

The Collected Works of

EDITH STEIN

Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross  
Discalced Carmelite

1891-1942

Volume Seven

ICS Publications  
Institute of Carmelite Studies  
Washington, D.C.  
2000

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*Philosophy of Psychology  
and the Humanities*

Edited by Marianne Sawicki

Translated by Mary Catharine Baseheart  
and Marianne Sawicki

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The original of this work was published in German as  
"Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie  
und der Geisteswissenschaften," *Jahrbuch für Philosophie  
und phänomenologische Forschung* 5 (1922): 1-283.

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#### Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Stein, Edith, 1891-1942

[Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und  
der Geisteswissenschaften. English]

Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities / Edith Stein  
(Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross); edited by Marianne  
Sawicki; translated by Mary Catharine Baseheart and Marianne  
Sawicki.

p. cm. — (The collected works of Edith Stein, Sister Teresa

Benedicta of the Cross, Discalced Carmelite, 1891-1942; v. 7)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-935216-73-1 (pbk.)

1. Psychology and philosophy. 2. Phenomenological  
psychology. 3. Social psychology. 4. State, The. I. Sawicki,  
Marianne. II. Title.

B3332.S672 E54 1986 vol. 7

[BF41]

193 s—dc21

[193]

99-057411

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“a practical resolve deliberately set.” And finally, there’s an inherent spontaneity to the act of willing that’s missing from the inclination. The resolve “proceeds from the egoic center, not as an event but as a peculiar doing, in which the egoic center *itself* produces a mental stroke *out of itself* centrifugally.<sup>88</sup>

This description of willing can be adopted in its entirety, but you have to be clear about the fact that what’s meant by act of willing here is the concrete unity of stance of will and resolve, so that the determinations achieved pertain to both but don’t hold for both in *the same* way. Therefore, furthermore (if we at first disregard the distinction between willing and inclination, and have in view only willing in its relationship to motivation), the description applies not only for the act of willing in the strict sense, but rather for all other voluntary acts as well. If I forgive someone for an offense for the sake of the remorse he feels, then first of all I notice that remorse, but that’s not all; rather, I take it in with respect to that posture of mental “hearkening back” of which Pfänder spoke.<sup>89</sup> And now I become aware of the demand to forgive that emanates from the remorse, and again I don’t let it rest at that, but I recognize it, approve it, grant its final admittance, and basing myself upon it I accomplish the act of forgiving. (In conformity with what we established earlier, here we would just distinguish: on grounds of the admitted demand, the inner posture of forgiving imposes itself, and the pardon is properly executed.) Thus according to its whole structure, forgiving is to be grasped as a parallel to the process of willing. It is absolutely not to be interpreted so that the *will* at first goes out from the demand in order to forgive. That can be the case, but it need not always be. But therefore motivation in the precise sense that Pfänder had in view is not confined to acts of willing proper, but extends to the whole sphere of voluntary acts.

88. [See “Motives and Motivation,” pp. 21-22, for a paraphrase.]

89. [Stein’s point is that while Pfänder had described a hearkening back to a demand registering within *one’s own* current of consciousness, social acts such as forgiving hearken back to a demand felt in *someone else’s* current of consciousness. This point is in accord with the theory of empathy that Stein had published in 1917 in her dissertation. See *On the Problem of Empathy*, CWES 3, trans. Waltraut Stein (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1989).]

#### IV. Impulse and Inclination

##### §1. Inclinations and Attitudes

In order to understand where the lines of demarcation fall between inclining and willing and between the motivatedness or unmotivatedness of inclination, we must first of all consider them from the points of view that were guiding us up until now. Obviously, inclinations are not free acts. They originate in me without my doing anything myself, and they cannot be the result of a plan. To be sure, it makes a kind of sense to say: I wish or I plan to strive for knowledge. That striving<sup>90</sup> then signifies a doing that is initiated in order to attain knowledge. But don’t confuse it with the inclining that we have in view here, which should be delimited from willing. Don’t confuse deliberate striving with the impulse to jump up and run out into the open air; or even with curiosity, the mysterious urge to break open some path that leads to knowledge; or with inclining toward the kinds of doing that were designated above as “striving” in an equivocal use of the term. Inclining, in the sense of the impulsive, can only be awakened in me; it cannot be willed or freely executed. Inclining is not a deed of mine; it just happens to me.

This seems to line up with attitude, which we just receive as well and don’t furnish ourselves with.<sup>91</sup> This is also supported by the fact that with inclinations – just as with attitudes – we have to distinguish between voluntariness, and the freedom to accept them or refuse them, to allow them to become operative within us or to renounce them. Suppose I accept an inclination. That means I give myself over to it, I allow it to take possession of me. That is not yet to say that the inclining leads to a doing, or that it converts into a willing. For example, the wish awakens in me to make a recreational trip. I accept it as a wish, I don’t shut it

90. [*Streben* can mean an active “striving,” as in these two sentences. But Stein focuses on the more passive sense, “inclining,” as suggested by the phenomenologist Alexander Pfänder; see his essay “Motives and Motivation.”]

91. [*Stellungnahme*, “attitude, literally means “stance-taking.” In the preceding part, Stein was discussing attitude as a kind of stance that involuntarily accompanies perception and that is appropriate to whatever is being perceived. Here she argues that inclinations, like attitudes, also emerge involuntarily and call for some decision.]

out, I give it room, and it develops into an intense desire for relaxation, for the beauty of the countryside, for fresh air and sunshine. However, alongside of this desire there exists in me the firm resolve to deal first with the work that I've begun, and the desire is not allowed to arrive at its natural consequence. I do not will the trip, and I do not carry it out.

Now if we investigate what it means to renounce an inclination, we notice that there exists yet another possibility here besides those we came to know with the attitudes. If I don't plant my feet on a belief, I make it inoperative but I don't make it go away. An inclination cannot be made merely inoperative; but I can get rid of it altogether if I withdraw myself from it. Instead of giving myself over to every wish that arises, I distract myself from them, I busy myself, completely absorbed in the work that I have before me – and it succeeds. It's not just that the inclination doesn't turn into a doing; rather, it dies away without having taken hold. That doesn't mean only that I have withdrawn my attention from it and in doing so have shoved it into the background. For it's also possible that I make up my mind not to think about the trip any more, and carry through with that resolve. As long as the thought remains outside the scope of my vision, the inclining is dormant, too. (At least, it can be; but it doesn't absolutely have to be dormant. It would also be possible for the inclination to linger as a mysterious and indeterminately directed urge.) But as soon as I grant it admittance again, the inclining wakes up again too. In a similar way, a belief remains "latent" as long as I compel myself not to think about the fact in question; but it revives as soon as I turn to it again.

It's entirely otherwise if you suppress not just the thought of what you're inclining toward, but the inclining itself. I can once again accept the thought of the yearned-for trip after work is done; but now, nothing more of the yearning is to be detected. The yearning is extinguished. In order to understand this "extinction," we must pursue the structure of inclinations from another direction. As they make their appearance, inclinations are conditioned – purely phenomenally – by various features. Sometimes (just like attitudes) they are stirred up by the objectivities to which they are directed, and to be sure, by the objectivities precisely with the determinate character with which they appear – in our example, by the "enticing" trip. On the other hand, they have their "source" (as Pfänder says) partly in an attitude of the ego, perhaps delight over the attractiveness of the trip that I anticipate; and partly in a certain purely

egoic condition like fatigue that allows relaxation during the trip to appear so enticing for me.<sup>92</sup> If I turn my gaze away from what I'm inclining toward, then I deprive the inclination (and the attitude presently founding it, respectively) of their objective support; however, I don't choke off their source. As long as that is present, the inclining comes back as soon as its basis is restored.

Considered more exactly now, our case looks like this: in a state of fatigue with exhausting work, the thought of the vacation dawns upon me. Out of the fatigued state, the urge for liberation from the exhausting activity bubbles up, and it "attaches" itself to the vacation. While I am representing it to myself intuitively, tendencies emerge that appear significant for me, and they lend it the character of "tempting," and now desire for it sets in within me. The indeterminate urge has become a goal-directed inclination. Alternately, suppose that out of love for somebody I develop the inclination to show him some proof of love. This starts out as an indeterminate urge too. Then it strikes me that a gift would please him, and now my inclining directs itself toward procuring the gift and sending it off.

The inclining can also be grounded purely objectively. Because I was considering a beautiful picture and am filled with delight over it, the desire to purchase it seizes hold of me. (Basically that's also the case with the previous example – even if indirectly – since the attitude from which the inclining develops is objectively grounded itself.) In such circumstances, the inclining will become more or less repressed, or will surface again, if you turn your attention away, or turn back again. If inclining arises from an attitude, then it can also be neutralized by my not "accepting" that attitude and by my making it inoperative; for example, the delight over the picture, or the love for the human being whom I'm inclined to please.

It's different when the inclining has its source in a living condition *as well*. Then the resurgence of the inclining depends upon whether or not that source is still present with the new turning of the attention toward the goal. If it is no longer present, then the striving doesn't set in again,

92. [In other words, the "attitude" or *Stellungnahme* is motivated by the perception of desirable objects; therefore one can cease to have it by deliberately ceasing to perceive those objects, by distracting oneself from them, by keeping busy about other matters. But the "egoic condition" or *Ichzuständigkeit* is caused involuntarily by antecedent material conditions and physical processes. Thus, the "source" or *Quelle* of inclination is partly motivational and partly causal.]

in spite of the renewal of the objective basis. But multiple possibilities exist here. The fatigue – in our first example – can have developed into utter exhaustion that no longer is able either to produce or to sustain inclining on its own. Then we might turn ourselves with total attention toward the trip that tempted us before, and also recognize its significance for us; yet the trip leaves us cold and arouses no inclination. The suppressing of the inclining has then consisted only in the withdrawal of attention. The total extinction of the inclining is an event that happened within me and that I had absolutely nothing to do with: a *causal* process, in our sense. Yet it's also possible that although the condition of fatigue persists, its corresponding inclining is deliberately held at bay, perhaps even while I advert to the goal. The inclining would like to activate itself, but I don't allow it to get established. And finally, it's possible that the condition's effect hasn't just been counteracted, but rather, the condition itself is "conquered."

Thus we see: inclining is (1) objectively grounded; (2) causally dependent; and (3) dependent upon the influence of the will, in a threefold way: (a) the objective basis can be withdrawn from the inclining by turning the attention away, which is itself "free"; (b) the influences of causal factors can be voluntarily counteracted; (c) the causal factors themselves are submitted to the influence of the will.

Now if we take another look at attitudes, we note that all the relations of dependency just mentioned are observed with them as well. However they are not *purely* objectively grounded, but rather depend upon whatever condition the subject is in: with regard to the same set of circumstances, an attitude arises at one time but at another time does not. Furthermore, with attitudes we came to recognize a contribution of the will: I can voluntarily "neutralize" a present attitude, and I can voluntarily "take on" one that isn't present. Nevertheless differences exist. (1) For the attitude, the objective basis is *condicio sine qua non*<sup>93</sup> of its existence; this is not so with inclining (in the broad sense of the word as we were using it up to now). (2) The attitude is "required" or rationally grounded by its objective basis; with inclining, this is not so, or not always so. (3) If a rationally required attitude does not arise, then a surrogate for it can be created through a voluntary "assumption"; with inclining, this is not so for any inclining that isn't rationally required. I can hope or

93. [*Condicio sine qua non* is Latin for "condition without which not." This technical philosophical term here indicates that there can be no attitude unless there is some objective ground for it.]

wish in a disingenuous manner, just as I can feign forgiveness or "assume" a belief, but only if the hope or the wish can stand before my eyes as something "justifiable" for me; however, that is not always the case. All of these relationships will undergo a more extensive clarification through the following analyses.

## §2. The Structuration of the Impulses

We're not yet able to follow up the complicated connections of causality and the efficacy of the will. First we'll apply our preliminary findings to the question about the motivatedness of inclining. We begin by establishing: There is such a thing as *unmotivated inclination*. The urge to get moving, which arises from an exuberant aliveness and releases itself in running, leaping, dancing, and such; the urge to keep busy, which issues from a state of hyperstimulation, a "nervousness" (understood, of course, only as a conscious condition) and discharges in a quest for always new impressions and occupations – they are determined purely causally by these conditions. We wish to designate them as *impulses*.<sup>94</sup> The direction inherent in them is absolutely not grounded upon any objective conscious entertainment of a goal; it doesn't get determined at all before the experience of an actual fulfillment or the anticipation of a possible fulfillment. Here we have a mere being impelled, like the ball that is sent off in a certain direction by a bump.<sup>95</sup> The "impelled" ego admittedly is conscious of being impelled, but it doesn't strive<sup>96</sup> toward a previously conceived goal any more than the moving ball does.

94. [*Triebe* means "impulses" rather than "drives." The term "drives" in the lingo of psychoanalysis has come to connote constitutive features of human being that are steadily present; however Stein was writing before Freud gave this technical sense to the term. Rather, she describes experiences that come and go, depending entirely upon the current state of one's bodily being.]

95. [Writing some five years later in the same journal, Martin Heidegger would also describe phenomena of intrinsic momentum within human being. Compare his discussion of "falling" (*Verfallen*) in §38 of *Sein und Zeit*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson as *Being and Time* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962). In the 1930s Stein prepared a critical response to Heidegger's "existentialist" phenomenology, and it was published posthumously in ESW 6: 69-135.]

96. [*Strebt*, "strive," is the same term that means "incline" when Stein uses it in the particular sense that she has defined and affirmed.]

Thus in the impulses we have experiences without objective grounding that – if we disregard a possible engagement of the will – depend purely upon the life condition at the moment, are produced by it, and increase or subside or even vanish altogether as it changes. Therefore there are conditions under which any impulse ceases, wherein the power is lacking for any kind of operation of living (of course “operation” is not to be understood here as “free doing” but rather as a “going-out-of-yourself” which is also to be regarded as a being-impelled).<sup>97</sup>

In this regard, we still have to bear in mind the doublesidedness that we established for all causal occurrence. Any operation of living depletes the available lifepower in proportion to its intensity. However an impulse also brings about a change in the lifesphere that undermines its own existence; and the more severe it is, the more rapidly must it “burn itself out.” Let’s suppose there’s a consciousness in which all activity consists in impulses and which is fed purely from the lifesphere. [In such a consciousness,] it looks like the state of exhaustion soon would have to set in, where activity wouldn’t be possible any more. If that doesn’t happen, it means that impulses are ceasing when they find their fulfillment, so that the power needed for their support doesn’t have to be expended [any more].<sup>98</sup> If we consider the dependence of the impulses upon the lifesphere in comparison with the dependence established for experiencing as a whole, it appears to be rather more extreme. With the other experiences we recognized a certain moment – their “coloring” – as the specific causal contingent, and we found the point within experiencing at which the effecting starts, while the experiential content is involved with that indirectly at first. With the impulse it’s obviously otherwise. Not only how the impulse is experienced, but also what it is, its material content, is determined by the lifesphere. The impulse is entirely brought forth from the lifesphere. To be sure, the impulse is where the condition of living undergoes a conversion; the impulse is synthesized out of the condition of living and not out of something flowing into the experiencing from elsewhere.

Of course, here again we also have to distinguish between the impulse, as a conscious experience, and sentience, which manifests itself therein.

97. [*Getrieben-werden*, “being-impelled,” should not be confused with compulsion in the ordinary sense of the term.]

98. The structuration of the impulses and of their satisfaction would have to be made the theme of a separate investigation, of course, and need not concern us any further here.

Correspondingly, we have to distinguish between the phenomenal dependence of experienced impulses on the feelings of life, and their real dependence upon lifepower. If a very strong impulse “consumes” me, then I feel as though my vigor is fading away *because of the impulse*; and in this modification of my “self-assessment” a decrease of lifepower comes to givenness for me, a utilization<sup>99</sup> of lifepower within an active operation of life. The structuration of this operation of life is something other than the uptake of data. What we’ve got here is experiencing not of something other than the ego, but rather of egoic contents; and the real quality of the sentient subject is manifested in those contents just as in the experiencing itself. The real impulse appears as a quantum of lifepower running off in a certain direction. And insofar as this running off comes to givenness, it forms the content of an impulse experience (and possibly of its conversion into a doing). There is no such thing as a “getting ready” of lifepower for the maintenance of impulses, corresponding to the cultivation of sensate capabilities. Each impulse is a direct utilization of lifepower. There is merely a spontaneity in the tapping of lifepower for impulses and, balanced against that, a capability of the subject to put a stop to the tapping, a capability that is no longer intelligible in terms of the causal mechanism alone.

Lifepower that has gone into the real impulse spends itself partly in its runoff, partly in the doing that perhaps proceeds from it. Therefore the doing simultaneously represents the fulfillment or satisfaction of the impulse. Now besides impulses that urge toward a doing, there are those that don’t aim toward a doing – or at least, not primarily – but rather toward a condition of the subject. Thus there’s a desire for rest, which is satisfied if the onslaught of external impressions to which the subject was exposed ceases. This desire has its phenomenal source in a feeling of fatigue. A reduction of lifepower manifests itself in that feeling, and the need to replenish it manifests itself in the desire. While the lifepower is not quite withdrawn by the fatigue, the desire takes lifepower up into itself that can perhaps initiate a doing through which the yearned for state is brought about (for example, closing yourself off against external impressions, of which we spoke earlier). If rest commences, the desire dissolves. But rest doesn’t mean just a halt of expenditure of lifepower, but simultaneously a supplementation, a replenishment of available

99. [*Umwandlung*, “utilization,” can also mean metabolism or conversion. Stein is expanding upon her theory of dynamic lifepower exchanges within “the sentient mechanism,” introduced above in part II §2.]

lifepower, which is manifested in a fading of the tiredness and in a decisive transition to new vigor and a positive urge toward activity corresponding to it.

The consideration of impulses completes the picture of the sensate mechanism for us. If the reservoir of power is filled, then it converts itself into activity impulses in which its surplus is used up. If it's near to exhaustion, so that a failure of the functions of the mechanism is imminent, then it sends out "impulses of need" whose fulfillment brings it an influx of new power. Where that influx comes from, we aren't able to say within the framework of our present investigation.

Lifepower doesn't present itself to us as an infinite quantum that gradually devours itself, but rather as maintaining itself through influxes and outflows. In principle, something different would be possible in this regard. Influx and expenditure could counterbalance themselves, so that the quantum would remain effectively steady at the same level. Or the influx could be greater than the preceding expenditure, so that a growth of power would take place. Thanks to the "mechanism" that converts "surpluses," such a gain would however not lead to an accumulating of heightened lifepower but rather to increased life activity. Finally, it would be conceivable – for any experience, even that whose content delivers new power and represents an expenditure – that the influx might not be able to cover the expenditure. Then a gradual but slower expenditure of the available quantum would take place. We are listing these possibilities here only as such, without deciding upon any of them. We cannot now carry out the investigations that would be needed for a decision about them. As usual, the brief causal consideration that we have just inserted does not stand there for its own sake, but only was required in order to illuminate the structure of impulses somewhat more closely. Before we can proceed again to the proper investigation of causal relations, we've got to set forth our studies in the sphere of pure consciousness somewhat more broadly.

### §3. Motivation of Inclining

At this point we consider inclining, which we now are separating from impulse and characterizing by its "goal consciousness." To begin with, we can consider it as one "conversion" of the impulse, a conversion that is to be understood from the fact that something is represented that could satisfy the impulse and, to be sure, as satisfaction of what was

promised. The previously aimless impulse now directs itself toward what's represented. The impulse to move perhaps turns into a desire for a hike. In that case inclining, just like impulse, remains dependent upon the lifesphere not only in regard to its experiencing but also in regard to its content. Inclining arises from the lifesphere and not from the representation of the hike; to the latter it owes only its direction.

But it can also be otherwise. For example, suppose I hear tell of a hike, and there is something that makes me "prick up my ears," that touches me inwardly, and to which I "listen up." I open myself up to it, and it discloses itself to me as a "lure," as an enticement. I don't close myself off from this enticement, but surrender myself to it, grant it admittance, let myself be flooded by the pleasure or perhaps by the "foretaste" of the joy of the hike. In this way the desire develops for me to experience this now also in reality and to bring it about through my doing: an inclining toward the hike. This inclining is objectively grounded according to its content. It develops for me on the basis of the representation of the thing yearned for, on the basis of dwelling upon its enticement, for the sake of this lure, and for the sake of its enticing character. The "lure" of the "enticement" appears to me as an analog of the "demand" upon which free acts are grounded. It seems to be an appeal that resonates into me and becomes effective within me if I grant it admission.

The manner of the "release" of one experience by the other is the same in both cases.<sup>100</sup> And if you take "motivation" in the broader sense of the term, in which it encompasses the release of a mental doing without rational foundation, meaning the "lure" too, then it appears justified to speak of motivation and motive even in cases of inclining. On the contrary, if you take "motivation" in the specific sense in which, besides the determinate form of release, it simultaneously designates a relation of rational foundation, so that "lure" and "motive" have to be separated,<sup>101</sup> then you won't be talking about motives of inclining in every case. For example, the fact that I wish undertake the hike because the hike appears enticing to me is something that's entirely understandable, but it isn't

100. [Namely: (1) the case where the origin of the desire to go hiking is *causal*, having arisen from a superabundance of physiological energy into an impulse which then found its focus in the idea of a hike, and (2) the case where the desire to go hiking originated *non-causally*, from a mental reception of information about a hike that someone else was organizing.]

101. See pp. 43-44, 48, 51.



rationally grounded and it isn't required. Conversely, the kind deeds of a human being require that I wish to show myself to be thankful to him. Here we've got a reason-motive. The original literal sense of "setting into motion" suggests that the *broader* sense be preferred and that the relation of grounding be regarded as a supervening special feature that makes the "release" into a reason-motivation.

In yet another respect the manner of motivation is otherwise with inclining than with willing. Inclinations lack that spontaneous fulfillment which is proper to free acts, the "*fiat*" with which they are, as it were, unleashed in consideration of the motive. But if we bear in mind the fact that even the free acts proceed out of attitudes (the voluntary stance, the posture of pardon) which turn up by themselves on grounds of "demands" received, as well as the fact that the execution resulting therefrom merely verifies and sanctions the relation of grounding, as it were, then it appears unwarranted to restrict motivation to the free acts.

What we have to investigate now is the dependence of motivated inclining upon the lifesphere, on one hand, and its connections with the will, on the other hand, and after that the meshing of causality and the operation of the will. We want to turn first to the connections of willing and inclining, inasmuch as they concern inclining as motivated, in order then to discuss the causal relations within the connection.

#### §4. Inclining and Willing

The "blindness" through which Pfänder wants to separate inclining from willing is something that we will recognize for the impulse but not – at least, not in the same sense – for goal-directed inclining. Consciousness of what is yearned for belongs to inclining, just as consciousness of what is willed belongs to willing.<sup>102</sup> Where they differ, we maintain, is in the fact that willing always includes (implicitly, at least) an orientation toward your own doing. The willed state of affairs has to be standing before me as something to be realized by me. What corresponds to that with inclining is merely the orientation toward your own experiencing, which doesn't need to be any free doing but can even

102. In another sense, a certain blindness is present; this will be shown soon. See following page. [For Pfänder's theory, see *Phenomenology of Willing and Motivation* and the commentary of the translator, Herbert Spiegelberg.]

be a sensation. For example, I can will the inception of an event only if I'm conscious that it's possible for me to bring the event about, and then I also have to will the means that serve to do it. But I can yearn and pine away for the event even if it stands before my mind's eye as – phenomenally – something that isn't up to me, or if I've planned not to take the steps through which it could be brought about. Thus, inclining can be oriented toward a great deal that cannot be rationally willed; for example, toward attitudes (toward a belief, a love, a joy) that can only happen to me and that I can't secure for myself.

Accordingly, from the totality of attitudes there's a particular class that is set apart: those that, whether explicitly or implicitly, are oriented toward my own doing – like the desire to undertake that hike. With these, just as with willing, what I yearn for can stand before my mind's eye as something that lies within the realm of my freedom. Now different possibilities exist:

1. The desire seizes possession of me and converts itself into the action without further ado.
2. The hike is extremely enticing and the inclining is severe, but there are motives that speak against carrying it out: I forgo the hike.
3. No contrary motives present themselves, nevertheless I don't proceed to carry it out.

In these cases of transition to the doing or the forgoing, the question is whether what you've got is still an inclining instead of a willing; in other words, what if anything is lacking here for the phenomenon of willing. The first case surely is missing the premeditation of the will, that which Pfänder depicts as the "centrifugal stroke" from the ego outward. The ego doesn't set the doing before itself and inaugurate it with a "*fiat!*"; rather, the ego is dragged along. There's no stance-taking of the will; the ego doesn't "put its hands on the state of affairs" – as Hildebrand characterizes the stance-taking of the will. Instead, the burgeoning desire impels the ego forward to its goal. Here, in the relation between inclining and doing as well as in the relation between volition and action, the distinction arises that Pfänder selects as characteristic of inclining and willing as such. The action of the will is grounded upon the motives of the action, and while carrying it out the execution the

ego has those motives in view. However in the doing that arises from an inclining, or in *impulsive* doing – as the natural manner of speaking rightfully puts it – the ego doesn't reach back for the motives of the inclining but rather surges ahead to the goal. So you can designate this doing – but not the desire itself – as motiveless.

Thus the distinction consists in these three facts: First, when there is stance-taking by the will, the ego grasps a state of affairs as something that is to be realized by itself; while with inclining, the state of affairs attracts the ego but the ego is vague about the details. Second, no resolve arises from the inclining. Third, the doing is initiated in a different manner by inclining than by willing.

Let's go on now to the second case listed above, the forgoing of the hike. Once again, there are various possibilities here. Conflicting motives can give rise to different inclinations, and the one that prevails is the one that's oriented against the doing that is in question. Then the forgoing follows in the same manner as the doing followed in case 1. Or, a prevailing willing can get in the way of an inclining and nip it in the bud. (Suppose I've made up my mind to finish the work begun, and I don't let myself be diverted from my resolve by the desire for the hike.) Finally, the motives of contradictory inclinations can become objects of a choice for me, in which I'll have to decide for the one or the other. A willing then takes the place of one of the inclinings and the other is suppressed.

With the choice, it's problematic to determine what tips the scale and what denotes the decision as such. I can decide in favor of a motive because it is weightier, or I can decide in favor of an inclination because it is stronger. The two cases are just as different from one another as they are from the case of the victory of one inclination over the other, discussed above. When I'm deciding between two inclinations, what tips the scale is no longer the objects of the inclinations (as was the case with the struggle between conflicting inclinations), but rather the inclinations themselves, as objects of the choice, and a moment within them, the strength, as the motive. If I choose between motives, then surely I am oriented to the motives, as in the inclinations themselves but in a different manner. I don't give in to the inclinations (without suppressing them either). I withdraw myself from the allurements and weigh the inclinations against one another. I examine whether the "lure" would be suitable as a "ground." Another ego, as it were, splits off from the ego that is standing within the play of conflicting motives. This other

ego sees through this play, takes it in hand, and according to its own insight prevails upon the first ego to push this way or that. The "insight" here consists in a live feeling of the precedence that the one motive has over the other (and accordingly – if we don't take "insight" in the strong sense as originally presenting consciousness – a mere knowing about this precedence). From that insight springs the stance-taking of the will with which the ego, as it wills, steps into the game that it has merely been watching up to now.

The felt precedence is the motive of the decision here. The insight alone doesn't do it, which is apparent in the case where the examination yields equal weights for the motives [of the opposing inclinations]. In such a case, perhaps I reach back to the inclinations in order to decide by their strengths. Yet it's possible that they still don't give me any criterion, that they're equally strong, which puts me in the position of Buridan's ass.<sup>103</sup> (After all, the ass is just the ego caught in the struggle between inclinations, for whom another must decide.) Here it's apparent that the ego not only sees through the game, but also takes it in hand. The ego seizes the one or the other possibility in a free stroke out of itself. The discomfort of indecision (and so its objectively grasped disvalue) may impel the ego to make some decision or other. Yet there isn't any such motive to be shown for the particular decision, for turning away from this possibility and seizing upon that one. Therefore the decision stands beyond reason and unreason. Yet you can't call it motiveless, inasmuch as no decision ever seizes upon something that would be incapable as such of inducing a stance-taking of the will.

Let's go on to the third case that we had taken into consideration: a yearned-for doing that is omitted even though no countermotive exists. There are two issues here. (1) An inclining doesn't become a willing all by itself just because it's uncontested (the same goes even for a "victorious" inclination). (2) The inclining doesn't lead straightaway to a doing. The first issue isn't difficult to understand according to the insights already achieved. Willing is no uninhibited inclining, but rather it requires (as a stance-taking of the will) an altered orientation to the object and (as a resolve of the will) a free stroke that bursts forth purely from the ego, as something new, and is not produced out of motives.

103. [In this well-known thought experiment, the ass starves when placed equidistant from two equally attractive piles of hay. John Buridan was a logician who taught at Paris in the fourteenth century. He was an early theorist of physical forces and developed the concept of inertia.]

The second point almost goes without saying, from the different modes and manners in which a doing is initiated by a willing and by an inclining. If moved to action by a resolve, I've got the resolve in view as I proceed with the doing when the opportunity presents itself and nothing holds me back. But to convert inclining into doing, it takes an inner impelling power of a certain strength. Even though there might be nothing in the way of the inclining, that impelling power could be unavailable.

This brings us to objectively grounded experiences and their connections to the lifesphere.

## V. The Intermeshing of Causality and Motivation

### §1. Causal Conditionality of Acts<sup>104</sup>

Although acts have their own distinctive way of being linked together within motivation, that's not to say that they have escaped from the realm of causal influences. As unities constituted in the original current, they are determined in their sequential rhythm and in their "coloring" by the flux of the life feelings, just like the data discussed earlier. More precisely, these experiences, which are "carried out" in their own distinctive sense, indicate the "tension" of experiencing with particular clarity. The more refreshed I feel myself to be, the more "alertly" my "mental eye" looks around, the more intense is the orientation toward the objects, and the livelier the apprehension. Indeed, a certain measure of lifepower is necessary for any egoic activity at all to develop, any act at all to come to life; and to that extent, the inception of acts itself is to be designated as causally determined. And that holds for all acts in the same way. At the same time, what we established previously in the narrower field continues to hold for the "necessity" of the general causal conditionality of all experiencing: that a consciousness is conceivable in which the entire "conditioning" stratum would be missing, a consciousness that would unfold without any fluctuation of "aliveness" and that would also allow acts to devolve out of itself.

104. [*Akt* here means specifically cognitive act, as opposed to the doings and action (*Handeln*) discussed in the preceding sections.]

### §2. Influencing of the Sensate Mechanism by the Contents of Experience

To advance further in understanding, we must now propose distinctions among the acts themselves. Perceptions and recollections of what was perceived, acts of thinking – in short, all acts in which "matters are given" – are carried out in a manner determined by the distinctive character of life feeling at the time, without exercising any reciprocal effect upon the life feeling itself, regardless of the fact that in the process the acts "consume" as it were the power necessary to their inception. Besides that, there are other experiences that share life feeling in a distinctive manner and impinge upon its status: the so-called "emotions" or feelings (as to what corresponds to them from a more objective angle, we can also say the value attitudes). Suppose that while I am hearing a report, and thus while this objectivity, "report," is developing for me into a series in the current of self-generating intellectual acts, a joy at this report is beginning to fill me up. "Joy," this unity of experience, is oriented toward something "external" to the current. Indeed, it is joy "at" the report, therefore an "act." And something on the objective side corresponds to it: the joyousness of the report, which attaches to it by virtue of its positive value. Like all experiences, the joy is causally determined: it is duller or more lively according to the condition of the prevailing life feeling. And it's also possible that the life feeling doesn't even let the joy in, that in its place a feeble phantom enters, in which I very well apprehend the joyousness without being able to "really rejoice."

And this brings us to something entirely new. The joy is not merely joy at the report, but at the same time it fills "me" up, it impinges upon the status of my life feeling. The joy is a new current, as it were, that gushes into the lifestream from elsewhere, "churns it up," influences its subsequent flow, and colors it in a determinate manner. Therefore the kind of impact can vary according to the kind of feeling. To begin with, it seems that when any feeling sets in with a certain strength, it slows down the current. This must be overcome before the feeling makes itself operative in its specific effect. The feeling either impels the rest of the flowing current forward more rapidly or paralyzes it, and colors it either "brighter" or "gloomier." The way in which the life feeling is "colored in" depends – as was said – upon the specific character of whatever the operative experiences may be. This is an "intentional" character that has for its correlate the object toward which the feeling is oriented.