

# ***The Metaphysics of Existence: A Dialogue between Edith Stein and David Deutsch***

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### **Abstract:**

*This work delves into the foundations of metaphysics by examining Edith Stein's original arguments on form, matter, act, potency, and person. By adding new pairs of terms such as eventus, actus and potentia, plants, animals and spiritual beings are integrated into the metaphysical structure. Teilhard de Chardin forms the bridge to David Deutsch. The focus is on David Deutsch's approaches to quantum computability and the many-worlds interpretation. The daring synthesis of these ideas results in a speculative, intellectually challenging and spiritually enriching perspective.*

### **Edith Steins Originalargumentation:**

Edith Stein, heavily influenced by Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, developed a metaphysical perspective built on the central concepts of form and matter. These basic concepts form the heart of their philosophy. Form, in Stein's understanding, represents the essential and individual structure of a thing, while matter is the substantial basis that gives substance to that form. The unity of form and matter is manifested in the person, highlighting the specialness and dignity of each individual.

Another key element in Stein's thinking are the concepts of act and potency. Act represents the actual realization of a possibility, while potency represents the not yet realized or the potential. The development and individual growth of a person

unfolds in the dynamic interaction between act and potency. This interaction illustrates the constant striving for perfection and self-realization.

In Stein's original argument, it is essential to understand that the unity of form and matter and the dynamics of act and potency are not just theoretical concepts, but form the basis for her understanding of the uniqueness and potential of each individual in their existence.

***Extended reasoning:***

In the further development of Edith Stein's argument, new pairs of terms are introduced to enable a deeper embedding of plants, animals and spiritual beings (such as angels) in the metaphysical hierarchy. These terms are *eventus*, *actus* and *potentia*.

*Eventus - inscientia* refers to events in inanimate nature that occur without consciousness. This is about the unfolding of natural events that are not controlled by a conscious actor, but rather follow an inanimate, natural order.

*actus - conscientia*, on the other hand, describes people who act consciously. This term emphasizes the conscious performance of actions by people who are able to reflect on their actions and make decisions based on their awareness.

*Potentia - omniscientia* stands for divine omniscience. Here God is represented as the absolute knowledge who knows all potentials and possibilities. The omniscience of God is viewed as a potential that encompasses and goes beyond all aspects of being.

This extended argument creates a metaphysical structure in which plants and animals are located between events without consciousness and people acting

consciously. Spiritual beings, such as angels, are viewed as a consciously acting subset that is represented by a specific wave function. The introduction of these terms enables a more comprehensive perspective on the positioning of different forms of existence in the metaphysical hierarchy.

### **Teilhard de Chardin as a bridge to David Deutsch:**

The inclusion of Teilhard de Chardin in this discussion of the metaphysics of Edith Stein and David Deutsch offers an interesting expansion. Teilhard de Chardin was an important thinker who explored both evolution and spiritual concepts.

His ideas about Alpha, Omega and the Omega Point, presented in "The Phenomenon of Man", link evolution, spirituality and the fate of the universe. Alpha symbolizes the origin while Omega represents the goal or end point. The Omega Point is the pinnacle of evolution in which the universe reaches a higher order and unites with God.

In this discussion, Teilhard de Chardin's concepts can serve as a link between Stein and German. The idea of evolution, development and a final goal presented by Teilhard de Chardin could be integrated into the dynamics of act and potency in Stein's thought. The Omega Point could be viewed as an expanded form of consciousness that exists across different realities, similar to Deutsch's Many Worlds interpretation.

The Trinity of God that plays a role in your synthesis between Stein and German could also be expanded through Teilhard de Chardin's perspective on Alpha, Omega and the Omega Point. A fascinating connection emerges between

traditional theological concepts, modern physical ideas and the evolutionary philosophy presented by Teilhard de Chardin.

***David Deutsch's argument:***

David Deutsch, a pioneer in quantum computing and advocate of the many-worlds interpretation, provides an expanded perspective that challenges the limitations of traditional thinking about consciousness and existence. Central to Deutsch's approach is quantum computability, which opens up a new dimension in the consideration of mind and consciousness.

This means that consciousness and mental processes are not only tied to a specific body, but can exist across different realities.

A key idea in Deutsch's thinking is the many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics. This theory postulates that with every quantum event, all possible outcomes are realized in parallel existing worlds. In terms of consciousness, this means that mental states and choices can exist in different realities. The idea of quantum computability leads to the idea that mental and psychological phenomena are not limited to the living body, but can be distributed across different versions of a self.

Deutsch extends Turing's notion of computability by suggesting that consciousness is not limited to classical computability but also includes the ability to be "calculated" across different possible realities. This expansion of the concept of computability creates space for a more comprehensive view of the nature of consciousness and mind.

Overall, Deutsch's argument provides a bridge between the microscopic phenomena of the quantum world and the macroscopic level of human consciousness. His reflections open up new ways of thinking about how consciousness can be understood in a broader, quantum mechanical context.

### ***Combining both approaches:***

The connection between Edith Stein's and David Deutsch's approaches offers a fascinating synthesis that reconciles traditional metaphysics with modern concepts of quantum physics. The Alpha concept is seen in analogy to the Father - the origin of all that manifests itself in the unlimited possibilities of form and matter.

Deutsch's many-worlds interpretation finds its counterpart in the Omega concept, the Son, which represents the potentiality of all forms of existence in parallel existing realities. Here the idea of God's omniscience, represented by *potentia - omniscientia*, is expanded to also include the understanding of all possible realities. *Omniscientia* is indistinguishable from resurrection. Because, to speak with Weizsäcker, the omniscience (wave function) of the end point Omega, in order to avoid a paradox, precludes the indistinguishability of the starting point Alpha. Omega is conceived, born, lives, loves, suffers, dies like us and omniscience is resurrection.

The wave function, which plays a central role in Deutsch's argument, is viewed as the mind that represents the consciously acting subset. This wave function, which spans different realities, is interpreted as a link between the Father (Alpha) and the Son (Omega), as it represents awareness of the multitude of possible forms of existence.

The Trinity of God, in analogy to Alpha (Father), Omega (Son) and Spirit, is understood in this synthesis as a dynamic unity that includes not only the development of individual form and matter, but also the diverse possibilities of the many worlds -Interpretation of quantum mechanics.

This speculative, intellectually challenging synthesis attempts to combine traditional theological concepts with modern quantum physics ideas. An expanded metaphysics emerges that goes beyond the traditional boundaries of thought and creates a space for a dialogue between theological speculation and quantum mechanical reality.

### **Reading notes:**

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