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“Lipps, Stein and Ingarden on Empathy and the Coexperiencing of Value in the
Aesthetic Experience”

Over the last few decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth, empathy became an increasingly important theme in studies of perception and aesthetic experience. In the work of Theodor Lipps (1851–1914) empathy became the foundational concept of an aesthetic theory, and also of a social and moral theory, that proved extremely influential in the early decades of the twentieth century. In her PhD dissertation, a large part of which was subsequently published as *On the Problem of Empathy*, Edith Stein subjected Lipps’s concept of empathy to lengthy critical analysis, in the course of which arose numerous insights into essential features of human nature, insights that she then employed in constructing her own view of empathy, focusing on intersubjectivity and our experience of community. The accounts offered by Lipps and Stein of the empathic character not only of our aesthetic experience but of our intersubjective experience of the social world supplied Ingarden with a good deal of material for his own critical analyses of the cognition of the literary work of art. And his analyses of the aesthetic experience have supplied us with directions of research for a “science of literary aesthetic objects” that we have still to explore.