

l'avoir si bien démontré. En dépit de son programme, il est peut-être regrettable que Desroches n'ait pas jugé bon de poursuivre ce travail de reconstruction remarquable en interrogeant la place (ou l'absence de place) de la politique dans l'œuvre du penseur danois et qu'il n'ait pu en tirer les conclusions qui s'imposent pour la pertinence de cette conception de l'éthique dans la société pluraliste qui est la nôtre aujourd'hui. C'est peut-être ce que nous sommes en droit d'attendre de son nouvel intérêt pour les auteurs contemporains.

**Angela Ales Bello, *The Divine in Husserl and Other Explorations*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2009; 170 + xiv pages. ISBN: 978-1402089107.**

*Review by Jeff Mitscherling, University of Guelph.*

Interest in religious and theological themes in continental philosophy has grown so rapidly over the last few decades that we now speak of its “theological turn,” most often with particular regard to developments in French philosophy. While it has been argued by some that religion and theology are presupposed in phenomenological research, and by others that religion and theology have perverted its method and misdirected its research, these themes remain prominent. Angela Ales Bello has no need even to mention this debate in her excellent study of *The Divine in Husserl and Other Explorations*, but she does recall to our attention that religious and theological concerns were fundamental to the thinking of Husserl himself. She also outlines a manner in which Husserl’s phenomenological method, when supplemented by Edith Stein’s contributions to a phenomenologically grounded philosophical anthropology, might be applied in the further examination of religion and religious experience, both in western and non-western cultures. Translated by Antonio Calcagno, this ninety-eighth volume of Tymieniecka’s *Analecta Husserliana* series comprises three Parts, respectively entitled “Thinking God,” “Believing in God,” and “Some Explorations in the Phenomenology of Religion.” In the first two parts Ales Bello offers a series of probing critical examinations of not only such well-known major works as *Ideas* but also numerous less familiar essays that compel us to reassess the extent to which religious concepts and beliefs motivated and sometimes even guided Husserl’s research.

She opens the third part with anthropological observations and what she refers to as “archeological excavations” before proceeding to offer a preliminary phenomenological exploration of religious experience, focusing on its hyletic and noetic elements.

Part I contains two chapters, and the first chapter, “Phenomenology as Philosophy *sui generis*,” contains in turn four sections, the first three of which present helpful introductory discussions of central features of Husserlian phenomenology—namely, “The Phenomenological Method,” “The Analysis of Lived Experience: Immanence and Transcendence,” and “Phenomenological Reductions: The Cartesian Way and the Way of Psychology.” The fourth section of this chapter, “The Phenomenological Approach to Anthropology,” deals with an intriguing yet not so well-known portion of Husserl’s work, and it is here that Ales Bello locates the starting point for both her further investigation of Husserl’s texts and her subsequent development of an outline for further research in the phenomenology of religion. After noting the confusion that has surrounded the use of the term “anthropology” in the human sciences and philosophy—a confusion already underlined by the observation “that Husserl and Heidegger exchange charges of ‘anthropologism,’ that is, an absolutization of the theme of the human understood within a naturalistic or scientific vision” (15)—Ales Bello writes that she has found it helpful in this regard to recall Edith Stein’s lectures on the philosophy of pedagogy in *The Structure of the Human Person*. The author’s work on the thought of Edith Stein has long been recognised as definitive, and given her expertise and erudition in the field we could ask for no better guide not only to the thought of Edith Stein, but also to the employment of Stein’s writings in the interpretation of her master’s view of the relation between phenomenology and philosophical anthropology. In the present study of Husserl on the divine, Ales Bello notes how Stein clearly distinguished between cultural anthropology, or anthropology understood as a natural science, and philosophical anthropology, and how Stein further distinguished between two separate tasks of philosophical anthropology:

The first makes use of the essential analyses carried out from a phenomenological point of view. The second is an integration operated on by the substantialization of the concept of soul in the Thomistic vein. She sees the possibility of agreement between

and even integration of the two positions, and she thinks that by using these two streams she can delineate the fundamentals of a philosophical anthropology. (15)

Ales Bello maintains that Stein's approach to philosophical anthropology, combining as it does the strictly phenomenological task of essential analysis with attention to the religious dimension of human experience, not only sheds considerable light on Husserl's own approach to philosophical anthropology but also provides us with what she calls a "theoretical conduit" for the further development of a phenomenological approach to the study of religious experience.

Ales Bello devotes the five short sections of the second chapter of Part I, "Husserl's Question of God as a Philosophical Question," to the description of five different "ways" in which Husserl's thought leads to the consideration of the nature of God, and she identifies features of each of these "ways" that she will be recalling in her subsequent construction of a phenomenological approach to religious experience. Central to this chapter are her analyses of less well-known Husserlian texts that are especially provocative regarding the phenomenological approach to religion, particularly the 1908 texts "Empathy of the Foreign Consciousness and Divine All-Knowing Consciousness," in which Husserl "proceeds to establish the relation between consciousness that is found in humans and the divine" (37), and *Monadology*, both of which make apparent the great extent to which Husserl's thought is indebted to Leibniz, "the thinker that most inspired Husserl's research on divinity." (46) Ales Bello further examines the Leibnizian elements in Husserl's thought, and with regard specifically to the divine, by reference to later texts found *Husserliana* XIV and XV. Quoting a passage from the latter (Appendix XLVI), she observes:

Behind all this there is also a great ethico-religious effort...but already in this text the ultimate justification remains in the fact that the originary force of monads finds its basis in God: "God is not simply the totality of monads but also the entelechy that finds itself in the totum as the idea of the telos of infinite development, that is, the idea of humanity as absolute reason, understood as that which necessarily regulates monadic being and does so according to a free decision. Insofar as this is

intersubjective, this process is necessarily expansive; without it, notwithstanding episodes of decadence, universal being could not exist, etc.” (45)

Part II, “Believing in God,” contains only two short chapters. In each of them, Ales Bello introduces a set of themes that she will subsequently develop, in Part III, in her “explorations” in phenomenology of religion. Perhaps the most significant theme advanced in “The Husserlian Approach to Religion” is that of mysticism and the mystical experience. Noting Gerda Walther’s recollections of Husserl’s response to her work recorded in the introduction to her *Phänomenologie der Mystik*, Ales Bello affirms that only the mystical experience itself could be established, according to Husserl, not the object of this experience. She is perhaps somewhat hasty in concluding from this remark that Husserl himself “doubts that one really places oneself in relation with a divinity” (68), but what is of chief importance here is her statement of the contrary claim voiced by both Walther and Stein, who, as the author observes, “are convinced of the objective validity of this type of experience and its specificity in relation to other experiences and knowledge.” A good part of her discussion of religious experience in Part III will revolve around precisely this claim. Most of the second chapter, “Religion as the Object of Phenomenological Analysis,” is directed toward what Ales Bello calls “phenomenological archeology,” and she here acknowledges the achievement of Gerardus van der Leeuw, who explicitly purported to be following the method of Husserlian phenomenology. This leads the author into interesting discussions of the “new disciplines” of phenomenology of religion and “‘the archeological phenomenology’ of religious experience” (83), in the course of which she announces that “both phenomenology of religions and cultural anthropology do not succeed in entering into the intimate structure of the phenomenon of the sacred, which remains uninvestigated.” She continues: “On the part of the phenomenology, there directly arises a not unimportant suggestion to deal with the question of method again, going beyond all the research that till now configures itself as ‘phenomenology of religions’ or ‘phenomenology of religion,’ even that one performed by van der Leeuw.” (88–89) She follows this bold suggestion in the next part of her book, in which she leads the reader to exciting conclusions that are themselves suggestive and provocative in radically new ways.

In Part III, Ales Bello draws from all of the preceding analyses in her own phenomenologically grounded investigation of particular and distinctive features of religion and religious experience. The first chapter in this part has more to do with cultural anthropology than with philosophy, as its title (“Examples of Archeological Excavation”) might already suggest, and in fact Ales Bello occasionally speaks in a way that could easily be misunderstood. In the first section of this chapter, for example, she writes, “Even temporality assumes a particular configuration. The past and the present do not represent two distinct moments of linear process. The past is a sedimentation that can be “reactivated” and lived through in its actual presence.” (104) She could here be interpreted as suggesting that the goal of the anthropologist (be she cultural or philosophical) is to somehow reconstruct a historically distant world in order that it may be “lived through” just as it was in the past. Indeed, many anthropologists continue to regard this task as essential to their research. But this is not what Ales Bello is actually claiming. Her position remains rigorously phenomenological, as becomes clear when she adds a couple of paragraphs after the passage just quoted: “Hyletics, noetics and the sacred, which I have distinguished in the foregoing analysis, configure themselves in a particular way in the archaic mentality. They are understandable in their reference to lived experiences that are at the base of those cultural expressions.”

The need for a preliminary reconstruction of the world of the religious believer has been maintained almost universally in the literature on phenomenology of religion, in the recent neo-phenomenology of Jacques Waardenburg no less than in the much earlier, groundbreaking work of van der Leeuw. In order to pursue the sort of phenomenological analysis of religious experience that Ales Bello is suggesting, however, there is no need first to reconstruct the world of the believer. This marks the central and distinguishing feature of the sort of phenomenology of religion that she is here advancing. The long-familiar criticism that it is impossible to reconstruct a historically or culturally distanced world simply does not apply. Her analyses of the hyletic and noetic moments of Christian mysticism, Sufism, Shamanism, and Hinduism—which she offers in the second chapter of Part III—make this abundantly clear. This point should be stressed: It is not the case that phenomenological analysis relies on any prior reconstruction of the lived world of existentially situated subjects. Rather, just the opposite is the case: It is

the phenomenological identification and analysis of the individually constitutive moments of the life-world of the existentially situated subject that will first render possible any reconstruction of that world by anthropologists, historians and other researchers. The importance that Ales Bello finds in Stein's conception of properly philosophical—that is, phenomenologically grounded—anthropology again becomes apparent here, as does the relevance of Stein's (and Husserl's) critique of Heidegger's conception of *menschliches Dasein*, whose existentially and historically situated character Heidegger saw as the starting point for any phenomenological analysis. The most remarkable and valuable contribution of this book is located precisely here, in Ales Bello's development of an approach to phenomenology of religion that remains in strict adherence to the most basic tenets of Husserlian phenomenology while at the same time following the inspiration of Stein. It is perhaps ironic that this radically new way of pursuing phenomenology of religion should find its foundation in the works of the father of phenomenology and one of his earliest disciples, and that this foundation should only now, after a century of research, be clearly indicated. Indeed, it is certainly unfortunate that this “way” should be radically new at all. As Ales Bello's research makes clear, the foundation has been there all along, and what we really ought to be asking ourselves is, How did we ever miss all of this? In the future, historians of the phenomenological movement will recognise Angela Ales Bello as having helped put phenomenology back on track after more than a half century of confusion. For the moment, all we can do is thank her for this magnificent effort.

**Philippe Grosos, *L'ironie du réel à la lumière du romantisme allemand*. Lausanne : Éditions L'Âge d'Homme, 2009; 164 pages. ISBN : 978-2825139608.**

*Compte rendu de Dominic Desroches, Collège Ahuntsic, Montréal.*

L'ironie est souvent comprise comme une critique négative. Apparaît ironique en effet l'insatisfait qui ne trouve plus son bonheur dans la réalité et qui le dit indirectement. Sont ironiques par extension ses propos, car celui-ci n'hésite pas à jouer avec les mots pour révéler