

ARTICLE

WILEY

What is phenomenology of religion? (Part I): The study of religious phenomena

Christina M. Gschwandtner

Fordham University

Correspondence

Christina M. Gschwandtner, Fordham

University.

Email: gschwandtner@fordham.edu

Abstract

Phenomenology of religion can refer to three distinct groups of phenomenological projects reflecting on religion. The term is used in the field of religious studies to designate the search for patterns of religious experiences or practices across traditions and to the methodology that shows religion to be a unique human experience deserving its own field of study. Philosophical phenomenology in the Husserlian tradition also engages religious questions at times. Finally, there is a group of contemporary French philosophers who advocate a phenomenology of religious experience. The first two groups are examined in this article and the third in the sequel. For the first group, the article briefly considers the projects of Rudolf Otto, Mircea Eliade, Brede Kristensen, and Gerardus van der Leeuw, as well as their contemporary interpreters in the field of religious studies. As representative of the second approach, the article considers Max Scheler, Edith Stein, and Gerda Walther as well as commenting briefly on the contemporary work of Natalie Depraz and Anthony Steinbock.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Maurice Merleau-Ponty remarked in 1945 that the question "What is phenomenology?" was "far from being resolved" even "half a century after Husserl's first works."¹ The question "What is phenomenology of religion?" harbors even more potential for confusion. This designation can refer to at least three distinct groupings of thinkers and their methods with only minimal overlap. First, religion is a concern in some of the writings of a group of thinkers directly inspired by or drawing primarily on the work of Edmund Husserl, such as Max Scheler, Edith Stein, Gerda Walther, Hedwig Conrad-Martius, and Jean Héring,² or, more recently, Angela Ales Bello, Emmanuel Housset, Natalie

Depraz, and Anthony Steinbock. Second, the term has been employed for several decades in the study of religion. Originally inspired by such thinkers as Pierre D. Chantepie de la Saussaye (who apparently first used the expression “phenomenology of religion”) and Rudolf Otto, slightly later by Gerardus van der Leeuw, Brede Kristensen, Mircea Eliade, and others, it has become the main methodology in the field of religious studies, although its predominance has recently been challenged by some thinkers in that field. Despite occasional appeals to Husserl, it is only tenuously connected to what goes by phenomenology in philosophy. Finally, a recent movement in contemporary French phenomenology focuses on religious experience in a predominantly Roman Catholic mode, although it strongly insists on its philosophical nature and does not really interact with the other two strains. Its most well-known thinker is Jean-Luc Marion, but the group also includes Jean-Louis Chrétien, Jean-Yves Lacoste, Emmanuel Falque, and, more tentatively, an earlier generation of thinkers, such as Emmanuel Lévinas and Michel Henry. While obviously not all these thinkers can be covered in detail here, these twin articles seek to lay out the main differences in their approaches and to analyze the ways in which they undertake the study of religion in phenomenological ways.³

In the Anglophone world, this work has been taken up by thinkers such as Merold Westphal, John Caputo, Kevin Hart, and Richard Kearney. In that context, it is usually referred to as “Continental Philosophy of Religion,” although that term can also encompass work that is not primarily phenomenological in nature. Indeed, the work of many thinkers who are influenced by or in conversation with phenomenology but take it in different directions—hermeneutic (e.g., Ricoeur, Gadamer, and Lonergan), deconstructive (e.g., Derrida, Nancy, and Vattimo), genealogical (e.g., Foucault and Agamben), psychoanalytic (e.g., Kristeva and Irigaray), etc.—also often touches on religion or even considers it explicitly. While relevant to phenomenology of religion, broadly conceived, they cannot be considered within the bounds of this essay.

2 | PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

“Phenomenology of religion” is the central methodology in the field of Religious Studies, usually considered separate from historical, theological, philosophical, psychological, sociological, and anthropological approaches and often treated as a method unique to Religious Studies and justifying it as an independent field.⁴ Livingston’s *Anatomy of the Sacred*, a popular introduction to the study of religion often employed as a textbook in courses, makes this especially clear: “The goal of phenomenology is to portray religion in its own terms as a unique expression, a reality not to be reduced to or explained in other—for example, psychological or sociological—terms.”⁵ James Cox points to the “central, and even overriding, role phenomenology has played in shaping religious studies as an academic field” and claims that “the phenomenology of religion defines the methodology that is uniquely associated with religious studies as a distinct discipline studying ‘religion’ itself, as opposed, for example, to studying sociology as it is applied to religion or psychology as it is applied to religion.” He also makes clear that phenomenologists are “not philosophers” (or theologians or linguists) and concludes that “only phenomenology provides for the academic study of religions a distinct methodology, justifying its claim to be a field of study in its own right, *sui generis*.”⁶ Phenomenology thus is conceived as distinct from philosophy or other disciplines and the unique methodology for the study of religion.

There is some disagreement regarding to what extent the early thinkers that developed the methods for the study of religion can be considered phenomenologists. Otto’s early landmark study on the holy did not employ the terminology of phenomenology, but he sent it to Husserl who approved it publicly and criticized it privately.⁷ Eliade insisted on calling his method “historical” rather than “phenomenological” yet is often considered a progenitor of the method.⁸ Both Otto and Eliade speak of religion as a mode of *manifestation* and focus on the *experience* of the holy or sacred. Otto argues that the sense of the holy or numinous is at the core of religion.⁹ This mystery of the “wholly other” evokes our wonder and awe, including both fear or terror and fascination.¹⁰ At the end of his treatment of the holy, Otto attempts to draw conclusions about the origin and development of religion from his analysis.¹¹ At least at this stage, he clearly thinks of Christianity as the highest development of religion.¹² Eliade, by contrast, does not privilege Christianity but focuses primarily on indigenous religious traditions, which he examines for the similar

patterns and basic structures they display.¹³ He criticizes Otto for considering only the “irrational” elements in religion and instead seeks to “present the phenomenon of the sacred” in all its complexity.¹⁴ Although he avoids the term “phenomenology,” he clearly speaks of religion as a type of manifestation or appearance: “Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane. To designate the *act of manifestation* of the sacred, we have proposed the term *hierophany*.”¹⁵ Although he thinks of his method as “historical,” he distinguishes it as a particular kind of historical approach, namely, one concerned with examining structures and seeking “to understand the *essence of religion*.”¹⁶ Both Otto's account of the numinous and Eliade's discussion of the manifestation of the sacred are subsequently read as phenomenological analyses by many scholars of religion.

The two central works in early phenomenology of religion are probably van der Leeuw's *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* (originally appeared 1925 in German as *Phänomenologie der Religion*) and Kristensen's lectures in the phenomenology of religion.¹⁷ Van der Leeuw's work has over a hundred chapters considering the “object” of religion (Part I), the “subject” of religion (Part II), the relation of subject and object in outward and inward action (Part III), as well as briefer sections on the ways and goals of “the world” (Part IV) and the “forms” of religion (Part V), including a discussion of founders. The most distinctive characteristic of religion for him is power (the focus of the opening chapter and a theme in much of what follows). In a very short final section of “epilegomena,” he considers phenomenon, phenomenology, and phenomenology of religion. Although phenomenology deals with appearance, while religion is about “ultimate experience” that “evades observation,” this does not mean that religion cannot be understood at all. Distinguishing phenomenology of religion from “poetry of religion,” history of religion, psychology of religion, philosophy of religion, and theology, he defines its task as organizing appearances by assigning names to them, treating them systematically but neutrally or objectively, and working at comprehending the appearances in the attempt to organize “chaotic reality.”¹⁸ He distinguishes this from a search for the origin of religion or an account of its historical development.

Kristensen, instead, does associate phenomenology of religion with history of religion: “Phenomenology of Religion is the systematic treatment of the History of Religion. That is to say, its task is to classify and group the numerous and widely divergent data in such a way that an over-all view can be obtained of their religious content and the religious values they contain.”¹⁹ He is clear, however, that this is not simply about history, but about identifying groupings and structures with the goal of becoming “acquainted with the religious thought, idea, or need which underlies the group of corresponding data” for an overall view of religion's most important ideas and motives.²⁰ Throughout, Kristensen tries to get at the shared “meaning” or “religious significance” of practices evident in various traditions.²¹ For both Kristensen and van der Leeuw, phenomenology is hence primarily about organization and categorization. For van der Leeuw, this is evident in his method of organization of the material—he actually does the organizing and categorizing—while Kristensen states it clearly in opening: “Phenomenology of Religion attempts to understand religious phenomena by classifying them into groups. These groups, which are the typical phenomena, are indefinite in number.”²² It seeks the “essence” of religion by describing common themes in different traditions without judging relative superiority.

Thus, phenomenology in this tradition has become a method for sympathetic consideration of someone else's religious tradition while withholding judgment about it, along with an attempt to ascertain the general patterns religion displays across traditions.²³ This emphasis on empathy is evident already in Kristensen who says of the historian (for him equivalent to the phenomenologist): “The historian seeks to understand, and he is able to do that in an approximate way, approximate, but no more. By means of empathy he tries to relive in his own experience that which is ‘alien,’ and that, too, he can only approximate.”²⁴ It has become a consistent feature in the contemporary accounts. Cox speaks of Wilfred Cantwell Smith as a phenomenologist, based on his “stress on empathy,” “hostility” against reductionism, and creation of typologies based on the ascertaining of religious structures.²⁵ Slightly earlier he identifies as the main themes of phenomenology “bracketing out prior assumptions, employing a fully empathetic approach, identifying typologies, interpreting the meaning of religious behaviour and insisting that religion comprises a category in its own right.”²⁶ The focus on empathetic understanding and the interest in organizing data into types or structures is again evident.²⁷

Besides the empathetic attitude, which has also led to some criticism,²⁸ and the need for organization into patterns, there is also often a desire to reach a universal conclusion or to ascertain an essence, to identify something unique to religion. Cunningham et al. outline four stages to a phenomenological approach: gathering of religious data, search for patterns, analysis of the structure of patterns, and suggestion of generalizations.²⁹ For Edward Jurji, a mid-20th century scholar of religion at Princeton Theological Seminary, phenomenology is an “objective, descriptive analysis of religious essence as it displays itself on the world stage.”³⁰ He also insists that, based on phenomenological analysis, we see that “religion is simply irreducible to what are merely functional and traditional attributes of society.”³¹ By comparing a variety of different religions—which the rest of the book goes on to do—a universally valid analysis of the phenomenon of religion can be achieved.³² Although phenomenology is identified as the central methodology for the study of religion by all of these thinkers, this is not understood in a philosophical sense (which is seen as a separate field).

Despite this extensive reliance on phenomenology in Religious Studies, its current status is contested. Gavin Flood is critical of its universalist and objectivist tendencies. He acknowledges that phenomenology “hoped to reach an objective, unbiased, empathetic understanding of religions that moved away from the traditional Christian attitude to other religions either as wrong, or as pale reflections of its truth.” Although this constituted “a welcome antidote to theological dogmatism,” nevertheless “the objectivism of the phenomenological research programme can be brought into question from the perspective of postmodern indeterminism.” He argues instead that “the understanding and/or explanation of religion is always historically contingent; knowledge is always produced from a social base, though this base is rendered invisible by objectivist science.”³³ Timothy Fitzgerald voices a similar critique, contending that while phenomenology has contributed to making religion its own field of study, it otherwise has had deleterious effects and is still too theologically motivated.³⁴ Russell McCutcheon criticizes the notion that religion is a *sui generis* phenomenon and especially the lack of sociopolitical analysis in the discipline.³⁵ Riesebrodt, despite his hesitations about phenomenology as a useful method, rehabilitates the category of religion as meaningful against Fitzgerald. Cox vigorously defends phenomenology against both Fitzgerald and Flood and judges it still the most successful approach for the investigation of religion.

In sum, the methodology for those who employ it is characterized by (a) a fundamental *attitude* of empathetic understanding, which includes setting aside prejudices and withholding judgment, (b) a fundamental *goal*, that of ascertaining the basic structures and patterns of religion, possibly even identifying its “essence,” and (c) an emphasis on the *uniqueness* and centrality of religion in human culture. Although some thinkers appeal to Husserl's phenomenology as an inspiration, generally there is little overlap between this use of phenomenology and more philosophical approaches. This goes both ways: the thinkers considered in this first part are rarely mentioned and never seriously engaged by philosophers. Although many were too late to have been discussed by early thinkers like Scheler, Stein, or Walther (who do refer to Otto), it is telling that contemporary French phenomenology of religious experience also ignores them.

3 | PHENOMENOLOGY AND RELIGION IN THE WAKE OF HUSSERL

Several contemporary thinkers try to ascertain the extent to which Husserl himself might have been open to an examination of religious phenomena.³⁶ We will focus in this section, however, on a (necessarily brief) selection of thinkers who explicitly and consciously apply Husserl's philosophical methodology to religious phenomena.³⁷

Scheler was one of the first philosophers to reflect on religion in a phenomenological vein, to some extent inspired by Husserl but also critical of his method.³⁸ His central text on the topic (supplemented by other essays and shorter treatments), *Vom Ewigen im Menschen*, is defined as a “religionsphilosophische Gedankenarbeit,” i.e., a work of thinking in philosophy of religion. He tries to distinguish his project from those of Aquinas, Kant, or Schleiermacher. Although not a systematic philosophy of religion, it deals with the “problems of religion” in what he calls “Wesensphänomenologie.” He identifies three goals: an analysis of the nature of the divine, the forms of

revelation, and the kinds of religious acts responding to it.³⁹ Scheler ends up affirming basic Christian concepts about God, including standard monotheist divine attributes, and religious attitudes like penitence and love. He argues, however, that these are not simply metaphysical insights but can be derived from human experience of the divine and its analysis. Creatureliness (*Geschaffenheit* and *Geschöpflichkeit*) is an effected experience (*Gewirktheitserlebnis*) not the result of reasoning from effect to cause. Religious consciousness comes to a notion of the divine through a sense of the valuable as such (*das schlechthin Wertvolle*).⁴⁰ Scheler speaks of the phenomenological process as a comparative process in which the core of the phenomenon is slowly carved out (*Herausschälung*).⁴¹ The fact that the human is an image of the divine also allows for phenomenological discovery, although he is careful to distinguish this from pantheism or deism.

This analogous, but not identical, character of human and divine is also evident in religious acts. The cognition (*Erkenntnis*) of the divine is unlike that of other types of knowledge, especially because the divine essence cannot be grasped by humans.⁴² Willing and loving are particularly crucial elements of this for Scheler; religion has not just a contemplative but also a moral (*sittliche*) dimension. Religious acts are just as constitutive of human existence as others (such as thinking, judging, and remembering). They intend another realm of things and manners of being and cannot be reduced to the psychological or empirical. Hence, they have autonomous and distinctive legitimacy.⁴³ Such acts include “praise, thanksgiving, fear, hope, love, happiness, ambition, desire for perfection, accusation, judgment, forgiveness, admiration, adoration, requesting, and worship,” all of which transcend our own spirit and its essential grasp of finite things.⁴⁴ Such acts assume a personal God and are hence able to distinguish between true and false religion and make us confident of God’s existence. Scheler also suggests that one need not have understood everything about religion beforehand, but that the participation in a particular liturgy or cult will increase religious insight.⁴⁵ He concludes that the religious act is an essential and necessary endowment of the human spirit.⁴⁶

Influenced by both Husserl and Scheler, Stein did not develop a fully formulated phenomenology of religion. Her early works are explicitly phenomenological, but do not really deal with religion, whereas the later more explicitly religious works are more heavily influenced by Aquinas and Scholasticism, although she never abandons the phenomenological method entirely.⁴⁷ An early suggestion can be found in her introductory lectures in phenomenological philosophy, in which she considers the possibility that one might have an experience of “person” beyond the human, such as a feeling of protection (*Geborgenheit*), especially in a desperate situation, or of renewed courage, when no path seems possible. Because its source is clearly outside ourselves and we cannot produce the experience on our own, it might suggest God’s existence and nature (as powerful, as wise, as kind, and as ultimately guiding all things to a good end).⁴⁸

In one of her final works, an analysis of the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, she applies the phenomenological method to the experience of God.⁴⁹ She distinguishes between a conscious awareness of revelation and the possibility of an inspired message coming to someone who is not conscious of its source. Assurance that God is speaking can come through an internal “feeling” of presence.⁵⁰ Stein analyzes the various forms in which such experience or insight can occur, drawing on biblical and other accounts to show its variations and to ascertain its truest sense.⁵¹ While this “feeling of God” (her quotation marks) is at the core of “mystical experience,” various stages of such experience can be distinguished, which include an increasing openness to and unification with the divine. Such experience is not mere “faith” (*Glauben*), but real cognition (*Erkenntnis*).⁵² She argues that the transition between “natural” experience of God and “supernatural” can be likened to our experience of other people (which she examines extensively in other works, from her dissertation on empathy to her many writings about the human person and community). In thoroughly phenomenological fashion, she concludes: “All types of knowledge of God (*Gotteserkenntnis*) are organized in accordance with the intentions (*Intentionen*) by which they point beyond themselves.”⁵³ We can hence analyze the ways in which God is known or recognized through the ways in which this is registered by human consciousness. She gives examples such as the sudden realization that a particular moral demand is directed at me, the sense that a word of Scripture or of a preacher is meant for me, that God is speaking to me through it, that a particular expectation of faith is fulfilled.⁵⁴ A direct experience can hence confirm something known from Scripture or from the reports of others.

Her most mature work, *Finite and Eternal Being*,⁵⁵ originally conceived as an editing of her earlier attempt to put Aquinas in conversation with Husserlian phenomenology, also contains significant phenomenological analyses. She tries to approach the question of being both from a phenomenological and from a scholastic viewpoint, showing the two to achieve similar results.⁵⁶ While she justifies belief in revelation as a valid source of knowledge, she is committed to leading the non-believer as far as possible on the path of inquiry, thus to approach the questions also from a “natural” standpoint. The second part proceeds in a phenomenological manner from the facticity of the I, that is, my own temporal being. This contrast between a temporal, changeable, finite being (the self) and a possible eternal and immutable being is for her the starting point of even natural philosophy.⁵⁷ She engages in an extensive phenomenological analysis, unfolding the being of the I and its experiences (*Erlebniseinheiten*) as pure I (*reines Ich*), distinguished from but always directed toward the content of experience. This being I find and analyze in my self is finite; I am not its source and cannot maintain it in being.⁵⁸ I therefore encounter the notion of another being who is not thus dependent or finite, hence not mine yet fundamental for it, i.e., eternal being.⁵⁹ Part III attempts to get to a notion of nature or essence (*Wesen*) that would be general, unchanging, and unified, able to give an account of singular instance but not reducible to it.⁶⁰ Philosophy can get us to a first and simple being, but only revelation (especially notions of the Trinity and of creation) can guide fully to the first being. After extensive discussion of Thomistic philosophy, she returns to the being of the I as lived body, soul, and spirit (*Leib, Seele, and Geist*) in Part VII. She considers this evidence for the Triune divine in the natural order, the human being and the larger creation.

Influenced by both Stein and Conrad-Martius, Walther raises the question of how to examine something as irrational, hidden, and ineffable as mysticism with the phenomenological method in the first sentence of her book on the phenomenology of mysticism.⁶¹ She argues that phenomenology cannot give purely natural or causal explanations for mystical experience.⁶² One must set aside two prejudices: first, that God cannot appear to people or that mystical experience is mere internal psychological delusion (which she identifies as psychologism), second, that only empirical and external or corporeal experiences can become objects of consciousness. The word “phenomenology” does not actually appear in the introduction after this first mention and she does not really explain what she means by the method (but instead primarily rejects other approaches). Yet the analysis itself is suffused with phenomenological language⁶³ and it is certainly an account of consciousness involved in various kinds of experiences, from self-induced imagination or memory via telepathy to genuinely mystical experience. She argues that one must already be attuned spiritually in order to grasp spiritual things (*Geistiges erfassen*) and depicts such attunement in detail.⁶⁴ Like Scheler, she argues that communion with the divine is only possible if God is person. She also strongly argues against the idea that union with God implies a total erasure of the self or a complete merging of “subject” and “object.”⁶⁵ Despite her extensive analysis of the paranormal and even “occult,” her treatment culminates in a distinctly Christian experience of the divine. Christian mysticism is clearly the highest experience in her phenomenological hierarchy. Her conclusion distinguishes the human union with the divine in mystical experience from Christ's union with “God-father” in the trinitarian relationship.⁶⁶

The “current state” of applications of Husserl's phenomenology to religion is represented well by the work of Natalie Depraz and Anthony Steinbock. Depraz focuses primarily on Husserl's account of corporeality. Her first study was an extensive analysis of Husserl's texts on incarnation and embodiment.⁶⁷ In part of her “Habilitation,” she applies this to the “glorious body” as discussed in the *Philokalia*, a compilation of religious ascetic writings in the Eastern Christian tradition, hugely influential especially in Russian and Romanian spirituality.⁶⁸ The analysis not only focuses primarily on issues of embodiment and corporeal expressions of prayer but also develops a phenomenology of the mystical body (i.e., the Eucharist) and a phenomenological anthropology of Christ.⁶⁹ She ends her treatment with a brief consideration of the relation between philosophy and theology in this kind of phenomenology, where she presents several models for their interaction. On the one hand, phenomenology can play an ancillary method in theology and thereby renew it. On the other hand, the analysis of certain experiences derived from theology can also renew phenomenology, especially by providing expanded notions of incarnation or enfleshment.⁷⁰ Furthermore, there is a difference between the hermeneutic analysis of a religious text (even one describing religious experience) and a phenomenological analysis of the experience as such.⁷¹ She tries to resolve the difficulty of one

discipline overwhelming the other by providing two separate treatments—one strictly phenomenological, one an analysis of religious experience—that mirror each other. Such parallels do not confuse the disciplines but show their coincidence as “co-generative.”⁷² She thinks of this as a “metaphysics” of “experiential praxis” that escapes the aporia of onto-theo-logy: “only a concrete praxis of the religious and spiritual dimension allows us to discover the experiential unity that would dissolve any residue of duality” between theology and phenomenology.⁷³ As regards the specific analysis of the glorious body, she discovers both parallels to the phenomenological “body” and an irreconcilable residue of such singular experience that cannot be captured phenomenologically.⁷⁴

Anthony Steinbock develops what he calls a phenomenology of “vertical” experience, which includes for him religious, aesthetic, moral, and other (non-object) phenomena.⁷⁵ He argues that phenomenology has traditionally only been concerned with the realm of phenomena identifiable as objects, given in the mode of “presentation.” Many phenomena, however, have their own distinctive modes of disclosure, irreducible to presentation. Religious phenomena appear in the mode of “epiphany” and the distinctiveness of their phenomenality is particularly obvious in mystical experience, which although extraordinary is also “exemplary.”⁷⁶ The analysis of three mystics from each of the Abrahamic traditions—the Christian St. Teresa of Avila, the Jewish Rabbi Dov Baer, and the Sufi mystic Rūzbihān Baqlī—serves to illustrate this and to develop the particular mode of religious givenness.⁷⁷ He argues that religious experience has its own language and “can only be confirmed or treated as deceptive within the context of religious experience itself.”⁷⁸ Such experience is superabundant, spontaneous, and experienced as gift. Furthermore, “the Holy is ‘received’ in such a way that this reception *alters the structure of experience itself*, and this makes a qualitative difference in how we live with others and in the world.”⁷⁹ Religious experience hence structures the self in a different manner. Steinbock suggests that religious experience as “vertical” can become subverted into idolatry in secularism or fundamentalism.⁸⁰

Thus, several of these thinkers try to make a space for religious experience that would distinguish it successfully from other kinds of experiences, be they “ordinary,” “occult,” aesthetic, or cultural. Furthermore, some (especially Scheler and Steinbock) argue that religious experience requires its own approach, that “standard” phenomenological parameters cannot be applied to it. This parallels to some extent the concern in the first group of thinkers to turn phenomenology into a unique method for religion that carves out a sphere in human experience not covered by other disciplines. They also share the worry that religious experience might be reduced to emotion or psychic acts; the specter of “psychologism” haunts both groups (cf. also Héring in Part II), albeit in different ways. Although there is a heavier emphasis on Christianity than in Religious Studies, there is some consideration of other religious traditions, albeit with less use of “empirical” research and a stronger reliance on texts.⁸¹ The philosophers also focus more heavily on the divine. Even the analyses of mystical experience often seem most interested in the conclusions that can be drawn from the description about who or what is behind or at the source of such experiences.⁸² We will see a similar tendency in the final group of thinkers, although their phenomenological approach is quite different and they do not interact explicitly with either group already discussed.

ENDNOTES

¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes (London: Routledge, 2012), lxx.

² To make the two parts of the essay more balanced in length—and because of his instrumental role in introducing phenomenology to France—Héring will be discussed at the opening of Part II.

³ The fullest introduction is provided by Jean Greisch's monumental three-volume work on philosophy of religion: *Le Buisson ardent et les lumières de la raison. L'invention de la philosophie de la religion*. 3 vols. (Paris: Cerf, 2002). He divides the tradition into five dominant “paradigms” (speculative, critical, phenomenological, analytical, and hermeneutic). Under “phenomenological,” he considers Husserl, Otto, Scheler, Heiler, Wach, van der Leeuw, Eliade, Lévinas, Chrétien, Lacoste, Marion, Henry, and Janicaud. His own preferences clearly lie with the hermeneutic paradigm, which occupies the entire (1026-page long) third volume.

⁴ Crawford lists “phenomenological” as a separate method (after historical, theological, philosophical, psychological, sociological, and before “feministic”) and defines it as a method that is “descriptive, looking at similarities and dissimilarities, and tries to be free from value judgements and to show empathy with the culture and beliefs. It endeavours to ‘walk

in the moccasins of the faithful,' looking at the phenomena from the viewpoint of the people themselves, and tries to discern patterns in the religions." Robert Crawford, *What is Religion?* (London: Routledge, 2002), 20.

- ⁵ James C. Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*, 5th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NY: Prentice Hall, 2005), 27. He makes clear that phenomenology in this sense is the main method adopted in the rest of the book. See also James L. Cox, *An Introduction to Phenomenology of Religion* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009).
- ⁶ James L. Cox, *A Guide to the Phenomenology of Religion: Key Figures, Formative Influences and Subsequent Debates* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 2, 3, and 4, respectively.
- ⁷ See the letters (both approving and disapproving) cited by Emmanuel Housset in his *Husserl et l'idée de Dieu* (Paris: Cerf, 2010), 13, 29, 73–79.
- ⁸ Cunningham et al. attribute the phenomenological method they employ to all four. Lawrence S. Cunningham, John Kelsay, R. Maurice Barineau, and Heather Jo McVoy, *The Sacred Quest: An Invitation to the Study of Religion*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NY: Prentice Hall, 1995), 3. Brenneman and Yarian argue for two strains of phenomenology: one they call "morphological" and attribute to Kristensen and Widengren, the other "hermeneutical phenomenology," which they associate with Eliade and van der Leeuw. Walter Brenneman, Jr., Stanley O. Yarian in association with Alan M. Olson, *The Seeing Eye: Hermeneutical Phenomenology in the Study of Religion* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1982). Paul Ricoeur, by contrast, always identified Eliade's work on ("pagan" or "nature") religion as "phenomenological" from which he distinguished his own "hermeneutical" writings on ("prophetic" or Judeo-Christian) religion. See especially his essay "Manifestation and Proclamation," in *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*, trans. David Pellauer, ed. Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 48–67. Cox argues strongly for Eliade as a phenomenologist in a way that is telling also of what constitutes phenomenology for him: "Eliade's hermeneutics provides a thoroughly religious interpretation of the world. His investigations into 'religio-historical facts' were intended not only to enhance the understanding of religion academically, but in the end, to commend religion as the only way to achieve a sense of meaning in life and to attain what he called 'access to the world of spirit' On the basis of this overwhelmingly 'religious' interpretation of the study of religions, Eliade's place as a scholar in the phenomenological tradition seems secure." *Guide*, 187.
- ⁹ "I shall speak, then, of a 'numinous' category of value and of a definitely 'numinous' state of mind, which is always found wherever the category is applied. This mental state is perfectly sui generis and irreducible to any other; and therefore, like every absolutely primary and elementary datum, which it admits of being discussed, it cannot be strictly defined." Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the non-rational factor in the idea of the divine and its relation to the rational*, trans. John W. Harvey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923), 7.
- ¹⁰ Otto, *Holy*, 28.
- ¹¹ Kristensen will be strongly critical of this: "It is simply an illusion to think that even a partial understanding of the developed organism can be gained from its germinal form. So too, it is an illusion to suppose that there can be a systematic development of the science of religion from the essence to the phenomena, or vice versa, whatever notion of the essence of religion is employed." W. Brede Kristensen, *The Meaning of Religion: Lectures in the Phenomenology of Religion*, trans. John B. Carman (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), 16. Scheler also criticizes this aspect of Otto's work, a critique followed by Héring.
- ¹² See also Duméry's *Phenomenology and Religion*, which outlines the structures of what he calls the Christian "institution" and considers deeply grounded in but ultimately superior to Judaism. Duméry sees his work as following on that of Husserl, Scheler, and van der Leeuw and calls for a sympathetic and objective philosophical investigation of religion. Henry Duméry, *Phenomenology and Religion: Structures of the Christian Institution*, trans. Paul Barrett (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).
- ¹³ See especially his *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (London: Sheed and Ward, 1958). Eliade's account of Australian aborigine religion (especially his interpretation of the Tjilpa myth) is strongly criticized by Jonathan Z. Smith in his *To Take Place: Toward a Theory of Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 1–23. Cox includes Smith (not to be confused with Cantwell Smith) in his discussion of phenomenologists in his *Guide*, although Smith has at times been quite critical of phenomenology.
- ¹⁴ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion. The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual within Life and Culture*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959), 10. It is also worth pointing out (in light of the strong distinctions drawn by recent French thinkers between "holy" and "sacred" in the wake of Lévinas' *Du sacré au saint*) that "sacred," as Eliade uses it, is a translation of Otto's "holy." Eliade's book was translated into German as *Das Heilige und das Profane*. Otto's book, of course, is *Das Heilige* in the 1917 original. Héring (cf. below) praises the "excellent phenomenological analyses contained in Otto's study on 'the Sacred' [*le Sacré*]" (97).
- ¹⁵ *Sacred and Profane*, 11.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 232.

- ¹⁷ Gerardus van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, 2 vols., trans. J.E. Turner (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1967). Van der Leeuw studied with Kristensen and was influenced by him. Kristensen's lectures were published posthumously.
- ¹⁸ Van der Leeuw, *Religion*, 2: 685–688.
- ¹⁹ Kristensen, *Meaning of Religion*, 1. While van der Leeuw briefly considers phenomenological method at the very end of his extensive treatment of the particulars of religion, Kristensen opens his lectures with a description of the methodology, which he then goes on to employ for three areas (cosmology, anthropology, and cult). *Ibid.*, 23.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.
- ²¹ For example, he says of prayer: "Now it is the task of Phenomenology of Religion to answer the question of what we should understand by the concept 'prayer' and what is common to its various forms" (*ibid.*, 4). The question "What is its religious significance?" (in regard to various religious phenomena) appears repeatedly in his lectures.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 18.
- ²³ For example, Livingston defines the contemporary method as follows: "To avoid intruding judgments of value or truth into this descriptive task, the phenomenologist must remain detached and impartial. Yet such insightful description and interpretation require a genuine feel for and empathy with religious experience. Phenomenology thus represents the effort to *reexperience* a certain religious phenomenon's essential character or structure. Phenomenology is, then, a study of the morphology (the structures or forms) of religion as manifested in and across different cultural and temporal periods. The forms that are studied vary, depending on each scholar's particular interest; they might be creation myths, rites of sacrifice, prayers, or forms of religious leadership." *Anatomy of the Sacred*, 27. Similarly Cunningham et al.: "At its simplest, a phenomenological approach leads to an effort to understand religious thought and behavior *from the point of view of religious persons*. A large part of our purpose, then, must be to identify and understand the intentions that lie behind religious behavior." They contend that "the most general purpose of the study of religion is the development of a heightened awareness of religion's significance in human life and culture." *Sacred Quest*, 4, 9.
- ²⁴ Kristensen, *Meaning of Religion*, 7.
- ²⁵ Cox, *Guide*, 204.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 204–05.
- ²⁷ Brenneman and Yarian define it in terms of reflection and conclude that "what is different for the phenomenologist is his way of attending to that world. His attention is directed to the fact that it is he who is experiencing the world, i.e., to the experience itself and to the essential dimension which is present in the fact, the essence of the experience." Brenneman and Yarian, *Seeing Eye*, 21.
- ²⁸ For example, Riesebrodt finds the method of phenomenology "highly problematic" from a sociological perspective, because its approach "is overlaid with a subjectivist interpretation in which the 'true' meaning of religious phenomena always lies in some sense beyond their historical, social, and pragmatic contexts." Furthermore, it "gives priority to the study of virtuoso practices and neglects religion in everyday life, thus excessively narrowing the range of religious studies." Martin Riesebrodt, *The Promise of Salvation: A Theory of Religion*, trans. Steven Rendell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 53.
- ²⁹ Cunningham et al., *Sacred Quest*, 5–6. They define their approach as follows: "At its simplest, a phenomenological approach leads to an effort to understand religious thought and behavior *from the point of view of religious persons*. A large part of our purpose, then, must be to identify and understand the intentions that lie behind religious behavior" (*ibid.*, 4).
- ³⁰ Edward J. Jurji, *The Phenomenology of Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), vii. He relies on Otto's idea of the holy but tries to show it operative in all religious traditions without privileging Christianity (*ibid.* 4). The "religious essence" consists in "love and faith toward the holy, the two in the state of conjugal interaction." *Ibid.*, 7.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 3.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 9.
- ³³ Gavin Flood, *Beyond Phenomenology: Rethinking the Study of Religion* (London: Cassell, 1999), 9.
- ³⁴ Timothy Fitzgerald, *Discourse on Civility and Barbarity: A Critical History of Religion and Related Categories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). See also his earlier *The Ideology of Religious Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- ³⁵ Russell T. McCutcheon, *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- ³⁶ Besides Housset, mentioned above, see especially Angela Ales Bello, *The Divine in Husserl and other Explorations*, trans. Antonio Calcagno (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009) and her *Husserl: sul problema di Dio* (Rome: Studium, 1985). See also the conversations Adelgundis Jaegerschmid had with Husserl on the topic of religion in the final years of his life: "Conversations with Edmund Husserl, 1931–1938," *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* (2001): 331–50.

- ³⁷ Karol Wojtyła (later Pope John Paul II), Erich Przywara, Robert Sokolowski, and Dietrich von Hildebrand are further examples of the appeal of phenomenology to religious thinkers.
- ³⁸ This presentation of Scheler—as of several of the thinkers below—must remain necessarily brief. It is merely trying to provide a general sense of his particular approach to religion to the extent that it is phenomenological and cannot examine his extensive work in its entirety.
- ³⁹ Max Scheler, *Vom Ewigen im Menschen* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1954 [first edition 1921]), 157.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 163–65.
- ⁴¹ He equates this with the phenomenological *Wesensschau*. *Ibid.*, 167. After a critique of Wundt, he identifies this phenomenological method with that of negative theology. *Ibid.*, 167–68. He insists that this is not a search for the origin of religion (170–71).
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 205. He argues that for this reason religious insight has to be especially cooperative or communal, even ecclesial. He later distinguishes between two methods for deriving divine attributes, one from the world as really experienced and one from the essential structures of the human spirit. Neither is empirical or rationalistic (the two tendencies he consistently rejects). *Ibid.*, 210.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 241–42.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 247.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 260.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 261. We don't have a choice about this in Scheler's view: we either worship God or idols (263). He promises to explore this further in essays devoted to phenomenology of religion, which, however, never appeared.
- ⁴⁷ Although some of Stein's work has been translated, for consistency's sake I rely here on the German *Gesamtausgabe* (Freiburg: Herder, 2000 [24 vols. expected]). Only a few brief indications of Stein's phenomenological method can be given here rather than a full treatment of her philosophy as a whole. For a fuller treatment, see Antonio Calcagno, *The Philosophy of Edith Stein* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2007). See also Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz, *Unerbittliches Licht* (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald, 1991), Beate Beckmann, *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens. Religionsphilosophische Überlegungen im Anschluß an Adolf Reinhard und Edith Stein* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2003), and Reiner Matzker, *Einführung: Edith Stein und die Phänomenologie* (Bern, 1991). Hedwig Conrad-Martius, who influenced Stein, Héring, Walther, and others, and served as Stein's sponsor when she converted to Catholicism, unfortunately cannot be considered here.
- ⁴⁸ Stein, *Gesamtausgabe* 8: 172.
- ⁴⁹ *Wege der Gotteserkenntnis: Die Symbolische Theologie des Areopagiten und ihre sachliche Voraussetzungen, Gesamtausgabe*, 17: 21–76. The rest of the volume contains her translations of texts attributed to Dionysius. This text is not a deliberate attempt to “reconcile” phenomenology and Dionysius (as, for example, in her *Akt und Potenz*, which reads Thomas Aquinas' work in an intentionally phenomenological manner), but a phenomenological approach is clearly evident, especially in the sections considering the experience of God (17: 44–52).
- ⁵⁰ She claims that “this is what we call experience of God (*Gotteserfahrung*) in the proper sense” (*ibid.*, 45).
- ⁵¹ For example, she says of Isaiah that he directly saw God and was certain in his innermost that God was present in person. She concludes that “only if that is the case can we speak of a personal experience-cognition of God (*persönliche Erfahrungserkenntnis Gottes*)” (*ibid.*, 47).
- ⁵² It is also significant that experience here is *Erfahrung*, not mere *Erlebnis*.
- ⁵³ *Gesamtausgabe* 17: 49. She also envisions the possibility that God can be known without words or images yet still felt or sensed in some way.
- ⁵⁴ Here also her language is thoroughly phenomenological: “Wenn aber die Erfahrungserkenntnis als ‘Erfüllung’ des Glaubens bezeichnet wurde, so war darin ausgesprochen, daß der Glaube auf dasselbe hinzielt, was in der Erfahrungserkenntnis zur Gegenbenheit kommt. Das gehört allgemein zum Verhältnis von ‘Intention’ und ‘Erfüllung.’” *Ibid.*, 51.
- ⁵⁵ *Endliches und ewiges Sein* was completed before she left Germany for the monastery in Echt to escape Nazi persecution but was not published in her lifetime. Her final work, a study of St. John of the Cross (*Kreuzeswissenschaft*), was practically completed in manuscript form when the Gestapo came for her and her sister Rosa in August 1942. *Finite and Eternal Being* is usually considered her *magnum opus*. It engages with major medieval sources, contemporary Scholastic material, as well as an extensive array of other contemporary sources, including Scheler, Héring, Conrad-Martius, Przywara (with whom she had extensive correspondence), even Jacques Maritain who impressed her at a Catholic conference on philosophy of religion in which she participated in Juvisy in September 1932. The work has an appendix that constitutes a reading and critique of Heidegger's *Being and Time* (a second appendix engages Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle*). While she originally intended to revise the unpublished *Akt und Potenz*, she quickly rejected this as unfeasible because too many changes would have been necessary and instead wrote an entirely new study.

- ⁵⁶ Christian philosophy, in her view, is not just the attitude of a philosopher who happens to be Christian or a historical account of Christian thinking, but the idea of a "perfectum opus rationis" that is able to reconcile what is offered by natural reason and revelation into a unity. 11/12: 33.
- ⁵⁷ 11/12: 42.
- ⁵⁸ She refers repeatedly to Heidegger's analyses in *Being and Time* here, including the analysis of being-toward-death, although she is more critical of it in the appendix, based on her own experience with severely wounded and dying people in her stint as a field hospital aid during World War I (see 11/12: 471–81).
- ⁵⁹ 11/12: 60. She points to the traditional proofs for God's existence as another way of getting to the same insights.
- ⁶⁰ In this context, she provides extensive phenomenological analyses of the phenomenon of joy (*Freude*).
- ⁶¹ Gerda Walther, *Phänomenologie der Mystik* (Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau: Walter-Verlag, 1955 [1923]). The second edition is revised, including accounts of personal experiences that she was encouraged to add by several readers (including Conrad-Martius).
- ⁶² "I count only those experiences [*Erlebnisse*] as mystical that claim to be a direct, bodily [*leibhaftiges*], albeit imperfect and possibly one-sided experiences of God *as such*. Only if there really is an experience [*Erfahrung*] of God, if all our opinions about God, our relations to him do not depend on pure fantasy or, as the opponents of religion continually claim, rely only on mere 'blind' faith in traditions, which themselves also—if there is no lived experience of God—would have to be traced back only to fantasy or at best to mere, unprovable hunches or conclusion, then it must give somewhere a real experience of God in 'flesh and bones' [*leibhaft*], even if it is not complete." *Phänomenologie der Mystik*, 22.
- ⁶³ The second chapter explains how the "I" can focus on its experiences of consciousness and distinguish between various kinds of experiences. She also throughout distinguishes between internal experiences or ones generated by the self and external ones that are genuine experiences of another ego, whether such experience occurs internally or not.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 214–23.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 224–30.
- ⁶⁷ Natalie Depraz, *Transcendence et incarnation. Le statut de l'intersubjectivité comme altérité à soi chez Husserl* (Paris: Vrin, 1995); see also her *Lucidité du corps. De l'empirisme transcendantal en phénoménologie* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), which carries this account further in a more independent manner.
- ⁶⁸ Natalie Depraz, *Le corps glorieux. Phénoménologie pratique de la Philocalie des pères du désert et des pères de l'église* (Leuven: Peeters, 2008). She has since also discussed other religious traditions in fairly syncretistic fashion.
- ⁶⁹ In this context, she engages both Marion and Henry in detail. She also argues that the popular Orthodox notion of anti-nomy functions as a kind of epoché.
- ⁷⁰ *Corps glorieux*, 261–63.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 265.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 267.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, 269. She projects that a study of Buddhism will be able to accomplish this combination of phenomenology of the body and Orthodox lived bodily experience.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 277.
- ⁷⁵ He lays this out in the introduction of his *Phenomenology and Mysticism: The Verticality of Religious Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007). He has since explored the realm of the moral emotions in a separate treatment.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 25–26. Depraz also distinguishes between "standard" experiences and "limit"-experiences. *Corps glorieux*, 271.
- ⁷⁷ *Phenomenology and Mysticism*, chapters 2–4, 45–113.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 139.
- ⁸⁰ He warns: "There is an important distinction to be made between living religiously, in the sense of living from the immediate and direct experience of the dimension of the Holy, and religion merely as a social and cultural phenomenon." *Ibid.*, 229.
- ⁸¹ Steinbock explicitly engages the three Abrahamic traditions, Bello compares Shamanistic, Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi, and Christian examples of mysticism, Depraz engages Buddhism, as does Evan Thompson, *Waking, Dreaming, Being* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017). (I thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing me to this source.) James Hatley and others have also engaged Judaism and various eastern religious traditions in a more eco-phenomenological context.
- ⁸² Steinbock is an important exception here, although even he stresses the givenness of the experience and sees this source of the experience outside the mystics as its most important feature.

WORKS CITED

- Beckmann, Beate. *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens. Religionsphilosophische Überlegungen im Anschluß an Adolf Reinhard und Edith Stein*. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2003.
- Bello, Angela Ales. *Husserl: sul problema di Dio*. Rome: Studium, 1985.
- Bello, Angela Ales. *The Divine in Husserl and other Explorations*, trans. Antonio Calcagno. Dordrecht: Springer, 2009.
- Brenneman, Jr., Walter and Stanley O. Yarian in association with Alan M. Olson. *The Seeing Eye: Hermeneutical Phenomenology in the Study of Religion*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1982.
- Calcagno, Antonio. *The Philosophy of Edith Stein*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2007.
- Cox, James L. *A Guide to the Phenomenology of Religion: Key Figures, Formative Influences and Subsequent Debates*. London: T&T Clark, 2006.
- Cox, James L. *An Introduction to Phenomenology of Religion*. London: Bloomsbury, 2009.
- Crawford, Robert. *What is Religion?* London: Routledge, 2002.
- Cunningham, Lawrence S., John Kelsay, R. Maurice Barineau, & Heather Jo McVoy. *The Sacred Quest: An Invitation to the Study of Religion*, 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs, NY: Prentice Hall, 1995.
- Depraz, Natalie. *Le corps glorieux. Phénoménologie pratique de la Philocalie des pères du désert et des pères de l'église*. Leuven: Peeters, 2008.
- Duméry, Henry. *Phenomenology and Religion: Structures of the Christian Institution*, trans. Paul Barrett. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.
- Eliade, Mircea. *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed. London: Sheed and Ward, 1958.
- Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion. The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual within Life and Culture*, trans. Willard R. Trask. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959.
- Fitzgerald, Timothy. *The Ideology of Religious Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Fitzgerald, Timothy. *Discourse on Civility and Barbarity: A Critical History of Religion and Related Categories*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Flood, Gavin. *Beyond Phenomenology: Rethinking the Study of Religion*. London: Cassell, 1999.
- Gerl-Falkovitz, Hanna-Barbara. *Unerbittliches Licht*. Mainz: Matthias Grünewald, 1991.
- Greisch, Jean. *Le Buisson ardent et les lumières de la raison. L'invention de la philosophie de la religion*. 3 vols. Paris: Cerf, 2002-2004.
- Housset, Emmanuel. *Husserl et l'idée de Dieu*. Paris: Cerf, 2010.
- Jaegerschmid, Adelgundis. "Conversations with Edmund Husserl, 1931-1938," *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* (2001): 331-50.
- Jurji, Edward J. *The Phenomenology of Religion*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963.
- Kristensen, W. Brede. *The Meaning of Religion: Lectures in the Phenomenology of Religion*, trans. John B. Carman. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960.
- Livingston, James C. *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*, 5th ed. Upper Saddle River, NY: Prentice Hall, 2005.
- Matzker, Reiner. *Einführung: Edith Stein und die Phänomenologie*. Bern, 1991.
- McCutcheon, Russell T. *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Otto, Rudolf. *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the non-rational factor in the idea of the divine and its relation to the rational*, trans. John W. Harvey. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*, trans. David Pellauer, ed. Mark I. Wallace. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.
- Riesebrodt, Martin. *The Promise of Salvation: A Theory of Religion*, trans. Steven Rendell. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010.
- Scheler, Max. *Vom Ewigen im Menschen*. Bern: Francke Verlag, 1954.
- Smith, Jonathan Z. *To Take Place: Toward a Theory of Ritual*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Stein, Edith. *Gesamtausgabe*. Freiburg: Herder, 2000.
- Steinbock, Anthony. *Phenomenology and Mysticism: The Verticality of Religious Experience*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.

Thompson, Evan. *Waking, Dreaming, Being*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.

Van der Leeuw, Gerardus. *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, 2 vols., trans. J.E. Turner. Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1967.

Walther, Gerda. *Phänomenologie der Mystik*. Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau: Walter-Verlag, 1955.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Christina M. Gschwandtner teaches Continental Philosophy of Religion at Fordham University. She is author of *Reading Jean-Luc Marion: Exceeding Metaphysics* (Indiana, 2007), *Postmodern Apologetics? Arguments for God in Contemporary Philosophy* (Fordham, 2012), *Degrees of Givenness: On Saturation in Jean-Luc Marion* (Indiana, 2014), and *Marion and Theology* (T&T Clark, 2016), besides articles on various contemporary French thinkers. A phenomenological study of liturgical experience, *Welcoming Finitude: A Phenomenology of Orthodox Liturgy*, is forthcoming with Fordham University Press (2019).

How to cite this article: Gschwandtner CM. What is phenomenology of religion? (Part I): The study of religious phenomena. *Philosophy Compass*. 2019;14:e12566. <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12566>