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From Empathy to the State

Steinian Analyses of Contemporary Sociopolitical Problems

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Abstract

This article-based thesis studies the applicability of Edith Stein's early social and political phenomenology to analysing contemporary issues in the political sphere on the level of experience. Often, this sphere is public, but it may also extend to our private lives and to non-public parts of government. In the articles included in this thesis, I utilise Stein's concepts and arguments to discuss media-based empathy, collective memory, and the nation-state nationalism guiding climate politics, because empathy, collective memory and the nation-state nationalism are central elements of sociopolitical experiences in the 21st century. As the articles included in this thesis demonstrate, all these three topics are formative of both contemporary politics and our private lives: media-based communication enables society-wide public political discussions, but we also communicate via media in our daily lives regarding private and professional matters; collective memory and nation-state nationalism guide politics, but they also provide building blocks for our identities as individuals. In my discussion of these topics, to demonstrate the convincing relevance of Stein's work in analysing the 21st-century political sphere, I take her arguments beyond the contexts in which she presented them.

In Article I, following Stein, I start from the assumption that empathy forms the basis for social experiences. However, media-based communication that is elementary in the 21st-century communication brings new challenges to our empathic experiences and requires novel theory on the basic level of the constitution of the media-based empathic experience. As I demonstrate in Articles II and III, collective memory and nation-state nationalism are both forms of exclusive collective experiences of "us," which dominate our identities, relations to others, and thus politics in the 21st century. As I argue in Article II, collective memory is a complex social experience that affects both our private lives and societies. In Article III, I argue that nation-state nationalism dominates the contemporary view of the state, ourselves, and others in destructive ways.

The three articles take up three major themes in Stein's early phenomenological period: empathy which Stein studies especially in *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* (1917), collective experience that Stein studies extensively in *Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften* (1922), and the state which Stein discusses mainly in her treatise *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat* (1925). Respectively, each of the three articles discusses one of these themes in a contemporary setting. The main argument that emerges from the combination of the three articles is that Stein's four phenomenological treatises from her early period form an oeuvre of early social and political phenomenology that provides original and relevant philosophical insights for studying 21st-century sociopolitical phenomena on the level of experience.

Keywords: Edith Stein, empathy, collective experience, the state, the 21st century

Acknowledgements

After defending my first doctoral thesis at the University of Oulu in March 2022, I said to my professor, Katariina Holma, that I wished I had done my thesis solely about Edith Stein's thinking. This current work is a wish come true. As always, this wish was realised thanks to many people, some of whom might not even know how important their contribution has been.

My interest in Edith Stein's social and political phenomenological works was aroused in 2017, at the Copenhagen summer school on phenomenology and philosophy of mind. One day after the lectures, we were all walking towards the city centre together. I had just given a presentation about empathy in media-based communication, and I had mentioned Stein's investigations of empathy. Professor Fredrik Svenaeus was a visiting lecturer at the summer school, and he told me that Stein also had some interesting analyses about community, society, and the state. He said that if I was interested in the problems of democracy—as I had just told him that I was—I might be interested in those other works of Stein as well. However, at the time, I was working on the problems of the media-based public sphere, which took all my time and energy. As a reader of this thesis might notice, the first article in the compilation is a link between my earlier and current projects. It is a continuation of my studies on media-based empathy but now concentrating on Stein's work rather than on the media-based communication in general.

Svenaeus's words stayed in my mind for a long time. During the subsequent years, my interest in Stein's work grew, and, finally, after defending my doctoral thesis at the University of Oulu, I applied for funding to read and analyse Stein's social and political philosophy. I received funding from two foundations, the Otto Malm Foundation and the Osk. Huttunen Foundation. Without their support, I might have just read Stein's *Beiträge* and *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat* and moved onward with my investigation of media-based communications or something else. However, these two foundations helped me to open up a whole new area of research that I would not have discovered without them. Therefore, I thank both Otto Malm Foundation and Osk. Huttunen Foundation.

Luckily, one of the few philosophers in Finland who have done research about Stein, Erika Ruonakoski, had just started working at the University of Helsinki. I talked about my thoughts to her and to the senior university lecturer at the practical philosophy department, Kristian Klockars. Without them, this dissertation would

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All this time I have actually done postdoctoral research. This second thesis grew partly out of my postdoctoral research project, but also next to it in my free time in the evenings and on weekends. I owe gratitude to my employer at the University of Helsinki, the Research Council of Finland funded Centre of Excellence in Law, Identity and the European Narratives, *EuroStorie*, and especially to my superiors Kaius Tuori and Pamela Slotte for letting me do this second doctoral thesis while already working as a postdoc at the centre.

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List of original publications

This thesis is based on the following publications:

I Kekki, M. The perceived object in media-based empathy: Applying Edith Stein's concept of *Wortleib*. *Continental Philosophy Review*, 57, pp. 165–184 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-024-09633-7>

II Kekki, M. Our Past vs. Theirs: Collective Memory as an Emergent Collective Experience. *Puncta*, 8.1, pp. 1–16 (forthcoming, 2025). <https://doi.org/10.61372/PJCP.voio.o>

III Kekki, M. Nation-states in a Prisoner's Dilemma with climate change: Applying Edith Stein's theory of the state. *Nations and Nationalism*, early view, pp. 1–15. (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.13016>

The publications are referred to in the text by their roman numerals.

1 The point of departure

1.1 The aim and research questions

This thesis consists of three articles that test the applicability of Edith Stein's early social and political phenomenology to analysing contemporary issues in the political sphere on the level of experience. By the "political sphere" I mean the area of life, where we or someone else makes value-based decisions affecting wider groups (see Dewey, 1991; Mouffe, 2005). Often, this sphere is public, but it may also extend to our private lives and to non-public parts of government (see Habermas, 2023; Kekki, 2024a). In the articles included in this thesis, I utilise Stein's concepts and arguments to discuss media-based empathy, collective memory, and the nation-state nationalism guiding climate politics. This is because empathy, collective memory and the nation-state nationalism are central elements of social-political experiences in the 21st century. All these three topics are crucial parts of contemporary politics that are also formative of our private lives: media-based communication enables society-wide public political discussions, but we also communicate via media in our daily lives regarding private and professional matters; collective memory and nation-state nationalism guide politics, but they also provide building blocks for our identities as individuals. In my discussion of these topics, to demonstrate the convincing relevance of Stein's work in analysing the 21st-century political sphere, I take her arguments beyond the contexts in which she presented them.

In Article I, following Stein, I start from the assumption that empathy forms the basis for social experiences. However, media-based communication elementary in the 21st-century communication brings new challenges to our empathic experiences and requires novel theory on the basic level of the constitution of the media-based empathic experience. As I demonstrate in Articles II and III, collective memory and nation-state nationalism are both forms of exclusive collective experiences of "us," which dominate our identities, relations to others, and thus politics in the 21st century. As I argue in Article II, collective memory is a complex social experience that affects both our private lives and societies. In Article III, I argue that nation-state nationalism dominates the contemporary view of the state, ourselves, and others in destructive ways.

This thesis has two aims. The first is to clarify the topics of the articles through a phenomenological analysis. That is, to analyse the concepts and characteristics of media-based empathy as part of the wider phenomenon of media-based communication; collective memory as part of belief systems guiding community lives and politics; and the affective experiential core of nation-state nationalism influencing current climate politics. In other words, the aim of each separate article included in this thesis is to clarify the 21st-century phenomenon presented in the article. The investigation of the experiential level of the phenomena of media, collective memory, and nation-states provides a deeper understanding of these phenomena. The experiential level can be considered a kind of micro level of these large sociopolitical phenomena. Social and/or political issues of the 21st century, such as media-based communication, collective memory, and nation-state nationalism in climate politics, can also be investigated on the macro level by explaining the main patterns or the historical, social, and political causes and consequences of these phenomena on the societal or global level.

The second aim is to show how and to what extent Stein's early phenomenological works have relevance in investigating these and potentially other 21st-century political issues on the experiential level. In the articles, I demonstrate the usefulness of Steinian concepts such as *Wortleib* (Article I), I rephrase and apply her analyses of collectives such as the state (Article III), and I construct a description of collective memory based on her analyses of memory and collective experience (Article II). Thereby, as I say in the abstracts of the articles I and III, I demonstrate the timeliness and relevance of her phenomenological accounts. In the articles, this concerns especially her accounts of empathy and the state, and even though I do not explicitly say this in Article II, this implicitly also concerns her account of collective experience and agency. The articles I and II use more space to discuss Stein's work than Article III, but in every article, the core argument of the article is built around Steinian analyses. I will elaborate the idea of Steinian analyses in Section 2. The two-fold aim of this thesis can be summarised as clarifying the topics of the articles through a Steinian phenomenological analysis and thereby showing how and to what extent Stein's early phenomenological works have relevance in investigating these 21st-century political issues on the experiential level.

My main approach has been to look at current social and political problems visible in the sphere of publicity and politics, while reading Stein's early phenomenological works at the same time. This way, I have found points in Stein's works that connect to the experiential aspects in the three phenomena I find crucial for our times. The process has led me to three specific research questions for each article included in this thesis:

1. How can we apply Stein's concept of *Wortleib* to a phenomenological analysis of the empathic experience in media-based communications?
2. Based on Stein's accounts of memory and collective experience in *Beiträge*, how can we phenomenologically describe collective memory?
3. How does Stein's theory of the state help us understand the experiential elements in the challenges of the nation-state regarding climate change politics?

In addition to the thematic concerns, these three questions concern the three central works from Stein's early period. The four treatises, published in three volumes, all involve several themes and can be read from multiple viewpoints.¹ The articles included in this thesis view those works from certain narrow viewpoints. However, implicitly these articles point towards looking at these works from the viewpoint of presenting Stein in her early phenomenological period as an early social and political phenomenologist.

In the articles of this thesis, I use Stein's works from her early phenomenological period, because that period forms a thematic whole of phenomenological investigations concerning social and political reality prior to Stein's religious turn. This period goes from 1917 to 1925 and combines classical early phenomenology with the topics of social and political studies. As a distinct package within Stein's works, this period provides a clearly demarcated group of central sources. Thus, concerning Stein's works, my focus is on the works *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* (On the Problem of Empathy), originally published in 1917 and later in *Edith Stein Gesamtausgabe* (ESGA) volume 5, *Beiträge zur Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften* (The Foundation of Psychology and the Humanities, hereafter "Beiträge"), originally published in 1922 and in ESGA volume 6, and *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat* (An Investigation Concerning the State), originally published in 1925 and in ESGA volume 7. These three works include the four phenomenological treatises that form the core of Stein's early period, as the two parts of *Beiträge*, "Psychische Kausalität" ("Psychic causality") and "Individuum und Gemeinschaft" ("Individual and Community"), are regarded as two treatises.

My three articles thus take up three major themes in Stein's early phenomenological period: empathy (ESGA 5; ESGA 8), collective experience (ESGA 6), and the state (ESGA 7). Respectively, each of the three articles discusses one of these themes in a contemporary setting. The main argument that emerges from the

¹ The treatises 2 and 3, "Psychische Kausalität" and "Individuum und Gemeinschaft," are published as *Beiträge*.

combination of the three articles is that *Stein's four phenomenological treatises from her early period form an oeuvre of early social and political phenomenology that provide original and relevant philosophical insights for studying 21st-century sociopolitical phenomena on the level of experience.*

A central motivating background factor that organises my thesis has been to discuss Stein's work in its own right. Often, Stein's arguments and analyses from this period are discussed in relation to the works of her teacher and colleague, Edmund Husserl (Jardine, 2014; Moran, 2004, 2017; Zahavi, 2014). In contrast, my reason to read Stein is to understand Stein's works as independent contributions to both phenomenology and social and political philosophy while also better grasping the phenomena she investigates in these works. While Stein was influenced by Husserl's eidetic method, already during her early period, Stein was an independent phenomenological thinker who drew from several authors of her time, including Max Scheler, Adolf Reinach, Georg Jellinek, Henri Bergson, Ferdinand Tönnies, and Theodor Lipps.

Part of the motivating background of this thesis is also historical work for recognition. Studying early phenomenologists shows that Husserl's students and colleagues, including Stein and other figures such as Eugen Fink, put much of their time into editing his works, as in the case of Stein's edition of Husserl's *Ideen II* (1991b). By contemporary standards, we might even think of Stein as a co-author of Husserl's *Ideen II* and *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewußtseins* (The Lectures on the Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness), as she had herself thought at first (Ingarden, 1962).² Stein's case provides an example of why the great thinkers in history of philosophy should rather be viewed as great circles and groups of intelligent and passionate thinkers, while out of these circles and groups, only a few have emerged as the most famous philosophers. The reasons for this might be structural, such as the prohibition for women to teach at many Western universities in the early 20th century (Connell & Janssen-Lauret, 2022; Tyson, 2014). For instance, the history of philosophy would know a different Edith Stein, if she had had the possibility to complete her

² My claim is supported by the fact that a new version of Husserl's *Ideen II* has been worked out as *Husserliana* vol. 44, where Stein's contribution is separated from what Husserl had originally written and compiled for the volume II of *Ideen*, to enable a more accurate textual basis for a historical and systematic investigation of Husserl's *Ideen II* (see Husserl, 2025). Concerning Husserl's lectures on internal time consciousness, for a long time, Heidegger was considered the editor of the work (e.g., Cohen, 1995, p. ix). However, from 1915 to 1917, Stein had worked on Husserl's "raw material" consisting of pieces of manuscript and notes to make them a coherent work on internal time consciousness. Heidegger was included in the editing process in the very end (Ingarden, 1962). Still, as we can see from the published work, he wrote the preface of the editor for the book, where he thanked Stein only for "occasional division of chapters and paragraphs" in the editorial process (Husserl, 2000, p. 368).

Habilitation and become a professor, and if the National Socialists would not have gotten in power and prohibited Jews from teaching in 1933, after which she joined the Carmelite convent (Tuorila-Kahanpää, 2003). However, it is difficult to speculate in any more detailed manner what she might have done, especially after the 1930s, if the world around her had allowed her to develop an academic career. It is impossible to know, whether she would still have turned to the convent at some later point in her life or whether she had written the religious works such as *Wege der Gotteserkenntnis* (ESGA 17) and *Kreuzeswissenschaft* (ESGA 18) even as a philosophy professor.

In the following, I will first discuss the general situation of current Stein scholarship. Subsequently, I will describe the backgrounds and methodological approaches of the three articles. After this, I will present Stein's three works/ four treatises as a continuum from empathy to the state, that is, as variations of social and political experiences and phenomena, and I will reflect on each work separately. As the three articles concentrate more on particular sociopolitical topics that I investigate than on explaining Stein's works, in this summary part of the thesis, I wish to give a more exhaustive overview of Stein's four treatises that I have used in my articles. To note, all English translations of Stein's works in this summary part are mine. I have given the original quotes in German in the footnotes, when necessary.

1.2 The background: Stein scholarship regarding her early phenomenological period

Discussing Stein's philosophy as a whole is an ambitious task that few have taken up (Calcagno, 2007; see Lebech, 2015; MacIntyre, 2007; Baseheart, 2010; Secrétan, 1992). As we can see from the books written by Mette Lebech, Antonio Calcagno, Alasdair MacIntyre, Philibert Secrétan, and Mary Catharine Baseheart, it seems almost inevitable that one emphasises some aspects of her work and life: either her philosophical work (Calcagno, 2007; Lebech, 2015; MacIntyre, 2007; Secrétan, 1992) or her religious work and life (Baseheart, 2010).

Within phenomenology, researchers have mostly focused on her book on empathy *Zum Problem der Einfühlung*. Her analysis of empathy, including the related themes of the nature of self, affectivity, and sociality, has been investigated and applied in further contemporary phenomenological arguments by many established contemporary phenomenologists, such as Dan Zahavi (2014), Dermot Moran (2004), Elisa Magrì (2015), Fredrik Svenaeus (2018), and Thomas Szanto (2015) (see also Magrì & Moran, 2017). Even in Finland, where Stein's work is relatively little known, philosophers such as Elisa Aaltola (2018) and Erika Ruonakoski (2017) have drawn from her treatise on empathy. It is notable that in contemporary phenomenological investigations on empathy, Stein's work is almost

equally recognised as that of Husserl's. Some of these authors have also studied Stein's *Beiträge*: based on this work, Magrì has investigated the phenomenology of emotionality, self-displacement, and affectivity (Magrì, 2017, 2018), and Szanto (2015) has investigated Stein's account of collective emotions. Also, Timothy A. Burns's work on collective agency in which he draws from Stein's *Beiträge* and even her treatise on the state is worth mentioning as an original work that relates Stein's work to contemporary social ontology (Burns, 2016).

In contrast to *Zum Problem der Einfühlung*, the other three treatises from Stein's early phenomenological period are often treated as a curiosity—even if many, who draw from Stein's first treatise also cite *Beiträge*, but often *Beiträge* is used rather as an additional source (e.g., Burns, 2015; Svenaeus, 2018; Vendrell Ferran, 2024). Even though Stein is not unknown as a philosopher, her works on the community and the state are underread. As Calcagno (2015) has proposed, the reason for this is rather social and political than philosophical. Being a Jew and a woman in the first half of the 20th century made her undermined during her lifetime. Later, Stein has been mainly known as a philosopher of religion due to her conversion to Catholicism and her life in a Carmelite convent after 1933, which has dominated the literature at least until the 2000s. Therefore, many contemporary political and critical phenomenologists, who are not interested in Stein's religious works or in the topics related to other-directed intentionality, might simply be unaware of her non-religious phenomenological works other than her book on empathy. For instance, in several introductory books to political and/or critical phenomenology, there are almost no references to Stein's works (Baratella et al., 2024; Bedorf & Herrmann, 2020). However, for instance, Magrì, who has published extensively on Stein, has included Stein's work in the classical canon of phenomenology in her and Paddy McQueen's book "Critical phenomenology: An introduction" (Magrì & McQueen, 2023). Their discussion of Stein's work in that book suggests that there is no clear philosophical reason to exclude Stein from the canon of early social, political, and critical phenomenology.

As Calcagno and Eva Reyes-Gacitúa (2021) point out, Stein's work in phenomenology proper has been investigated primarily within the last 20 years. However, some studies of her phenomenological investigations can be found also earlier, such as in Baseheart's (1997/2010) introduction to Stein's thought, Schulz's (1993) paper on the newly published *Einführung in die Philosophie* (vol. XIII of Edith Steins Werke, 1991), and Secrétan's introduction to Stein (1992). It is worth mentioning that, at least regarding the international Stein scholarship, Secrétan was ahead of his time. Secrétan's work discusses Stein's theory of empathy and the person, the Being (including a critique of Heidegger's theory), the state, and her feminist theory, even though Secrétan's book was published before the publication of Stein's phenomenological works in *Edith Stein Gesamtausgabe* (ESGA). Nevertheless, despite the existence of several works on Stein's early

phenomenological period before the 2000s, when comparing the phenomenological Stein scholarship with the studies on Husserl, Heidegger or Merleau-Ponty, it is clear that Stein scholarship is a relatively new area in phenomenology.

The collected volumes of Stein's works, *Edith Stein Gesamtausgabe*, have been published since the 2000s. At the moment, the collection includes 28 volumes, including the early phenomenological treatises in ESGA 5–7. Prior to the publication of ESGA, the Cologne Carmelite Order had published a series of collected works of Stein under the name *Edith Steins Werke* (ESW) from the 1950s to the 1990s. This collection contains 18 works, excluding some of Stein's philosophical works and instead focusing on Stein's religious and autobiographical works. For example, ESW excludes all Stein's early phenomenological treatises.

Currently, Stein is read in both theology and philosophy. Of these two areas, the theological interest in Stein's works has been more significant. In Catholic circles, Stein is highly regarded as a thinker and as a patron saint of Europe. Carmelites and other theologians and religious philosophers have analysed Stein's texts on the Catholic faith. In Germany, for example, Beate Beckmann-Zöllner has written and spoken extensively about Stein, more or less directly related to religious-philosophical themes. Within Catholic thought, Stein's early phenomenological works are sometimes treated as so-called proto-Christian works, as if they were merely part of Stein's early journey towards Christian philosophy, instead of being perceived as independent phenomenological works (see Calcagno, 2014, p. 3; MacIntyre, 2007). While the theological investigation of Stein is a bigger field than the phenomenological Stein studies, the relevant area of Stein scholarship for this thesis lies in the phenomenological discussion of Stein's early phenomenological period. Therefore, I will not discuss the theological interest in her work more than necessary in this thesis.

It is notable that many of the contemporary authors cited above (Jardine, 2014, 2015; Magrì, 2015; Szanto & Moran, 2015; Zahavi, 2014) have used Stein's work on empathy as an equal source with Husserl's studies on empathy. At the same time, some other scholars within phenomenology still consider Stein's work on empathy only as an elaboration of Husserl's work. For instance, the description of a special issue on Stein—titled “Edith Stein and other Forgotten Disciples of Husserl: Celebrating the 80th Anniversary of Edith Stein's Death”—in *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* states: “Edith Stein's most relevant contribution in the field of phenomenology is, probably, the deepening of the study of the notion of empathy (*Einfühlung*). At heart, phenomenology is nothing more than variations on Husserl. Therefore, one may interpret the work of Edith Stein as one of those heresies that constitute the history of phenomenology” (Pires Lopes Nunes et al., 2022). While Husserl is a major character in the history of phenomenology and Stein's early phenomenological period was strongly influenced by his work, as my Article I

demonstrates, in my view, even her account of empathy—not to mention her other phenomenological treatises—stands on its own and differs at some points from the accounts of Husserl, Lipps, and Scheler while being influenced by all of them.

In the 2020s, Stein's treatise on the state has caught more attention among philosophers than before (Bello, 2022; Reyes-Gacitúa & Calcagno, 2020; Taieb, 2020). For instance, Calcagno (2015; 2021) and Hamid Taieb (2020), among others, have published analyses of Stein's investigation of the state. The most notable out of the works discussing Stein's treatise on the state is the whole collected volume *Edith Stein's An Investigation Concerning the State* edited by Reyes-Gacitúa and Calcagno (2020).

In his book *Lived Experience from the Inside Out: Social and Political Philosophy in Edith Stein* (2014), Calcagno lists several reasons for the earlier disinterest in Stein's early phenomenological works—at least other than her work on empathy. First, Stein did not strictly follow Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, especially from the part where the assumption of the existence of the world is set aside (see Husserl, 1986). Afterwards, it was transcendental phenomenology that became influential, which left Stein and many other early phenomenologists with less attention. Second, Calcagno lists Husserl's and Heidegger's dismissive attitude towards Stein, which made Stein's career difficult and made her look like their student or secretary instead of a colleague. In addition to this, Husserl and Heidegger regarded Stein mainly as a religious thinker, and this view lived long among later phenomenologists (Calcagno, 2014). Third, related to the second point, as Calcagno has straightforwardly put it, “[s]exism and racism combined to frustrate Stein's philosophical ambitions” (Calcagno, 2014, p. 7).

Another reason for the dismissal of Stein's phenomenological work before the 2000s is the impact of Stein's unfavourable history on the availability of her works. Related to Calcagno's point about antisemitism, the National Socialist society prevented the distribution or printing of works by writers of Jewish origin. Therefore, the works printed during her lifetime were difficult to get (Schulz, 1993). Moreover, Stein's unpublished works were not available until the 1950s, because the rights to her works were transferred to the Cologne Carmelite Order only after her death was confirmed in 1950. The publication of her collected works could begin only after that year. In addition, there were no English translations of her works before the American publishing house ICS began to publish Stein's work in English in the 1980s. Given the dominance of the English language in contemporary international academia, this latter factor had a major impact on the recognition of Stein as a philosopher.

Contrary to Calcagno's view of the first reason for the dismissal of Stein's works, there is an ongoing discussion on whether Stein really abandoned Husserl's transcendental phenomenology presented in *Ideen I* published in 1913. Relying on the history of the so-called Göttingen Circle that was rather realist-

phenomenological along the lines of Husserl's earlier work *Logische Untersuchungen* (Logical Investigations), published in 1900–1901, and in which Stein was an active member, Secrétan (1992) indeed describes the Steinian phenomenological method as “phenomenological realism,” not excluding the reality of the world when doing phenomenological investigation. In contrast, Lebech (2015) has argued that Stein did not think of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology as negatively as is often argued. Stein indeed uses Husserl's method of *epoché* in *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* (1916–1917), but simply bracketing the existence of the world does not mean that she approaches the world as being constituted by consciousness or transcendental subjectivity. Also, it is known that it was only a few months after the defence of this thesis in 1916, when Stein declared herself contrary to the “idealism of the Master,” at the same time when she started to edit the manuscripts of the second volume of Husserl's *Ideen* (Filho, 2022).

As we can see, in *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person* (ESGA 14), Stein speaks of the phenomenological method similarly to the one given by Husserl in *Logische Untersuchungen* (before his *Ideen I*): “I have already touched on the most elementary principle of the phenomenological method: to look at things themselves. Do not question theories about things; eliminate as far as possible everything you have heard, read, and already constructed, but approach them with an unbiased gaze and draw from direct observation” (p. 27).³ This suggests that she did follow the phenomenological method provided by Husserl before his transcendental turn: to bracket the existing theories about the world. At the same time, however, her presentation of the phenomenological method in *Einführung in die Philosophie* comes close to Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. In this work, she describes the phenomenological method as starting with the Cartesian doubt, after which all that is left is the doubt itself and thereby the experience of doubt and the whole domain of consciousness (ESGA 8, p. 14). This is how, according to Stein, phenomenology provides the “absolute foundation” (*absolute Boden*) for all philosophy (pp. 13–14). Thereby objects are viewed as “phenomena” in the Husserlian phenomenological sense and not as worldly things. Her following description of the consequences of this accomplishment comes close to Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, but leaves the question of the constitutive subject open by just mentioning the world as a correlate of experience:

³ Das elementarste Prinzip der phänomenologischen Methode habe ich eben schon einmal angesprochen: die Sachen selbst ins Auge fassen. Nicht Theorien über die Dinge befragen; möglichst alles ausschalten, was man gehört, gelesen, sich selbst schon zurecht konstruiert hat, sondern mit unbefangenen Blick an sie herantreten und aus der unmittelbaren Anschauung schöpfen.

It follows from this that the whole world of objects, which threatened to disappear from us through the elimination of natural experience, is included in phenomenological consideration with changed signs: not as a world of being, as natural experience posits it, but *as a correlate of experience. How it stands with the existence of the world, we leave that open for the time being.* We do not deny it by not making use of natural experience, we only practise abstention from judgment – ἐποχή, as the sceptics used to say. We have sought a field of absolute knowledge, and we have found it: it is the realm of phenomena, i.e., of pure experiences with all that belongs to them, and to this realm of phenomena belongs the world itself. The philosophical method we sought consists in the faithful description of the phenomena we call phenomenology. (p. 16, emphasis mine).⁴

Regarding the ongoing discussion on Stein's approach, we can conclude that it is not certain that Stein abandoned transcendental phenomenology, but certainly she does not exclude social or political topics from her phenomenological investigations like Husserl does in his *Ideen I*. However, based on her description of pure experiences as containing the world itself, and given her investigation of empathy as the foundation for experiencing the world, her understanding of phenomenology might at least not meaningfully allow the Husserlian reduction to the so-called sphere of ownness (*Eingeheitssphäre*) presented in *Cartesianische Meditationen* (Husserl, 1991, §44). Still, as Husserl brings social and political topics back to his own research later, for instance, in *Krisis* (2012) and in his notes on intersubjectivity and the state (e.g., Husserl, 1973a, 1973b), it becomes even more unclear whether the Husserlian transcendental phenomenology really excludes such topics (see Miettinen, 2020; Steinbock, 1995).

⁴ Es ergibt sich daraus, daß die ganze Gegenstandswelt, die uns durch die Ausschaltung der natürlichen Erfahrung zu entschwinden drohte, mit veränderten Vorzeichen in die phänomenologische Betrachtung einbezogen wird: nicht als seiende Welt, wie die natürliche Erfahrung sie ansetzt, sondern als Erlebniskorrelat. Wie es mit der Existenz der Welt steht, das lassen wir vorläufig dahingestellt. Wir leugnen sie nicht, indem wir von der natürlichen Erfahrung keinen Gebrauch machen, wir üben nur Urteilsenthaltung – ἐποχή, wie die Skeptiker zu sagen pflegten. Wir haben ein Feld absoluter Erkenntnisse gesucht, und wir haben es gefunden: es ist das Gebiet der Phänomene, d. h. der reinen Erlebnisse mit allem, was ihnen zugehört, und zu diesem Bereich der Phänomene gehört die Welt selbst. Die philosophische Methode, die wir suchten, besteht in der getreuen Beschreibung der Phänomene, die wir als Phänomenologie bezeichnen.

2 The articles: Applying and rephrasing Stein's works on empathy, memory and collective experience, and the state

The three articles included in this thesis are separate and independent works, but they have several points in common. First, as I have brought up above, they all discuss 21st-century sociopolitical situations phenomenologically by using concepts, arguments, and analyses found in Stein's early works. Second, they all discuss these situations as crucial for the contemporary political sphere but as also expanding to the private lives of individuals. Third, all these situations include some kind of indirect experiences of others in the sense of perceiving others through media or through other factors in the society that mediate the idea of specific others, such as my community or my co-nationals, being there somewhere, even though I do not perceive them directly. In Article I, such indirect perception of others is discussed in terms of media-based empathy, and in articles II and III, such indirect perception of others is discussed in terms of imaginaries and assumptions about others, who make up "my" community but who may remain anonymous to the subject.

The three articles also follow Stein's conception of the constitution of social experiences. Empathy forms the basis of interpersonal experience (see Magri & McQueen, 2022, p. 113), which is why I have put the Article I first in the order of this compilation. However, empathy alone does not cover the whole range of social experiences. Rather, as Stein's analysis in *Beiträge* suggests, in collective experiences such as a community, empathy is not the sole constituent of the social experience (Szanto & Moran, 2015)—if empathy even is constitutive of some social experiences. For example, collective memory that I investigate in Article II is a collective phenomenon and involves collective experiences of "us." It might not involve empathy but rather a vague imagination of the group and "me" belonging to that group. Continuing with social experiences that might not involve empathy—these social experiences have transcended empathy in the constitution of experience—in Article III, I take up the state as a kind of social experience. The state is more than just a community or a society and becomes an object of perception that transcends the immediate social encounters here and now. In contemporary

philosophical terms, we might call the state a “social imaginary” that forms our social and material reality. A state never appears to the subject as a whole, but, from the first-person perspective, only instances of the functions of the state appear. The three articles included in this thesis also follow the order of the three works Stein published during her early phenomenological period. The chronological and thematic order of these works go hand in hand.

Even though I do not explicate this in the articles, the three articles are thematically related also by the fact that media-based communication is crucial for the occurring and existence of community-wide and society-wide collective memory and especially nation-state nationalism (Anderson, 2016). Therefore, now when I look at the three articles, I suggest that media-based empathy provides the foundation for such 21st-century sociopolitical phenomena as widely spread (nation-wide, society-wide) collective memory and nation-state nationalism, even though, as said, the social experiences in collective memory and nation-state nationalism probably transcend empathy.

Methodologically, to demonstrate the timeliness and relevance of Stein’s thought still today, I apply, rephrase, and develop further her arguments about the less obvious cases of empathy, the constitution of memory and collective experience, and the relation between the state and the people or nation in the era of climate crisis. To do this, I use both reconstruction of her arguments constructed in the 1910s and 1920s as well as phenomenological analysis of the objects I investigate by means of Steinian arguments. In other words, I do not accomplish exegetic or philosophical-historical interpretations of Stein’s works. In every article, in addition to Stein’s works, I use the relevant literature discussing the topic at hand: empathy and media, collective memory, and nation-state nationalism and climate politics. This synthetic approach incorporates general philosophical methods of argument and conceptual analysis, source criticism, and basic informal logic. In this regard, my approach is innovative and speculative, focusing on finding ways to apply Stein’s discoveries to contemporary issues.

A central theoretical starting point of my articles is thus Stein’s thought. My analyses are thus Steinian. As implied by the discussion about whether Stein’s phenomenology is transcendental or not, her way to do phenomenological analysis differs from other early phenomenologists, especially from Husserl to whom her work often is connected (e.g., Jardine, 2014, 2016; Moran, 2022; Zahavi, 2014). As mentioned, Stein did not fully adopt the Husserlian method as presented in *Ideen I*, which includes setting aside or bracketing the belief in the existence of the world and approaching the world as constituted by consciousness. Instead, in her four early treatises, Stein clearly assumes the existence of the investigated phenomena—even if she sets aside theories or the naïve assumptions about them belonging to the natural attitude—and that any topic can be investigated phenomenologically. As also mentioned above, in *Krisis*, Husserl explicitly goes along with this view. Stein’s

somewhat more realistic approach, however, is part of her phenomenological oeuvre from the start. In my articles, I use a similar approach, when I apply Stein's concepts and analyses to the topics Stein herself does not discuss.

There are at least three kinds of Steinian analyses related to her philosophical phases: the early Steinian way of doing phenomenology, the middle period of connecting phenomenology to educational-feminist questions and religious philosophy such as scholasticism, and the late period of religious thought. My theoretical focus is on the first one.

Moreover, in this thesis, I speak of both "social" and "political," sometimes combined in the term "sociopolitical," when discussing experiences, phenomena, and philosophical accounts, because the concepts of empathy and collective experience refer to social but not necessarily to political phenomena, philosophy, and experiences. However, in this thesis, empathy and collective experience are related to wider phenomena important in the contemporary political sphere. Thus, it would not be meaningful to speak of two separate areas, the social and the political, when referring to experiences, phenomena, and philosophical accounts related to the topics of the three articles.

2.1 Article I: Media-based empathy

In the first article of this thesis, I concentrate on Stein's theory of empathy through her concept of *Wortleib*, a living word body, referring to words metaphorically as "living," as bearers of meaning in *Zum Problem der Einfühlung*. I consider this concept and Stein's discussion of words, signals, and signs as potentially empathic objects a unique trait in her theory, which has much potential for further studies of empathy expanding outside face-to-face interaction or even outside interaction between two living beings.

The question of how other consciousnesses appear via media has forced us to rethink the classical phenomenological accounts of sociality. However, as the phenomenological account of empathy is very much centred around the perception of the other's living body, it has faced challenges in discussing the empathic experience in media-based contexts, where we cannot perceive the other's body, but something else, such as a screen or a text. In this article, based on Stein's concept of *Wortleib*, I therefore provide a concept for describing the perceived object in media-based empathy: a living textual body. I divide the term *Wortleib* into two different cases—the empathic and non-empathic object—and thereby argue that, while the object of media-based empathic experience cannot be the other's body, it is an empathic *Wortleib*, a communicative empathic object. While Stein herself discusses media-based empathy merely in paper media, I demonstrate the unique usefulness of this concept in analysing any media-based communication and thus the timeliness of her work in this respect.

The reason for taking up this topic is that a huge part of our social relations is in one way or another media-based, either through phone calls, chatting with friends and strangers online, or listening to politicians on television, etc. Media-based communication covers both social and political phenomena, as we communicate with our friends and families by digital and other media tools, and the public sphere functions for the most part through media. Investigating empathy in a media-based context points towards the view of humanity as transcending physical presence.

With this article I want to point out that our sociality is formed by much more than mere physical presence. Especially the political world appears mostly in different media and is thus mostly physically absent, but nevertheless real for us, not mere imagination, but actual views and actions involving actual other human beings as “us,” “you,” and “them.” Therefore, an investigation of empathic experiences in media-based communication concerns a phenomenon that is formative of our current social and political lives.

In this article, I use the phenomenological method of bracketing reality claims about the world in terms of the reality of the other individuals with whom “I,” the subject, am communicating by media. That is, I step away from empirical questions related to media communications and look at the experience of such communication. I set aside the empirical questions of whether the others on the other end of the media are real persons or whether the content I perceive reflects the reality of those other persons or the world around them. What matters is how the subject perceives others in the media-based communication, or, more precisely, how the empathic experience is constituted in media-based communication, how others are given in such experience and how the experience differs from the empathic experience where the other is given as physically present. Thereby I answer the research question 1 of how to apply Stein’s concept of *Wortleib* in *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* to a phenomenological analysis of the empathic experience in media-based communication.

Stein’s investigation of empathy is timeless, contributing to a popular question of philosophy, that of other minds. Humanity as we know it is based on social relations, understanding what someone else is going through and acting accordingly. Today, the question of perceiving other consciousnesses through other means than their bodies, that is, meeting them otherwise than face to face, is relevant. Stein herself does not spend much time on investigating media-based communication. However, as her work is a very foundational general investigation of the nature and constitution of empathy and includes several thought experiments on different variations of empathy, it also includes fruitful insights to be applied in an investigation of media-based empathy.

For Stein, empathy is absent on higher levels of intersubjectivity, that is, on the levels of community and society (see ESGA 7, II). This becomes relevant when thinking of the wider audience and discussions in media in the political context. I

suggest that, based on Stein's argument of empathy being part of only our experiences of another individual—not a community or another type of group—in the political discussion in media, both empathy and other forms of intersubjectivity may be constitutive of the experience. An opinion letter or a political statement appears to the subject as put forth by another person somewhere there, while, as a context or as a background, also the public sphere and society appear to the subject.

This article grew out of my notes that I had made during my previous research project on the media-based public sphere. I encountered the question of whether we actually encounter other persons via media, and if we do, what does it suggest about our abilities to lead meaningful discussions in the media-based public sphere. When reading Stein's 1917 work on empathy, I noticed an interesting term, *Wortleib*. I first misunderstood the term as referring to a human living body mediated by words, but this misunderstanding led to a realisation of the potential of this concept in the investigation of media-based empathy. I figured out that to discuss media-based empathy, dividing the concept of *Wortleib* into two, an empathic and non-empathic *Wortleib*, is useful in distinguishing the perception of a media object as mediating someone's perspective and the perception of a media object as presenting plain non-personal content.

2.2 Article II: Collective memory

In Article II, I move away from empathy to a wider social experience of collectively remembering something from the first-person plural perspective as a "we." I construct a description of collective memory as a collective historical experience by applying Stein's accounts on memory and the higher-order personality in *Beiträge*, alongside contemporary elaborations of the constitution of collective experiences both in general and in political contexts. By drawing from Stein's account, I argue that collective memory, as an emergent collective experience, is essentially different from individual memory. As an act of a higher-order personality, it can take place even within loosely connected communities, such as nations or ethnic minorities. I conclude that a phenomenological analysis of collective memory as a collective experience reveals the difficulty of understanding from the outside how something appears to a collective when the outsider is not familiar with the constitutive elements of their collective memory.

In the 21st century, collective memory shapes politics both locally and internationally. This can be seen in the decolonial politics of the formerly occupied countries and in international relations, for instance, in Europe, where the experience or the memory of the 20th century was very different for the Eastern European than for the other European countries. However, instead of simply looking at the differences in collective memories within Europe or individual

societies, I aim at understanding what collective memory is as an experience and how differences in collective memory appear on the level of experience.

Given the limited amount of contemporary phenomenological analysis of collective memory, the aim of this article is to contribute to the discussion by drawing both from phenomenological research on collective experience and from memory studies. For a phenomenological investigation of memory, one might also use other classical sources, such as the Husserlian analyses of temporality and memory (Hadjipulja, 2024) or the Heideggerian and Bergsonian analyses of lived temporality. However, as an individual experience is essentially different from a collective experience, investigating collective memory as something that appears collectively requires material that combines an investigation of memory and collective experience.

Just like in the first article of this thesis, also in Article II, I take Stein's analysis further than Stein herself takes it. In *Beiträge*, Stein discusses solely individual memory, even if she does this in relation to collectives, such as a family. I contend, however, that this does not mean that the phenomenon called "collective memory" would not exist or could not be analysed phenomenologically by drawing from Stein. Stein's phenomenological study of memory as a psychological phenomenon implies that collective memory is a different kind of a phenomenon from individual memory and therefore a different kind of social and a political situation. In other words, if we accept Stein's analysis but assume that the phenomenon called "collective memory" exists, it follows that collective memory and individual memory are two different kinds of memory. Collective memory must be rather a kind of emergent phenomenon: it is more than the sum of every individual memory and cannot be found as such in any individual's memory. Yet, it is not an act of consciousness of its own. One cannot have a collective memory as such in one's psyche, unlike with one's individual memory. Instead, I suggest that the experience of collective memory is constituted by experiencing other members of the community who also share the same view of the past, or from the outside of the collective by perceiving a group of people sharing a similar view of their past as the collective.

The concept of collective memory was created already in the 1920s by a philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs. The concept appeared for the first time in his book *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (On collective memory) that was published in 1925. However, the concept started to be used more widely only after WWII, during the so-called "memory boom" revealing and discussing genocides, mass deportations, the Holocaust, and other horrific actions targeted at specific groups before or during WWII (see Kekki, 2024b; Malinova, 2021; Mälksoo, 2023). As also my Article II shows, the memory boom grew even more after the collapse of the Soviet Union and continues today. At the same time, discussing collective memories is formative of identities and perceptions of history, which, in turn, affect

politics and other activities on the level of society and international relations (see Kähäri, 2024; Kattago, 2009; Langenbacher, 2008; Mälksoo, 2015; Melchior, 2020).

Even though Halbwachs's book on collective memory came out only three years after the publication of *Beiträge*, it is possible that the concept of collective memory never reached Stein due to gaining relevance and popularity only after her death. Speculatively it can be said that, if Stein had continued to do research on psychological phenomena and collective experiences along the lines of *Beiträge*, she might have read Halbwachs's work and commented on and analysed the concept and the phenomenon of collective memory. However, as this never happened, we are left with her accounts of memory and collective experience based on which we can work out a phenomenology of collective memory.

In the article, I reconstruct a phenomenology of collective memory based on Stein's work by describing the complexity of collective memory as an experience as constituted both by the first-person plural "we" perspective and memory in individual consciousnesses. This complexity lies in the controversy between memory and collective experience. As Stein argues in *Beiträge*, memory as such does not occur within a community or any sort of collective but only in its elements, that is, in the consciousness of those individuals who make up the collective (ESGA 6, II, II, §3a, 157–158). According to her, memory as an act of consciousness belongs only to individuals and not to a collective (a community or any other kind of collective). She assumes the impossibility of a collective consciousness: while a collective can act as a higher-order personality, consciousness and thus the acts of consciousness can belong only to individuals (ESGA 6, II, §1, esp. p. 102). The personality of a higher order is not the same as a higher subjectivity or higher consciousness. A collective may act as if a person—in a "personal" manner, which, for Stein, means action including values and interests—but without becoming one consciousness. Stein attributes experiences to collectives—as supra-individual experiences—while denying that a collective is itself conscious of these experiences. A group of people may have "we" experiences, perceive something from the first-person plural perspective, while not being fused together as one first-person singular experience (ESGA 6, II §1; see Taieb 2020, p. 24). Thus, according to Stein, there is no such phenomenon as a collective consciousness that could literally remember something.

As a collective experience, then, collective memory does not occur within one consciousness but within many. As I argue in the article, this might not be, however, a problem in the Steinian framework. In *Beiträge*, Stein characterises the first-person plural perspective as a manner of responding to an object, such as an event or a history, which is characterised by the awareness of "me" belonging to a wider group so that "I" respond as a member of that group and not as a solitary individual (ESGA 6, II §1). When one has the response to an object as a member of a group,

one so to say has the response “in the name of” the group (*im Namen der gesamten Gruppe*) (ESGA 6, II §1). The idea of “us” may also include those members who are not themselves aware of their belonging to the group, such as small children, and the past or future generations of the group, so that one can respond also in the name of the deceased or future generations. In the case of collective memory, the individuals participating in the collective perceive some historical objects as “ours” and some objects in the present in the light of this remembered past.

For Stein, in a collective experience a participating individual perceives the shared object as real and non-subjective due to being perceived by “us all,” while still being a distinct individual: they may form a shared awareness of forming a “we” and act, receive, and feel together, while not sharing a first-person singular perspective (ESGA 6, II §1). The members may, for instance, share the feeling of sadness for a certain reason in the sense that they all acknowledge and understand that each individual feels sadness for the same reason, but everyone still feels the actual sadness in their own subjective ways, as individual consciousnesses. The collective experiences may also influence the character of the collective. While the character of the collective may influence individual memories of its members, individual memories within a collective, such as a family, may also influence the character of the whole group (ESGA 6, II, II, §3a, pp. 157–158). For example, if family members share good memories about their life as a family, the family is probably happier together than those families where the members lack such good memories. Similarly, a shared view of the past of the collective may influence the life of the whole collective. In such cases, the individuals perceiving the past of the collective do not consider their perception of the past as merely subjective and separate from others but as something that others are able to perceive, too. For such shared experiences about the past, we do not need to assume a collective consciousness.

2.3 Article III: The nation-state in climate politics

Article III continues with collective experiences, but in the context of the state. To get a better picture of the relation between nationalism and global environmental problems within a situation dominated by nation-states, in this article, I present the inherent logic of international environmental politics as a version of the famous Prisoner's Dilemma, while also drawing from Stein's analysis of the state. I argue that the same contingent bonds that relate the members of nations to their respective nation-states are part of the contemporary difficulty of working together for the common good on the international level by creating exclusive feelings of solidarity—the “Prisoners” of the Dilemma. To reveal the experiential background of nation-states in this situation, I rephrase and apply Stein's theory of the state as

a collective entity that may or may not appear to the engaged subject as their social and cultural community.

In Article III, I also take Stein's analysis further than she did herself, explicating the affective bonds within a "nation" and thus a nation-state, which Stein's analysis only implies. As my argument in this article further suggests, her work thus has relevance for further affective nationalism studies. Namely, the point of the article is to bring forth the affective experiential pattern that constitutes the experience of "us" as separate or opposed to others—the "not-us"—and competing with them. In principle, the ideology behind such experience of togetherness could be any exclusive ideology, but in the 21st century, such an ideology often is nationalism in one form or another.

One of my starting points for this article is that, in her treatise on the state, Stein discusses the nation-state with somewhat similar conclusions to a famous nationalism theoretician Benedict Anderson in his *Imagined Communities* published in 1983. However, Stein comes to the same conclusions by her phenomenological method instead of an induction based on empirical material like Anderson. At the same time, another starting point is Daniele Conversi's (2023) argumentation regarding the connection between nationalism and climate change. Nation-state nationalism related to the problems of climate politics is an important topic that is yet mostly undiscovered. As Article III demonstrates, this problematic can be clarified by the phenomenology of nationalism for which Stein's work provides a source.

Stein's investigation of the state can be read from several angles. For example, Lebech (2015) has analysed Stein's work from the viewpoint of shared values (pp. 41–48), while Taieb (2020) has analysed it as an investigation of social acts. To me, in a somewhat similar manner with Taieb, the interesting part in Stein's investigation of the state is her phenomenological approach to the state as a collective formation. This can be seen in my discussion of states as collectives in Article III.

As I bring up in this article, for Stein, the state is at least to some extent a *Gemeinschaft*, and the central characteristic of *Gemeinschaft* are shared values (Lebech, 2015). This does not mean that every member of the community would share all same values with every other member of the community, but they share at least some of the core values keeping them together as a community. In the case of a state, this would mean to share the value of their state. In the case of a nation-state, the shared value keeping the state together is the nationalist value of the nation. As I argue in the article, this pattern of the shared values underlies the Prisoner's Dilemma kind of situation, which as a situation can be dealt with rationally and looks very much like statism, but the ground for such a situation is the national emotional ethos. Thus, I do not claim that all states would necessarily compete against each other in the statist manner.

In addition to Stein's work, in Article III, I discuss other classics of political theory. Most importantly, I refer to theoreticians of nationalism, such as Anderson and Gellner, and to realist political theoreticians or international relations realists, such as E. H. Carr. Due to Stein's and Carr's temporal closeness, in this article, I bring up some similarities in how they discuss the state.

Especially with this article, when reading Stein's works in order to grasp her arguments regarding the state, I have constantly done a critical analysis of the material, while not forgetting the historical context of her treatise on the state. This is because Stein's discussion of the features of the state is at some points outdated. It was written 100 years ago, when the political situation in Europe looked very different from today's Europe connected by the European Union, NATO, Schengen Agreement and other international cooperation systems. For instance, her strict take on the sovereignty of the state is historically interesting, but not a fruitful approach for contemporary liberal democratic states that aim at collaboration and unions with other states (Calcagno, 2014; Reyes-Gacitúa & Calcagno, 2020). In the existing literature, Stein has sometimes been simply admired or even mystified, as if her thought did not include any inaccuracies (see Baseheart, 2010). However, truly respecting a thinker and taking her work seriously allows criticising her work while also applying it to further arguments.

3 The central sources: Stein's early phenomenological treatises

One of the starting points of this thesis is that Stein's three works containing the four treatises form a thematically coherent whole that is a continuum from empathy to other social and collective experiences and to the state: from the most basic (but not exhaustive) constituent of social experiences, that is, empathy, to psychological and communal social experiences and, finally, to the collective experience and the ontology of the state in 1925. Therefore, they provide a meaningfully demarcated group of central sources. In this section, I will clarify the nature of this whole, first by reflecting on each of these works separately and then by arguing that, despite their different tasks, these works form a thematic whole as a continuum. In the end, I will also briefly discuss Stein's other works she wrote before 1925 and why they are not included in the three articles, except for *Einführung in die Philosophie*.

3.1 Brief reflections on the topics of Stein's three works including the four treatises

All Stein's early phenomenological treatises used in the articles of this thesis take up different tasks: *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* takes up the task of clarification and elaboration of empathy and various empathic experiences; "Psychische Kausalität" & "Individuum und Gemeinschaft" published together as *Beiträge* aim at clarifying the founding concepts of the human sciences, among other narrower tasks; *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat* takes up the task of clarification and elaboration of the concept and ontology of the state. This means that all these different treatises discuss partly different topics. As the articles in this thesis do not wholly cover the tasks in these treatises, in the following, I will briefly reflect on each of their tasks. I will present my reflections in a chronological order starting with empathy, continuing with the foundation of human sciences as one of the main aims of *Beiträge*, and ending with a reflection on the state. As I will note, Stein's treatise on empathy and her treatise on the state are thematically narrower than her *Beiträge*. At the same time, as my reflection on empathy demonstrates, she has continued some of the investigations done in the treatises in her book *Einführung in die Philosophie*.

3.1.1 Empathy

The study of empathy, *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* (1917), is Stein's first published work and, according to a common view within Stein scholarship, serves as the basis for all her later work (Magrì, 2015; Szanto & Moran, 2015). The main topic of *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* is empathy as *Einfühlung*, “feeling-into-the-other.” Stein’s account of empathy is an account of experiencing another consciousness instead of a non-conscious object (ESGA 5, III, §5). This refers to the immediate grasp of the point of view of another conscious being and roughly understanding what their point of view is without having to explicitly deduce it. For example, when I see another person, I immediately perceive the direction in which they are looking, what they are doing, or in which direction they are walking. However, my perception does not eliminate the possibility of error (ESGA 5, III, §5m).

The original German term *Einfühlung* literally means feeling in the other, immediately and intuitively grasping what the other experiences, but not in the same way as they have them. The other has their experiences from their own unique first-person perspective. The English translation “empathy” is not perfect, as it is often thought to relate to sympathetic feelings, such as pity, understanding, and care. Other options, such as “immediate relation” have been proposed (Depraz, 1995), but “empathy” has still been the most commonly used English translation for *Einfühlung* among phenomenologists (Zahavi, 2014).

The term “Einfühlung” was created in the 18th century by German Romantic philosophers, most likely by Herder in his theory of the relation between the human and nature (Herder, 2002). During the second half of the 19th century, this term started to be used more widely in the discussions of the psychological phenomenon of relating to others and grasping what they are going through (Nowak, 2011). The most important author who developed the term in this direction was Theodor Lipps, whose works Stein, too, cites in her discussion of empathy (ESGA 5, II, §3). During the early 20th century and the interwar years, there was also a critical discussion about the concept of *Einfühlung*. For instance, Weber criticised Lipps’s use of *Einfühlung* as a naïve projection of the subject’s own feelings to the person one is trying to understand (Weber, 1988, pp. 75–89). Weber’s context is, however, research on history, which is not the primary interest of at least phenomenology. Stein notes this critique without citing Weber in §3 by referring to “some historical theories” (ESGA 5, II, §3). Stein, too, criticises Lipps’s account of empathy as “inner imitation” (Lipps, 1907, pp. 718–719) and “co-experiencing” (*Miterleben*) (Lipps, 1907, p. 721). For Stein, grasping another’s experience entails a clear self/other distinction, which cannot be established by the projection of one’s own affects onto another, but precisely involves empathy as an other-directed act (ESGA 5, II, §3e; see Szanto & Moran, 2020).

Stein discusses empathy also in *Einführung in die Philosophie* (ESGA 8), where she elaborates some of the main contents of her account. In that work, Stein defines and explains empathy concisely as follows:

As perception, empathy is an original experience, a present reality. What it presents, however, is not one's own past or future "impression," but a current original movement of another person's life, which is not in continuous connection with my experience and cannot be reconciled with it. I place myself in the perceived body as if I were the centre of its life and "as it were" an impulse in such a way that it could trigger a movement—perceived "as it were" from within—which would coincide with the externally perceived one. If empathic perception were not motivated by external perception, it would be no different from imagination. In this way, however, it participates in the constitutive character of the motivational view. Insofar as the content of external perception and empathy match with each other, so far, I regard the original movement of life empathically as reality. (ESGA 8, p. 113).⁵

As I pointed out earlier, Stein's account on empathy resembles Husserl's account. Her work on empathy was originally a doctoral dissertation written under his supervision. Part I of the original doctoral dissertation has gone missing, which is why the current version starts straight from Part II. Nevertheless, Stein's work on empathy is more concise than Husserl's, as it is organised mostly within one work, while Husserl's account—or a variety of accounts—is spread over many manuscripts and notes mostly found in *Husserliana* 13–15. The clarity of her treatment of empathy in contrast to Husserl's account might be one reason for *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* being the most popular of Stein's works among phenomenologists (Jardine, 2014; Magrì, 2015; Moran, 2004; Svenaeus, 2021; Szanto, 2015; Zahavi, 2014). *Einführung in die Philosophie* has been cited less, probably because it has not been translated into English and because it contains discussion of several topics, not just of empathy.

However, despite the close relation with Husserl's work, Stein's account on empathy is also original: for her, empathy includes self-reflective knowledge (Baseheart, 2010, pp. 36-39). This means that, for Stein, empathy does not only yield our knowledge of other minds but also of ourselves. The perception of another's consciousness also allows a more advanced reflection of "me," because empathy provides "me" the eidetic sense about myself and, more importantly, advances that knowledge to the concrete essence of what it is to be human (ESGA 5, III, §5p). Therefore, for Stein, empathy is the basis of consciousness of the self and the world. This is clearly different from Husserl's account, in which self-

⁵ I provide the original German quote from Stein only if I want to prove a point by that quote.

perception as the perception of one's own sentient body is the starting point for empathy and intersubjectivity (Husserl, 1973a, p. 250).

3.1.2 The foundation of human sciences

Stein's early phenomenological research is partly motivated by the goal of producing a clear and logical foundation for human and social sciences. This goal is most clearly present in *Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und der Geisteswissenschaften* which plays the main role in my Article II. As the title points out, this work deals with the foundations of psychology and humanities—or human sciences, but *Geisteswissenschaften* refers to an area covering parts of both human sciences and humanities. As Stein discusses Tönnies's and Simmel's works in Part II of this work, the analysis of *Geisteswissenschaften* mostly concerns the concepts of sociology. Stein's aim is to clarify the concepts, the background of any erroneous assumptions that may exist in psychology or sociology as they were in the 1920s, and the essences of the key factors in the mentioned fields, which include the logical principles of these factors and their experiential constitution. This work thus shares the general aim of German academics of that time to investigate the methods and aims of these sciences after psychology had separated from them and started to look for methods resembling the “exact sciences” (Baseheart, 2010, p. 42). The same goal of clarifying concepts is also part of Stein's research on empathy and the state, which include studies of possibly problematic assumptions in these fields and their solutions.

The two parts in this work are separated as two treatises. The first part investigates the foundations of individual psychological phenomena. It is influenced by James's theory of psychological phenomena⁶ and Bergson's theory of time consciousness. Here Stein brings out the physical and psychological sides of the human world of experience: a human being is a whole made up of body and mind, in which the two overlap in many ways (e.g., ESGA 6, I, I, §4; see ESGA 5, III, §4). Observations, emotions, and sensations are subject to bodily influences and vice versa. For example, physical fatigue affects sensory perception as well as the experience and motivation of one's possibilities (ESGA 6, I, II, §3).

⁶ In the Husserl Archives in Leuven, there is a copy of James's *The Principles of Psychology*, which is full of notes in shorthand, especially in chapters on topics that are central for Husserl's phenomenological theory, such as time consciousness, the self, and the stream of thought. This suggests his deep interest in James's theory, which might have influenced Stein's reading of James as well.

Another central argument in the first part of *Beiträge* is the distinction between causality and motivation.⁷ Causal relationships refer to the physical, material world, while motivation is a cause-and-effect relationship on the mental side (ESGA 6, I, I). In the mental part of a person, there are no causal relationships, but motivation (ESGA 6, I, III). It is notable here that Stein only talks about that part of mentality that we are aware of. In other words, motivation is conscious and partly volitional. For example, value judgments are part of motivation: if I think that hurting others is bad, I feel bad when I see someone hurting someone else. In a similar manner, memory, which I discuss in Article II, is not a causal phenomenon caused by one's environment and causing the subject unconsciously to believe or act in certain ways.

The second part of *Beiträge* continues on the basis of the first part with collective and social experiences. As I have brought up in the section discussing Article II, in this part, Stein argues that collective formations can have agency, even if individuals do not lose their individuality even in seamlessly functioning and close communities. However, a collective as a higher-order personality is more than the sum of its parts and is guided by values generally accepted in the community (see also Husserl, 1973b, p. 182). For example, a political party is more than the individuals who come together in it: a party can act in different ways than any sole individual participating in this formation would (ESGA 6, II, I, §3d).

In this part, Stein also analyses three forms of sociality or social formations—*Masse*, *Gesellschaft*, *Gemeinschaft*—that were common tools of analysis in sociology and other related fields in the early 20th century. Stein takes the distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* from Tönnies, for whom these meant the traditional society (*Gemeinschaft*) and the (Western) modern society (*Gesellschaft*). Stein, however, analyses the characteristics of these forms and argues that no society exist independently without community-like features. That is, there is no pure society, while a pure community without any society features can exist (ESGA 6, II). This is because *Gesellschaft* is characterised by Tönnies as a formation in which others are objectified, but as Stein argues, fully objectifying others would mean that we do not perceive them as other consciousnesses and thus we could not have a social formation with them in the first place (ESGA 6, II). Therefore, any existing *Gesellschaft* always involves some traces of *Gemeinschaft* as a formation in which others are perceived as other subjects. A mass or crowd, on the other hand, is for Stein a momentary social formation that cannot exist

⁷ Baseheart (2010) characterises Stein's concept of motivation as follows: "She uses the term 'motivation' in a broader sense than that in which it is applied only to free acts. It is a universal structure valid for the whole range of intentional experiences, a structure which undergoes different elaborations. The "I" directs its gaze on the lived ensemble of intentional objects in consciousness and grasps their connections, progresses from act to act with a constantly developing continuity of meaning." (p. 43).

continuously because it does not involve a sense of belonging or acting together with others (ESGA 6, II, II, §4b).

Stein's investigation of collective experience in *Beiträge* relates to these three forms of sociality. She calls them a priori social forms as also does Simmel (1908, p. 41), who Stein quotes on many pages when she discusses the attributes of different social formations. These three categories are very popular in the academic and artistic products of the prewar and interwar period: the idea of masses can be found in several scholars such as Herrmann Broch, and critiques of the modern society as a *Gesellschaft* can be found implicitly even in movies such as Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*. That is, during those years, these categories might have generally appeared as universal elements of human collectivity. Therefore, in Stein's social environment, these concepts could possibly have been regarded as referring to universal theoretical forms of sociality rather than to contingent sociological inventions related to the empirical reality.

3.1.3 The state

The topic of the state is not a classical topic in phenomenology. Despite its topic, *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat* includes many connections with *Beiträge* and can thus be viewed as a thematic application of phenomenological analyses and methods. This statement can be backed up with Husserl's statement in *Krisis* that phenomenology is a method that excludes no topic, mentioned above (Husserl, 2012, p. 188). It is notable, though, that in *Ideen I*, he states that the exclusion of the natural world in *epoché* involves the exclusion of such actualities as state and law (Husserl, 2009, p. 131). Later in his career, still, Husserl himself made notes and drafts regarding the state, but never worked out a coherent theory (Szanto, 2023).

The continuation between *Beiträge* and the investigation of the state is among the features that make Stein's treatise on the state a unique work both within phenomenology and within the theory of the state. Stein brings philosophy of mind into her theory of the state and utilises it to investigate state-related factors such as law-making acts (ESGA 7, I, §2), the state as a higher-order personality (I, §2c), and the law as distinct from morals and other ethics-related beliefs such as religion of the inhabitants of the state (ESGA 7, II, §6). She operates with the concept of the state that she draws from classical and 20th-century discussions of political philosophy.

She calls the first part of the work an ontic analysis of the state. In this part, she describes and criticises the classical and contemporary accounts of the state (see ESGA 7, §1). However, we can also approach her concept of the state in the first part of the work as a phenomenological concept if we consider the state as being constituted by collectivity as *Gemeinschaft* and/or *Gesellschaft*. Based on Stein's

conclusions in both *Beiträge* and *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat*, the state is a mixture of these social formations. A “state” for Stein is therefore not just an institution constituted by sovereignty, but it also *appears* to those recognising its sovereign status (ESGA 7, I, §2c).

According to Calcagno and Reyes-Gacitúa, Stein’s “investigation of the state ... has received scant consideration” (Reyes-Gacitúa & Calcagno, 2020, p. 1). One of the reasons they give for this is that Stein’s treatise on the state may seem naïve as it was written in the interwar period, when there had just been one brutal war all over Europe and fascism and National Socialism were becoming more powerful, but Stein described the functioning state as lawful and democratic (see ESGA 7, §1e).⁸ I disagree with this explanation. Stein’s treatise on the state is partly a philosophical–political commentary explaining why the degenerated forms of government (tyranny, oligarchy, ochlocracy) are not as functional as proper monarchies, aristocracies or democracies and why a state must be governed by the rule of law: if those in power break the law or use the state for their own personal interests, they break the sovereignty of the state, because no private person is above the law in a sovereign state (ESGA 7, §1b). She and many of her contemporaries witnessed how the abandonment of the rule of law and the totalitarian rule destroyed the German state. The rise of National Socialist totalitarianism can be seen as an exemplary case of the state losing its sovereignty to a relatively small group of people who as if kidnap the state for their own purposes and thereby harm the very status of the state as a sovereign entity. Here, I agree with Angela Ales Bello (2022), when she says that Stein does not underestimate the negative aspects of human life, including the state. She just does not view these aspects as essential to the phenomena she investigates (p. 298). Accordingly, for Stein, the rule of law is essential for a sovereign state, that is, for her, a state in the proper sense. The essence does not exclude the possibility of harming the rule of law and the sovereignty of the state. Negative aspects of state politics, such as totalitarianism or despotism, are not excluded as possibilities according to the essence of the state, but they are not part of this essence. Therefore, Stein does not have to analyse these phenomena as

⁸ Reyes-Gacitúa and Calcagno’s argument can be countered by pointing out the general interest towards Husserl’s ideas on the state, as Husserl could be argued to be more naïve and incoherent in his ideas concerning the state than Stein. Think of the above-mentioned self-contradiction in his views on whether state can be investigated phenomenologically in *Ideen I* and *Krisis*, his belief in social teleology leading towards a community of love and his view of the state as a unit of law-related norms (Husserl, 1973a, p. 107). The latter is an account of the state led by the rule of law, which Calcagno and Reyes-Gacitúa criticise in Stein. If the reason to ignore Stein’s treatise on the state would really be its optimism, then there should not be any interest towards Husserl’s ideas related to the state, either. As Husserl’s views have, however, caught interest (Crespo, 2020; Miettinen, 2020; Szanto, 2023), the reason for the ignorance of Stein’s work must lie elsewhere.

necessary parts of the state. Rather, states can be destroyed precisely by destroying their law and sovereignty, which Stein mentions (ESGA 7, I §1e), because without sovereignty and the law the state is not a state anymore. In other words, in my view, Stein's account of the essence of the state as sovereign and governed by the rule of law is not naïve but explicates the conditions for both the sustainability and the destruction of states.

Stein's investigation concerning the state involves much that Stein does not discuss in her other early phenomenological treatises. The state and the law as topics of analysis relate to a whole different philosophical tradition than the traditional topics in philosophy of mind. Stein discusses the state as a sovereign agent in competitive relations with other sovereign entities. This means that, in terms of the theory of the state, she can be called a statist and a political realist, both of which are relevant political-philosophical accounts still in the 21st century (Lieven, 2021). This means asserting the primacy of the state in both international and internal politics. Statism means to view the international sphere primarily as an unstructured society of states, contrary to cosmopolitanism. Realism in this context means that politics is conceived as interests defined in terms of power. Sovereignty is considered crucial as the state has the ultimate legal authority over a defined territory and the people within it (McGrew & Lewis, 2013). Stein's approach relates her work to this much wider realism/idealism debate that took place in the interwar period as well as after the war and can be seen, for instance, in E. H. Carr's *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939) used in my Article III and in Simone de Beauvoir's "Moral Idealism and Political Realism" (2005).

In her discussion of the constituents and tasks of the state, Stein follows mostly her contemporaries and classics of the theory of the state: Hobbes, Pufendorf, Hegel, Fichte, Jellinek, and Reinach—even if she is critical of some of their accounts. At least some of her reading of these authors is common to the general interwar period reception of the classics of the theory of the state. For instance, her reading of Jellinek reflects the general interwar reading of Jellinek's international legal studies as a staunch apotheosis of German (Hegelian) notions of absolute state sovereignty (Bernstorff, 2012). Due to following Tönnies in her 1922 and 1925 works, Stein's investigation of the state also bears many similarities with Weber's work. Thus, her characterisation of the main features and conditions of the state follows the German thought of her time: the idea of the state as essentially sovereign, the critique of the social contract theory—based on opposing the idea of a state of nature outside or prior to the state—and the idea of the written law of the state as something posited, called "positive law," are all common aspects in the 19th and 20th-century German political thought (see Thornhill 2000, pp. 9–17).

As Stein's work on the state includes discussions of the matters and authors of her time, this work also provides historical insights. The treatise was published in 1925, a few years after it was originally written. Stein most likely got her motivation

for writing the treatise from her political activity in the German social democratic party (DDP) in 1919–1921 (Sawicki, 2006). The political discussions of her time are reflected in her discussions about the forms of the state: what pros and cons are included in monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, what underlies the idea of the nation-state, and whether a state should be independent of other states and organisations in order to keep the status of the state.

Regarding political philosophy in general, Stein's aim to provide a neutral description in the lines of phenomenology is an original methodological feature. For instance, Stein does not say that acts of occupation or colonialism would be *right* or *wrong* in any moral sense, but she describes them as possibilities a state has, be they evaluated as moral or immoral by someone (ESGA 7, I, §1d). Whether a purely descriptive political theory, including a theory of the state, is possible or not, is debatable, but that is another discussion to be held in other places.

A critical point made by Calcagno with which I agree concerns a contradiction in Stein's argument of state sovereignty as consisting of the freedom to make law and her argument on the state as a community. According to Calcagno, the intimacy and intensity that characterise the Steinian idea of community pose a challenge for her understanding of the state. He asks whether the idea of law is compatible with the framework of such an intimate and intense form of sociality, which Stein calls community. He suggests that society, rather than community, would be a better fit for the sociality required for the law (Calcagno, 2020). At the same time, however, as Stein explains both in Part II of *Beiträge* (§1) and in the treatise on the state, what she means by "community" (*Gemeinschaft*) is not simply Tönnies's traditional communities, but also abstract human formations, such as the universal community of humanity (see ESGA 7, §1a). Stein uses the term "community" both in the sense of groups of agents and in the sense provided by Tönnies, which makes the interpretation of her analyses sometimes complicated. For example, she speaks of *Staatsgemeinschaft* (ESGA 7, §1c), but she also argues that the state has the features of both a community and a society (ESGA 7, §1a). While law and community in the sense of Tönnies's theory are mutually exclusive, they become compatible if the term "community" is used in the wider sense referring to collective formation of agents.

When reading Stein's investigation of the state, one must take into account that this work includes much that is drawn from other theorists, such as Reinach's analysis of the pure law distinguished from positive law that Stein discusses in Part I §2. At the same time, again, in my interpretation, the characterisations of law and sovereignty function as starting points of her analysis. As we can see in the beginning of every § in Part I, her original analysis comes always after she has provided a general overview of the topic she discusses. Therefore, in analysing Stein's arguments, one must distinguish between the original and non-original parts in Stein's work. Even though Stein is, for her time, rather precise with

citations, at some points, as with Tönnies's concepts of community and society/association in this treatise, one must be familiar with the original sources in order to notice that Stein draws the characterizations and arguments from somewhere else.

It must be noted that Stein's understanding of the state is not only confined to her treatise on the state. There are relevant discussions on statehood in *Beiträge* (ESGA 6, pp. 151, 183, 195, 197, 209) that resemble much of what Stein says in ESGA 7, in *Einführung in die Philosophie* (ESGA 8, pp. 10, 159-160), where she discusses the state in terms of the possibilities of scientific research, and in *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person* (ESGA 14, pp. 118-119), where she discusses the state in relation to community life, again resembling what she says also in ESGA 6 and 7. These discussions are short and sporadic and do not add up to the insights concerning the state relevant in this thesis, which is why I do not discuss them at length.

3.2 Stein's early phenomenological period: a continuum from empathy to the state

As mentioned, the central sources for the Steinian analyses in the articles included in this thesis are Stein's early phenomenological treatises. These treatises form a thematically coherent whole as a continuum of social, collective, and political experiences, from empathy to the state. Some Stein scholars agree with me on this, such as Secrétan (1992). However, for some other Stein scholars, like Calcagno (2014), the status of the treatise on the state in this row is not obvious, even though connections to Stein's other early treatises can be drawn, especially in terms of the categories of social formations and collective agency. Due to this debate in Stein scholarship, in the following, I will argue that the four treatises can be approached meaningfully as a thematic whole and thus as a meaningfully demarcated area of study. As the debate concerns especially the status of the last one of the four phenomenological treatises, I will concentrate especially on the status of that treatise.

As one of the most important contributions to this debate are provided by Calcagno, I mainly concentrate on his account here. I both agree and disagree with Calcagno's (2014) following statement on why the treatise on the state does not belong to the thematic whole of Stein's early social phenomenology:

Considerable gaps exist, and a significant lacuna in Stein's phenomenological logic is the lack of a particular form of awareness that would mark one's living through an experience of the state. In her earlier works, empathy and the three forms of sociality are all accompanied by a particular mental state. While she does assert a lived experience of community (*Gemeinschaftserlebnis*), she does not offer an eidetic

description of what it is for us to live through together an experience of the state; there is no *Staatsgemeinschaftserlebnis*. No unique mental state accompanies the experience of political life. Rather, Stein's political ontology presents the state as an object of consciousness, whose meaning we, as a collectivity living within the state, can share and understand as lived experience of community, which draws upon empathy. (p. 162)

First, as I say in Article III, there are many different forms of collectivity in a state. Therefore, it would indeed not be meaningful for Stein to present a specific "Staatsgemeinschaftserlebnis," the experience of a state community, because that would limit the kinds of collective experiences we can have as people forming a state. Otherwise, in a state, we would only have a collective experience as a state and not, for instance, experiences of demagoguery, which occurs in state politics and which Stein discusses in the beginning of "Individuum und Gemeinschaft." As I have explained above, for Stein, a state can be a community or a hybrid of society and community, or it does not even have to be founded on any civil collective but simply on a few persons institutionally acting in the name of the state. Thus, there are many forms of sociality within the state. In *Beiträge*, too, Stein provides examples of several real worldly groups, such as families or political parties. Just like there is no distinct essentially separate experience of belonging to a political party, a *Parteigemeinschaftserlebnis*, there is no particular *Staatsgemeinschaftserlebnis*.

The question of what kind of sociality the state is includes the question of how others appear to the engaged subject in such social formations and what are the relations between "me" and others, what is the "us" that is experienced in such a formation. Thus, phenomenologically put, the state is an object of consciousness, but it is also a cluster of certain ways of living together. Unlike Calcagno argues, for Stein, it is not only an object of consciousness, but also a bunch of sociopolitical experiences, while it does not allow all kinds of social formations, such as a mass or crowd (see ESGA 7, I, §1a).

It is true, however, as Calcagno (2014) says, that Stein's work on the state differs from her other early phenomenological treatises in several respects. In her treatise on the state, Stein does not investigate and provide basic concepts for phenomenological studies. The work is very concise in the sense that Stein assumes the reader to know German Idealism, Hobbes, Pufendorf, Jellinek, and many other theorists of the state and thus does not explicate at length the arguments and ideas she counter-argues in the book. In addition, unlike in her work on empathy and *Beiträge*, she does not explain the connections between her different ideas very thoroughly. The work is very much a thematic analysis of the characteristics of the state and less an analysis of classical phenomenological topics related to philosophy of mind.

Moreover, I agree with Calcagno when he says that Stein's text on the state is more polemical, more straightforwardly argumentative than her other three

treatises, and more “political” (Calcagno 2014, p. 164). The latter also counters Bello’s statement that Stein does not discuss political issues (Bello, 2022). For example, in her treatise on the state, Stein advocates the viability and validity of a certain kind of state, namely, the sovereign model of the state as opposed to a federal model. An example of the latter is the German empire, which she calls a monster in the lines of Pufendorf (ESGA 7, I, §1b).

However, like in her other early treatises, in her treatise on the state, Stein proceeds by examining and criticising various theories relevant to her object of investigation, in this case, theories of the state. I thus disagree with Calcagno also in terms of the methodological differences between Stein’s treatise on the state and her other early treatises. As Calcagno argues, in the works on empathy and *Beiträge*, Stein proceeds by first obtaining an accurate phenomenological essence of the object under investigation and thereafter engages the theories of other philosophers, psychologists, or scientists relevant to the object (Calcagno 2014, p. 163). This is what Stein does in *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat*, too: she starts with a tentative characterisation of the state based on earlier theories and advances by critically engaging with various theories of the state by using the eidetic phenomenological method, thereby also providing characterisations of some of the experiences related to the state. She explicates her method in a popularised manner, without using the terms “epoché” or “eidos,” in §3a in Part I. Moreover, in the treatise on the state, Stein shows the reader at length what can be done with her phenomenological analysis of the three forms of sociality (*Gemeinschaft*, *Gesellschaft*, *Masse*) regarding the state as a particular sociopolitical case. Here Stein also uses many other concepts she had developed in the other three treatises, such as the concept of “types” in her discussion of the state and people (ESGA 7, I, §1c).

Stein herself points out the connections between her treatise on the state and her other early treatises in several places, for instance, in §1 and §2b of *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat*: in §1, she brings to attention that she has already discussed the three concepts central to the starting point of the treatise—*Gemeinschaft*, *Gesellschaft*, *Masse*—in the second part of *Beiträge*, and in §2b, when discussing the essence of law-making acts, she notes that she has discussed the topics of free and voluntary acts in the first part of *Beiträge* (in section III, §4). Moreover, in the latter part of the treatise on the state, Stein discusses values in the state and thereby the relation of the state as a higher-order personality to individuals. The latter relates to her argument presented already in the §1 of “Individuum und Gemeinschaft” that consciousness can only be an individual consciousness. While the state makes the law, only individual subjects experience the world and the state evaluatively, which involves the perspective of morals (ESGA 7, II, §1, §4).

Supporting my view of the continuum from *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* and *Beiträge* to *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat*, Lebech (2015) argues that the work Stein has done in *Beiträge* plays an elementary part in her theory on the state. If she had not written *Beiträge*, she would have had to write the analysis about values and different formations of social groups and experiences in her treatise on the state. According to Lebech, Stein's account of values as formative of communities in *Beiträge* is a central point for her theory of the state: "It is the community-forming ability of values that make them of decisive importance for Stein's concept of the state, as the state is a community or at least relies on a community" (p. 41). My interpretation of Stein's treatise on the state in relation to the three other treatises comes thus close to Lebech's, Bello's (2003) and Secrétan's (1992) accounts who have read Stein's work on the state as a classical phenomenological description of the essence of the state and as consistent with her other early treatises.

3.3 Stein's other works from the early period

It is worth noting that Stein's early phenomenological period includes also other works besides the three works that I have used in the articles of this thesis:

- 'Zur Politisierung der Frau,' *Der Volksstaat*, no. 1, 10. Februar 1919, 3-4 and no. 4, 25. March 1919, 5-6 (as 'Zur Politisierung der Frauen'). ESGA 28 (2020), 11-16.
- 'Vorwort' to Adolf Reinach: 'Über das Wesen der Bewegung' in *Gesammelte Schriften*, 1921, 406. ESGA 9 (2014), 7.
- 'Freiheit und Gnade,' 1921, ESGA 9 (2014), 8-72.
- 'Wort, Wahrheit, Sinn und Sprache,' ca. 1922, ESGA 9 (2014), 73-84.
- 'Was ist Phänomenologie?' *Wissenschaft/Volksbildung – Wissenschaftliche Beilage zur Neuen Pfälzischen Landes-Zeitung* 5, 15th May, 1924. ESGA 9 (2014), 85-90.
- *Einführung in die Philosophie*, 1920–1924, ESGA 8 (2004).

Out of these other works, the articles included in this thesis cite the last one, *Einführung in die Philosophie*, written around 1920–1924, in Article I. This is because that book includes several points where Stein discusses empathy as *Einfühlung* in a way that elaborates on the views presented in *Zum Problem der Einfühlung*. This work also is illuminating in working out the early Steinian phenomenological methodology.

As can be seen from the list of her other works belonging to the period when she wrote the four phenomenological treatises, her interest in religious philosophy and scholasticism started already in the 1920s. "Freiheit und Gnade," written in 1921, is a phenomenological-ontological work discussing Christian topics such as mercy or the grace of God, freedom in grace, the church, sacraments, and God. During this

time, she also started translating scholastic works, such as Alexandre Koyré's work on Descartes and scholasticism. As Lebech has put it, rather strongly, *Eine Untersuchung über den Staat* is "conclusive of a chapter in her life" (Lebech 2015, p. 48), as it is the last part of her non-religious phenomenological works before her conversion in 1922. Note that the treatise on the state was written already in 1921, the same year as "Freiheit und Gnade," but Stein revised the work before its publication in 1925, so that some parts of it are written after 1921.

So, even though the historical period including the four early treatises goes from 1917 to 1925 due to the years of publication of these works, Stein's second phase can be considered starting already during this early phase with her writing "Freiheit und Gnade." Thus, the last years of the first phase and the first years of the second phase in her work overlap. A fully historical-exegetic research on Stein's work in 1910s and 1920s should also include an investigation of "Freiheit und Gnade," but such work does not belong to the scope of my thesis.

From the texts published in ESGA 9, we can see that Stein did not quit phenomenology after the publication of the treatise on the state. Instead, she continued writing on the nature of philosophy, Husserl's phenomenology, and the latter's relations to scholasticism. However, from thereon, her phenomenological works often include religious or theological elements.

4 Conclusion

Above, I have provided a description of the twofold aim of this thesis, which is to clarify the topics of the articles through a phenomenological analysis and to test how and to what extent Stein's early phenomenological works have relevance in investigating these and potentially other 21st-century political issues on the experiential level. After this, I have introduced the three articles that picture the 21st-century sociopolitical experiences as founded on empathy but transcending empathic relations and becoming exclusive experiences of "us" versus "them" on a wider sociopolitical scale. I also have described the state of Stein scholarship concerning especially Stein's early phenomenological period and the central sources of this thesis concerning Stein's works. The latter has included brief reflections on the works that I have applied in my articles and a statement that these works should be regarded as forming a coherent whole in the form of a continuum from empathy to the state through an analysis of other social and collective experiences.

There is much potential for future studies on Stein's philosophical work. Stein is a multifaceted philosophical character, whose importance for early phenomenology both philosophically and historically is still to be discovered. She was a phenomenologist, a feminist philosopher of education, a religious philosopher, and a nun, at a time when women were not accepted as equal to men and Jews were oppressed and annihilated based on their ethnicity. As I have brought up above, many of Stein's early phenomenological works combine phenomenology with other areas of philosophy, such as the philosophy of science (ESGA 6) or political philosophy (ESGA 7), and with other disciplines, such as psychology and sociology (ESGA 6) or law (ESGA 7). For instance, she combines Tönnies's sociology with the phenomenology of collective experiences (ESGA 6), and in her investigation of the state (ESGA 7), she analyses classical theories of the state, such as Grotius and Pufendorf, together with 20th-century law studies and phenomenology.⁹ Reflecting

⁹ As Baseheart (2010) has argued in relation to Stein's later period, "Stein's work shows what happens when phenomenology reaches back into the tradition to broaden and illumine its vision through contact

the social and political conflicts of her time, even if addressing them rather indirectly in her texts, the body of her work is rich and diverse.

As this thesis demonstrates, Stein's social and political philosophy brings together philosophy of mind and social and political philosophy. Her being an early social and political phenomenologist also makes her original among the group of early phenomenologists as she discussed political topics in her published texts and in her speeches on feminism (see ESGA 13). As a phenomenologist, in her early social and political work, she aims at being descriptive and politically neutral and not bringing moral claims into the discussion. She does not argue for a certain kind of organisation of social life over others, even though she surely held convictions such as the importance of democracy. Thus, regarding especially her work on the state, Stein does not fit very well in the contemporary categories within political philosophy, where the argumentation often takes the side of certain political ideology or governmental form. Despite the aim of neutrality, her works can be categorised as early political phenomenology, as political philosophy in general also covers an area of topics related to social and political phenomena that do not present the status quo in a negative light.

As Stein can be regarded as an original early phenomenologist, there is much future potential in applying her work for further contemporary social and political philosophical questions. For example, it is crucial to understand political collective experiences in various contemporary cases, which could be done by drawing from Stein's analyses in *Beiträge*. One could also compare Stein's treatise on the state with other theorists of the state in order to find critiques and counterarguments that could develop the current theory of the state in new directions. In addition, the most popular of Stein's early works, her work on empathy, could still be used to uncover the less investigated cases of empathy and ways of understanding the self.

with the thought of Plato and Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, and Scotus, to name only a few" (p. xi). Throughout her career, Stein engaged with multiple areas of philosophy.

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