

that The Sacred cannot be known. It is not the case, as Ricoeur thinks it is, that phenomenologists have "secretly" decided to remain neutral regarding the truth of religion. What is the case is that phenomenologists have explicitly refused to answer these questions in some situations rather than others. As we have seen in Chapter One, van der Leeuw knows very well what The Sacred is; it is "the wholly other," it is God. And van der Leeuw also knows that it is the theologian who knows who God is! It is the theologian who seeks the truth about God. Let us recall that the truth embodied in religion cannot be "scientifically demonstrated" because the essence of religion is "revelation." In brief, the phenomenology of religion and theology are two sides of the same coin! The only problem, of course, is that the phenomenology of religion, as the applied side of this "science," cannot call upon theology to confirm its applications in any straightforward manner simply because the object of theology, God, Faith, or Revelation, is not theoretical.

It is significant, therefore, that at the end of the symposium on methodology in the study of religion, Drijvers and Leertouwer conclude that the problems presented at the symposium demonstrate once again "how strongly phenomenology [of religion] is bound up with the crisis of the Christian religion [and theology] in Western culture."<sup>48</sup> The paper responsible for this judgement was written by Professor Waardenburg, who as we have seen, knows the phenomenological movement in the study of religion very well. He argues that one of the problems in what he calls "classical" phenomenology of religion is its insistence on grasping the meaning of religion by typologies, patterns and classifications of religion. His argument is certainly persuasive when we remember that typologies and taxonomies do not explain anything, including the meaning of religion. Waardenburg wants to shift the emphasis in the phenomenology of religion, he wants a "new style" of phenomenology which interprets the "intentionality" of religious expressions.<sup>49</sup> This is indeed a refreshing proposition. Waardenburg suggests that we reformulate the phenomenological problem; instead of "back to the facts" we should concentrate on "back to basic intentions."<sup>50</sup> Once again, it would seem that phenomenologists of religion have returned to Husserl,

who, as we have seen, made "intentionality" central to his phenomenological system.

Unfortunately, the "new style" of phenomenology of religion is a variation on the classical approach. All the classical problems are embedded in the reformulation; the threat of theology, defense against "reductions", suspension of the recognized problem of truth in religious expressions, and recognition of "transcendence" as the special, sui generis nature of religion. After specifying that the new phenomenology of religion would concentrate on reconstructing religious meaning, on formulating the intention of what is meant in religious texts and expressions, Waardenburg concludes that phenomenological analysis of this kind will remain "scholarly guesswork." Now why, we must ask, does a new style of phenomenology of religion end up as a guessing game? Because "it is the trans-empirical, 'transcendent' reference of such facts which makes them what we call, at least from a phenomenological point of view, 'religious'."<sup>51</sup>

Note again how the new phenomenology of religion has borrowed a crucial term from Husserl's phenomenology. But we must not be led astray. Waardenburg's use of "intention," "meaning" and "signification" have no relation whatsoever to the phenomenological movement which begins with Husserl. This is unfortunate because we are left without any theoretical framework by which we might understand the procedure for putting "intentional analysis" into practice. Perhaps a new slogan might be suggested to scholars interested in developing a phenomenology of religion. Instead of "back to intentionality" it should be "back to Husserl."

This would not involve accepting every word of Husserl. If, for example, a phenomenologist of religion were interested in working out the implications of the meaning of religious expressions as "intentional acts," it just might be helpful to discover both what Husserl meant by "intentionality" and how he used this theoretical term. The phenomenologist of religion might well reject Husserl's sense of the term, showing us why it is inadequate for an analysis of meaning in religion. We would then fully understand why and where the phenomenologist differs from Husserl's phenomenology. Since this has not been done, we are left with technical terms which lack theoretical