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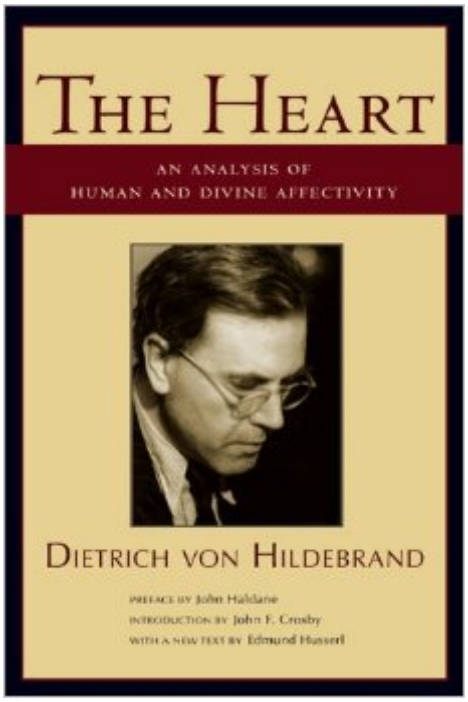
The Heart: An Analysis Of Human And Divine Affectation



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Synopsis

Â Â â œI am personally convinced that, when, at some time in the future, the intellectual history of the Catholic Church in the twentieth century is written, the name of Dietrich von Hildebrand will be most prominent among the figures of our time.â •â “ Joseph Cardinal Ratzingerâ œVon Hildebrandâ ™s concept of affective response, essential to his ethics and to his meaning of the heart, was the wake-up call that mainstream philosophy and social neuroscience are finally recognizing and accepting. We are all in his debt.â • â “ Andrew Tallon, Author of Head & Heart: Affection, Cognition, Volition as Triune Consciousnessâ œVon Hildebrandâ ™s book is a remarkably rich and illuminating exploration of that much neglected area of philosophical investigation, the affective life of the human person, symbolized by the human â œheart.â • First, the fundamental philosophical point is made that the affective life is not just a set of â œfeelings,â • basically all on the same level. Rather, the affective life stretches over a wide spectrum of levels, from the lowest sensible to the highest spiritual, depending on the level of values to which it is responding. Secondly, he lays out a very insightful, perhaps unique, phenomenological description of the various kinds of affective responses, both healthy and unhealthy.â •â “ W. Norris Clarke, s.j., Fordham Universityâ œThe notion of the heart has not been at the center of attention in the philosophical tradition, though it is front and center in Augustine and it plays a larger than expected role in Hegel. Dietrich von Hildebrandâ ™s book, The Heart, is a welcome recovery of this core notion.â •â “ Robert E. Wood, University of DallasÂ

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a very fine essay on the role of affectivity in man - how the emotive sphere must not be undervalued in the trio of intellect, will and heart. "Let us admit that in man there exists a triad of spiritual centres - intellect, will and heart which are ordained to cooperate and to fecundate one another (page 19)Von Hildebrand notes that the affective sphere of man has been to date more or less ignored in philosophical thought. Von Hildebrand notes that affectivity has often been castigated because of distortions, such as where the emotive sphere is disfigured by, for example, mawkish sentimentality.But, for von Hildebrand, the affective sphere to be true to itself must be activiated by a reponse to objective value. This motif was key to his book: "Transformation in Christ". "Real joy necessarily implies not only the consciousness of an object about which we are rejoicing, but also an awareness that it is this obect which is the reason for this joy". (page 26). He compares this real joy to psychic states (high spirits) activated by alcoholic beverages.Pausing here, if I may give potential examples of my own for what I perceive to be inauthentic affectivity: prolonged mourning where the mourning becomes after a time not so much a mourning over the loved one but a kind of entering into and delighting in (in a kind of masochistic way) in the psyhic feelings associated with deep mourning. In other words, there may come a time, when the intellect needs to step in an re-direct the heart so that it is not consuming itself.

this book is pure genius. yes... western philosophy has underated the importance of the heart... the seat of love. a truly wonderful book. i feel very guilty giving it four stars, but his emphasis is on focusing on others as the object of love, kindness etc etc and says little about love for oneself. one cannot love others unless one cherishes and loves oneself.hildebrand’s analysis of the different human emotions and moods is dazzling. his teacher husserl (the founder of phenomenology) was understandably left almost speechless by the first essay in this book. another nice thing about it is that there arn’t too many big words, but a dictionary is needed from time to time.my own view on love is that when we focus on the person we love, there is a oneness or unity. love is the ultimate dissolver of subject object boundaries. love is very oneness itself and without love, oneness is just not possible. the purpose of union is love.hildebrand looks critically at post romantic pragmatism and you can tell that he had a problem with kant (and would with modern day objectivists).he argues that in order to truly appreciate the object (person one is talking to) one must do so holistically. engaging and aware of ones emotions. knowledge of pheremones and body language imply that emotions are important. if you wish to suppress emotions (unless you are a very sensitive person) you favour the unemotional robot.kant said that good deeds should be detatched from emotions. ie

a neutral but practical gift. hildebrand argues that a gift is more sincere if offered with genuine emotion. we as humans should not follow in the footsteps of plato, aristotle and socrates in ignoring the emotions and their importance, but rather should be influenced by...

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