the will, together with other spiritual acts, constitutes the so-called “specifically human”: the specific dimension of the man that characterizes him as a personal being.

In short, his spiritual character establishes man as an open, transparent, awake, conscious, free and active being. Master of himself, the subjective human spirit is capable of self-configuring, since it is responsible for what it is and what it will become. Through his activity he is able to form himself. While intellectual acts allow the subject to expand his spiritual world, volitional acts establish the possibility of a free configuration. Through the action of the will the individual guides his own formation, constituting a personal peculiarity that makes him a unique personality.

The notion of responsibility involves the idea of a self, that is, a free and spiritual person who can and must form himself and that this capacity for self-formation establishes the boundary between animality and the specifically human. The process of formation of the human person therefore has a double aspect: on the one hand, a sphere that does not depend on the performance of the subject, and on the other, one that belongs to his free activity. The first concerns the given bodily-psychic structure, which, abstracted from the spiritual dimension, presents a development dependent on external circumstances. The body, which has an organic life, needs favorable conditions so that it can develop normally. Likewise, the psyche needs stimulus in order for its qualities to be formed from the various directions of psychic vitality. Consequently, at this level the external elements are formed as a forming agent, which do not depend on the individual’s free action.

The second aspect, on the other hand, belongs to the realm of spiritual life, which allows the subject to self-configure himself, or rather, to form himself. The structure of the self is not at the mercy of external conditions, because through free acts it can conduct its process of formation, within, obviously, the essential limitations established. That which is not disposed in the structure of the self cannot experience a development. In a synthetic way, the subject’s free spiritual activity acts from the established original dispositions, giving form to the bodily-soul unity that constitutes the human person (Betschart, 2017).

For the phenomenologist, “the free person has ‘himself’ in his hands, that is, the soul and the body are under the direction of the will, even if not unconditionally” (Stein, 1930/2003, p. 190). Faced with this spiritual self-configuration, the subject’s personal structure becomes an *individuum*, since his activity frees the plasma from an individual peculiarity, forming from then on his character. In summary, it is emphasized that in addition to its intentional aspect, the spiritual being also manifests itself in the sense of a personality. As Husserl and Stein pointed out, he constitutes himself as a personal being, *i.e.*, an *individuum* with a life animated by the spirit. This means that the subject, or rather, the human Person, is structured as the support of a rational/spiritual nature, demarcating the domain of the specifically human. Consequently, human life has essentially a spiritual interiority that endows it with a personal structure (Moraes & Goto, 2015).

Man as a personal and individual being

In view of his spiritual character, man has a personal structure so that he appears as a human person. But, what does it mean to say that the subjective human spirit merges as a personal being? In Stein’s sense: “everything we generally call a person, *es rationalis naturae individua substantia*, that is, particular beings of a nature endowed with reason” (Stein, 1950/1994, p. 372). *Pessoa* can also be understood as the support (*suppositum*) of an essence, that is, the foundation of a general nature. In the case of the human person, the personal structure designates the support of a nature endowed with reason. As previously mentioned, rational and spiritual are understood as inseparable elements, since with the acts and motivations of the spirit sphere, the domain of sense and reason is inaugurated. In principle, it follows that the person can also be conceived as the support of a spiritual essence (Sepp, 2017).

For a rigorous understanding of the notion of person, it is essential to highlight some fundamental distinctions. The personal being is distinguished from the notion of self, since not every self necessarily has a personal structure. However, everyone is based on a self. According to Stein (1950/1994), I mean the



entity that presents a conscious life, which can be expressed in its lower pole in sensitivity or in its upper degree in awakened consciousness. In this sense, it is possible to infer for example, that animals, despite having a self, do not manifest a personal life. Their experiences exhibit a bodily and psychic structure, lacking the sphere of the spirit. Therefore, the animal self does not establish itself as a personal being. Its formation process is circumscribed by psychic passivity due to the absence of the active qualities of the spiritual dimension.

In turn, when presenting a personal life, human subjectivity establishes itself as a conscious, awake and free self. In other words, man's *self* is placed in the quality of a personal self, which is based on the realization of free acts. The life of the *self* endowed with a personal organization is constituted by the free and conscious action of the person, which can vary in different degrees of depth according to the spiritual activity of each individual (Baseheart, 1997; Novinsky, 2014).

Another important clarification refers to the distinction between the pure self and the personal self. From the elucidation made earlier between the realm of pure experiences and the real soul-self, it is understood that the self taken in its purity concerns the center of irradiation of experiencing; the identical subject that underlies every act of the stream of consciousness; the egological connection of the lived. As explained by Husserl (1952/2005) and Stein (1922 / 2005a), taken as the constitutive axis of the empirical subject, the pure self cannot be confused with the personal self. That establishes himself as an absolute subject lacking real qualities, whereas he is founded as an individuum who presents an empirical position in the world, exhibiting personal peculiarities and character traits (Jacobs, 2014; Obsieger, 2014).

It is now possible to draw an outline of the human person: man is a bodily-soul being, but both body and soul have a personal nature. In other words, in man lives a self aware of himself, capable of contemplating the world, a self that is free and that, by virtue of his freedom, can configure both his body and his soul; who lives from his soul and who, due to its essential structure, submits to spiritual information, before and along with voluntary self-configuration, the punctual acts of his life and his own permanent body and soul (Stein, 1932 / 2002a, p. 110).

Therefore, man is a body-soul subject who, when presenting a spiritual life, is founded as a being-person. Consequently, it is conceived that the human bodily-psychic substrate manifests a personal character. The body expresses, in addition to its organic disposition, a spiritual nature, establishing itself as an organ of the will, capable of expressing the inner life of the spirit. In addition to mere materiality, the living body reveals a psychic and spiritual peculiarity. In the same way, the human psyche cannot be completely determined by the causal nexus of the vital sphere, because it is traversed by the spirit and exhibits a personal quality. In summary, the human being-person refers to a self whose spiritual life is based on a bodily-soul subsoil, which in turn expresses a personal nature as a result of its link with the dimension of the spirit.

In view of man's personal constitution, it is understood that in his psychophysical disposition there is a self-person, capable of looking at the world and himself. Awake, self-conscious and free, the human is placed as a transparent being who can contemplate his inner life and be in constant relationship with the objective and intersubjective world. It is worth mentioning that man is also a social being, since he is not an isolated *individuum*, but a community. The surrounding world is made up of other personal beings, who share the same corporeal, psychic and spiritual structure (Alfieri, 2014; Betschart, 2016).

It is not possible to understand the human person's eidetic composition in its entirety without considering its social-intersubjective dimension. Faced with his spiritual openness, man captures through empathic experience that there are other subjects who have a personal formation similar to his (Vargas & Farias, 2018). Therefore, the human being-person presents an intersubjective surrounding world. This is in constant relationship with other subjects, being able to form different types of associations, such as mass groups, societies, in addition to the community ties present, for example, in peoples, families, clans, tribes, religious communities, etc. (Stein, 1922 / 2005b).

The social dimension is a co-determining factor in the process of configuring the bodily-psychic-spiritual unit of the human *being-person*. It is possible to infer from these considerations that on the one hand the human spirit is partially determined by the corporeal-psychic structure in which it is immersed. On the other hand, it also exhibits social co-determination, since the surrounding intersubjective world also influences the course of its configuration. However, as a personal being endowed with a spiritual opening, man is not fully determined by these elements, as he is able to self-configure through his free activity, constituting himself as a unique personality. In short:

The human soul as a spirit rises in its spiritual life above itself. However, the human spirit is conditioned by what is higher and lower: it is immersed in a material product that it animates and forms in view of its configuration as a living body. The human person carries and embraces "his" living body and "his" soul, but is at the same time founded and closed by them. His spiritual life rises from a dark background, he rises like a torch flame, nourished by a material that itself does not shine. The human



soul shines without being absolutely light: the human spirit is visible to itself, but not entirely transparent; it can illuminate something else without going through it completely (Stein, 1950/1994, p. 380).

The human *being-person* also places himself in the quality of an individuality, that is, a singular being who has a specific peculiarity. This means that the general structure of the human person, that is, the corporeal, psychic and spiritual unity, is unique in an individual essence, a personality that manifests a unique being. Therefore, man exhibits a personal disposition and an individual qualification, revealing himself as an *individuum* endowed with a bodily-soul essence of a spiritual nature.

As Stein pointed out, in the course of their training process, the human person develops his qualities, thus composing his personal peculiarity, the individual mark that singularizes his eidetic structure and that will constitute the character of the individual (Pezzella, 2017). Referring again to the Husserlian analyzes present in Ideas II, it is noted that the philosopher spoke in some points of his work about the individual element of the human *being-person*, that is, what makes him a unique personality.

In section d of §60, Husserl emphasized that in order to understand the human person, it is necessary to take into account that the typical-individual is based on the general essence. This is established as a personality with its own motivations, characteristics, qualities and character traits. Thus, “this (the personality) is built, according to its essence, from special characters within the general subject-man type or character, and certainly from those that compose the individual type of this human subject as insignificant specialties (Husserl, 1952 / 2005, p. 318).

The personality is built up from the affection and action of the self, which will institute a personal peculiarity to the individual, giving to the lived an individual color. Despite being delimited eidetically by the same universal configuration, each experience is unique and forms the personal being as a unitary personality. This means that the development of the human person has an individual mark, instituting what Stein called character. This expresses a way of being itself that gives a singularity to the entire personal structure of the individual.

In essence, the character is established as a personal hue, manifested as a *quale*² that grants the individual being an individual trait. Such uniqueness exhibits varying degrees of manifestation, and these can found certain types, thus establishing a typology. However, a person’s character is not reduced to the expression of a certain type, given that he has an “individual note” that marks his qualities and experiences. The expression of this individual note can then oscillate between two extremes: in one of the poles there is the individual whose character is close to the typical, having his personal peculiarity not very well marked. On the other hand, there is the opposite pole where the person imperiously distances himself from the typology, founding an intense individuality and a well underlined character.

Final considerations

In view of such anthropological-phenomenological analysis, which took the experiences as a starting point, a deep investigation of human subjectivity was undertaken based on Stein’s phenomenological anthropology, highlighting its different strata. When adhering to the fundamental structures of the lived, it was stressed that man is constituted by corporeal, psychic and spiritual elements, the latter being the essentially human dimension. The eidetic trait that characterizes the human being as such and that differentiates it from other forms of life. This spiritual character gives man a personal and individual nature, making him an awake, conscious, free, active, intersubjective and capable of self-configuring (Stein, 1922 / 2005a; Husserl, 1952/2005).

Given these conclusions, one can now ponder the subject of the clinic and its constitution, thus outlining an anthropological-phenomenological basis for clinical praxis. As previously mentioned, when presenting the phenomenon of the human that is shown in suffering as its core, it is clear that the psychological clinic needs to be based on a conception of man that takes into account his different layers, conceiving it in all his complexity and specificity. Otherwise, it will be built on mistaken notions, understanding the human from a merely objectivist perspective, which will invariably lead to a deterministic and reductionist conception (Holanda, 2014).

However, in the face of an authentic analysis of the human being, via phenomenological anthropology, it becomes possible to establish a rigorous foundation for psychological clinics. Based on the investigations undertaken by Husserl (1952/2005) and Stein (1931/2007), it can be conjectured that the subject of the clinic is not merely a corporeal-psychic being, so that it is not possible to understand it from a set of explanatory-causal nexuses. Despite having a corporeal and psychic structure, which is subject to a causal legality, the human phenomenon is not restricted to it, as it exhibits a spiritual character. In this way, it becomes counterintuitive to reduce it to a mere organicist naturalism, as engendered by the biomedical model incorporated by psychological praxis. Likewise, there is no room for psychic determinism, a notion that neglects the domain of the specifically human, that is, the spiritual dimension.

² The term *quale* in this context designates the essential quality that constitutes the person’s character. According to Edith Stein “quality is understood here in a very broad sense, not as the quality of a thing, but as everything that, determined in itself, comprises in itself a ‘quale’ (Stein, 2005b, p. 718).



A well-founded psychological clinic, built on a phenomenological basis, must consider that the body-psychic structure of man is crossed by the sphere of the spirit. Therefore, far from being immersed in the “blindness of psychic passivity”, the subject of the clinic is an awake, active, conscious and gifted person. Therefore, even though he is susceptible to bodily-psychic determinism, it does not impose itself inexorably, because given his spiritual nature, man is able to transcend it. This makes him a being of possibilities who, due to his spiritual openness, via intentional acts, is able to make sense of what stands before him.

In summary, the subject of the clinic must be conceived as a spiritual being who has an intentional life and precisely for that reason, exhibits an intellectual and volitional character. Such characteristics place man in the quality of an open, transparent, conscious, free and active being. In other words, his spiritual openness allows him to understand the world through his intellect and to act under it through his free action. This gives him the ability to self-configure, forming himself through his spiritual life, which makes him a personal and individual being. Furthermore, this openness also places him as an intersubjective being, who establishes relationships with other spiritual individuals. Consequently, it is concluded that an authentic clinic must conceive man as an indeterminate being, considering him from his spiritual nature and avoiding any type of reductionism and/or determinism.

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