

THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SCRIPTURE: PATTERNS OF RECEPTION AND DISCOVERY BEHIND SCRIPTURAL REASONING

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A phenomenology of scripture as a descriptive enterprise would, of course, be a vast project, especially one that crosses diverse traditions, and a project that would fall under deep (and justified) suspicion in late modernity. But while there are fundamental problems concerning the scientific or objective aspirations of a descriptive phenomenology of religion,¹ problems linked to the claim that any comparative phenomenology of religion is a form of colonialism,² a second level phenomenology sensitive to the contexts of its performance that seeks to look behind appearance raises theologically and philosophically interesting questions. Such a phenomenology is necessarily hermeneutical. While I do not intend to strongly defend a comparative phenomenology of scripture and justify the category in the light of its critique, I do wish to claim that a hermeneutical phenomenology raises profoundly interesting questions about the nature of scripture across traditions and contributes to a semiotically informed understanding that takes seriously both external, text-historical scholarship and internal theological concerns. I wish therefore to raise second level phenomenological questions or questions within a hermeneutical phenomenology and to move from there to a semiotics of scripture; a move necessitated by those very questions. Indeed, one route to Scriptural Reasoning (SR) is by way of a phenomenological questioning that requires a non-teleological, textual engagement of the kind performed in SR. But first a note of terminological clarification of my title: what I understand firstly by phenomenology and secondly by scripture.

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Husserl spoke of phenomenology as description³ in the first instance, the mapping of the general structures of consciousness in a static mode. More recent studies of Husserl have shown that the descriptive enterprise, so often associated with phenomenology *tout ensemble*, was only one side of his understanding and that a descriptive or static phenomenology (*beschreibende Phänomenologie*) he contrasts with genetic or explanatory phenomenology (*erklärende Phänomenologie*), which inquires beyond description into origins and the ways in which appearances arise.⁴ While not wishing to operate exclusively within Husserl's boundaries, I think it important to think of phenomenology both in terms of description which entails the bracketing of the being or truth behind appearances and in terms of a deeper inquiry that allows for questions about being and source to be raised. We clearly need a descriptive phenomenology in order to clarify the relationship of scripture to community but we also need a second level phenomenology or hermeneutical phenomenology that is open to deeper questions of being and truth and the answers presented within scriptural traditions. Such a hermeneutical phenomenology is not coterminous with Husserl's genetic project but because its aspiration is general (if not universal), it necessitates comparison in some form and dialogue across boundaries. I therefore take phenomenology firstly to mean description that entails the suspension of judgement about the being behind appearances (the *epoché*) and, secondly, as an inquiry into questions of source beyond description. Both of these are predicated upon a fundamental assumption of intentionality (see below).

The second term of my title, "scripture", is a category whose contents have been widely contested in the history of Abrahamic religions but a category that at a simple level I take to refer to the texts, oral and written, of historical traditions that set them aside from other texts because of the claims they make on human communities. Usually it is claimed that these texts bear witness to a revelation: in the case of the Qur'an the text is the revelation of God mediated through the Prophet, in the case of the New Testament the text bears witness to the revelation of Christ. Other scriptures are understood in other ways. For the atheistic Mīmāṃsakas the Veda is revelation (*śruti*, that which has been heard by the sages) which is authorless while the Tāntrikas have a hierarchy of revelation from a hierarchy of cosmic levels, their own texts transcending the restricted revelation of the Veda. While, of course, the Hindu texts are very different from the Jewish, Christian or Moslem texts, the category "scripture" meaningfully applies across traditions although accounts of what scripture is will vary greatly. We might say that scriptures comprise primarily injunctions to act along with accompanying prohibitions and narratives. Some traditions have emphasised the injunctive nature of their scriptures (such as the Mīmāṃsakas claim that the Veda is primarily concerned with injunction (*vidhi*)) while others have emphasised the narrative dimensions (such as more recent narrative theology). It is important that common

questions can be asked across the divides of tradition about the nature of scripture, questions which will be answered in different ways.

Assuming the text-historical mapping of the scriptures of traditions, perhaps the most important questions that arise at the level of a hermeneutical phenomenology inspired by Ricoeur are of what is scripture an index, for whom is scripture an index, and how is scripture an index?⁵ Scripture is in some sense a sign that points to an object and I take "index" to be the phenomenological relationship between sign and object. It is to these intimately related questions that I shall address this essay.

Of What is Scripture an Index?

"Of what is scripture an index?" is a primary theological question the response to which will depend upon the context of its occurrence. There can be no truly general answer to such a question but we can examine more closely what is involved in any particular answer. It is a question of the relation between scripture as a sign and an object to which it points or to which it is in some relation. Although the language of sign and object is somewhat impersonal, a phenomenological inquiry necessitates *in the first instance* the avoidance of any particular theological language, such as the claim that scripture (sign) is an index (causal relationship) of God (object), if it is to offer some kind of account across traditions. A theological reformulation of this statement could be explicit about the sign-object relationship through saying that scripture is an index *from* God. Any phenomenological account is both a weakness and a strength; a weakness in that from tradition-internal perspectives scripture is not simply an index of a transcendent source as its "object" but is a living presence brought to fulfilment in the life of a community. Yet a phenomenological account is also a strength in opening out an analysis that provides a framework that goes beyond particular traditions and so is inherently comparative. Such a phenomenology is more a mode of reception than a method. While a closed theological position would see comparison as pointless, I would argue that in principle comparison in the mode of phenomenological reception allows development in the human sciences and refinement in theology through the clarification of difference. While the question "of what is scripture an index?" will be filled out with varied theological content from Islam to the Mīmāṃsakas, I would wish to identify the question of the index, namely the relationship between the scripture as a sign and its object, perhaps a transcendent source, firstly as a question of intentionality and secondly as a question of narration.

Any phenomenology of scripture must take intentionality as one of its primary categories, as this is the starting point of Husserlian phenomenology. By intentionality Husserl simply means that consciousness has an object—we are always conscious of something, the *cogito* bears witness to

a stream of *cogitationes*.⁶ By extension, and in accordance with the term's everyday use, we might say that intentionality means a subject's direction towards an object which entails the idea of positive or negative desire: desire for a situation to come into being or desire that a situation should cease. "I am drinking a cup of tea" is intentional in that the cup of tea is the object of my consciousness and the object of desire.⁷ In Husserl's fundamental phenomenological language, cognitive activity or *noesis* has content, a sense of meaning or *noema*. The cognitive act is directed towards its intentional object. With regard to scripture this relationship is highly complex and we need to identify the *noesis-noema* relationship within scripture, which leads to the question of the *noesis-noema* relationship between scripture and community of readers. This last question is actually our question "for whom is scripture an index?"

If we assume, as I think we must, that scripture/s has/have an intentionality, then we might say that the *noesis* of the texts is the scribal process whereby the meaning or object is arrived at. The *noesis* is intimately bound up in the question "who speaks?", which refers to the narrator of the text (who may or may not be coterminous with the author). If the *noema* of scripture is the object of the *noesis* or processes of narration by the narrator, then we have two senses of the term. *Noema* points in two directions away from the text, firstly to an extra-textual source to which it bears witness (the voice in the burning bush, the source of the light in the niche) and, secondly, to the reader or community of readers who become the object of the text's *noesis* or noetic process. The first sense, the trans-textual *noema* to which the text bears witness and to which the narrator wishes to draw attention, is always deferred and always approached tangentially or indirectly (through the burning bush, through the lamp in the niche). The second sense of *noema* is, in fact, the implied reader of the text to whom the narrator addresses his injunctions and narration. *Noema* in the sense of deferred transcendent referent is the "about" of the text in contrast to the second sense of *noema* as the "to whom". To illustrate this complexity let us take a concrete example, endlessly rich, from the Hebrew Bible, commented on by others here, especially by Oliver Davies.

There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.⁸

Here there are different levels of narration. The implied narrator of the text is not, of course, a conscious agent coterminous with the author, but the narrative voice is always present whenever the text is read. The narrator uses the processes of narration to indicate a content (*noema*), which is indicated through that which is set aside as sacred. The voice from out of the burning bush speaks in the first person yet is nevertheless the object of the narrator's narration. This "object", whose extra-textual existence is presumed, is nevertheless only encountered within the text. Any extra-textual encounter with the *noema* of scripture is phenomenologically distinct from an intra-textual intentionality. Similarly, Moses as an index of the reader (as Oliver Davies shows), perhaps an image of the implied reader, is likewise the intentional content of the narrator. Thus the *noema* of the text points in two directions, to an extra-textual source of the narrated voice and to the narratee to whom the text is addressed. It is this question of "to whom" that we must now take up.

But are not all texts like this? Do not all texts contain an intentionality that points to an extra-textual referent and to the narratees implied within it? From a haiku to a science fiction novel or even an advertisement, all texts contain intentionality and an implied narrator addressing an implied narratee about an extra textual referent. What is it, then, that distinguishes the intentionality of the burning bush passage from that of other texts? This is a difficult question. On the one hand, one could create a first level or descriptive phenomenology that would be able to distinguish a scripture from a magazine advertisement—perhaps with reference to semantic density, to degree of openness, or the way the text is received by a community. Yet one cannot so easily distinguish scripture, which refers to an extra-textual transcendent source from, say, a science fiction novel which refers to an extra-terrestrial source, simply by an appeal to a distinction between history and fiction (as perhaps some communities of reception would wish to do). Ricoeur can, once again, be of help here. For Ricoeur history is a kind of narrative in so far as it explains events by making causal links between them. Thus testimony becomes archive which can then be turned into history. But similarly a fiction draws causal connections between events created in the narrative. Both share emplotment (*mythos*) or the ordering of events but what distinguishes the ordering is that in fiction events are internal to the narrative whereas for history events were lived. Fiction opens up the kingdom of "as if"⁹ whereas with history we have the emplotment of stories that were lived. A novel, Ricoeur observes, is different from a history book and the distinction lies in the nature of the implicit contract between the writer and the reader, a contract which entails distinct expectations. In fiction "the reader is disposed to carry out what Coleridge called a 'wilful suspension of disbelief' with the reservation that the story told is an interesting one. . . . In opening a history book, the reader expects, under

the guidance of mass of archives, to reenter a world of events that actually occurred."¹⁰

History and fiction both share emplotment but one is real, the events linked by the narrative happened, the other is false existing only in the realm of imagination. Where, then, does the story of the burning bush stand between these two poles? Clearly many scriptures are narratives characterised by emplotment and many followers of scripture would wish to place their texts closer to the realm of history and to distance them from fiction in contrast to secularist or historicist readings which would wish to place scripture closer to fiction than to history.

It seems to me that scripture occupies a place between history and fiction. To claim either that scripture is coterminous with history or that it is only fiction is in the former case to reject scholarship in the space of rational discourse and in the latter case is to reject the force of scriptural claims about human life. The binary truth/falsity distinction mapped on to the history/fiction distinction does not do justice to the complexity of the scripture-community relationship. Clearly questions regarding the origins and composition of texts must be interrogated—there can be no “no-go” areas in text-historical scholarship, even (or especially) in the case of the Qu’ran and Veda—but clearly questions regarding the meaning of scriptures for communities need to be explored by religious communities themselves as well as by the secular academy. Scripture cannot be reduced to either fiction or history. Like history, scripture is emplotment that makes a claim to truth and, like fiction, it is emplotment in so far as scripture’s narrative as a living force is not deeply accessible outside of the religious imagination. The claims of scripture are not fictional claims for the traditions but nor are they historical claims in the sense of history understood by Ricoeur. We can explore this further by examining the relationship between the narratees or community of reception and the narrator, the voice of the text, which is not identical with the author. It is this relationship that clearly separates scripture from both fiction and history and it is this relationship that comes into view through the question “for whom is scripture and index?”

For Whom is Scripture an Index?

This question is not simply one of first level phenomenology, a historical question about communities who revere a particular text, but is a second level phenomenological question about the nature of sacred text itself seen in the relationship between *noesis* and *noema* or, in other words, between narrator and implied reader or receiver of the text. From the perspective of the community of readers, the narratees, we can take *noesis* to be the

process of reception of the text or more accurately the reception of the text's implicit intentionality.

As we all know, the role of the author and the authorial voice in texts is a contentious one ever since Roland Barthes declared the death of the author. The problem of authorial voice in sacred texts is, of course, problematic for many sacred texts were composed over long periods of time and for some the authorial voice is regarded as transcendent by the community of reception. But we can say that a general feature of reading texts, as Wolfgang Iser and others remind us, is an interaction between the structure of the work and its recipient. As we have learned from German literary theory, *Rezeptionsgeschichte* or *Rezeptionsästhetik* of Hans Robert Jauss, that every act of reading evokes a horizon of expectations (*Erwartungshorizont*) or set of cultural, ethical and literary expectations on the part of readers "in the historical moment".¹¹ The text is not simply passively received by the reader but actively constructed from within the reader's horizon of expectation and the relationship between reader and text is quite dissimilar to that between perceiver and object. This is so with sacred texts as much as with literature. The text is brought to life and its meanings opened out only in the present moment of its reception. In this reception, the truth of the text is constructed by the imagination of the reader or the shared imagination of the community of readers, often acted out in a liturgical setting.

The analysis of this relationship is of key importance in understanding the relationship between sacred text and community where the "fulfilment" of the text comes in the reader. Wolfgang Iser refers us to Husserl's seminal essay on time to understand this relationship. Iser quotes Husserl, who writes: "Every originally constituent process is inspired by protentions, which construct and collect the seed of what is to come, as such, and bring it to fruition."¹² These protentions, Iser explains, are expectations implied at sentence level, a structure inherent in all intentional sentence correlates. The sentence correlate or intentional correlate is that to which the sentence points and, for Iser, the literary object is built up by these intentional correlates, the totality of these sentence correlates constituting the "portrayed world" of the work.¹³ In the process of reading each sentence prefigures a horizon which becomes the background of the next sentence correlate which modifies it, and so on. The reader has expectations as to how indeterminacies in the text are to be concluded with some expectations being resolved and new expectations being evoked. In literary texts these expectations are often disrupted and the text reassessed and modified. Memory here undergoes a transformation and "that which is remembered becomes open to new connections, and these in turn influence the expectations aroused by the individual correlates the sequence of sentences". The act of reading therefore consists of "a continual interplay between modified expectations and transformed memories".¹⁴

While Iser's formulation is an important point for understanding the process of reading, it needs to be modified in the context of religious reading where transformed memories are not only connected with the individual's life-path but with the tradition and the nature of the intentional correlates within the text are of a different order to that of the literary text. This is not to claim privilege for sacred texts on the grounds of some identifiable, inherent quality that separates them from fiction, but it is to claim that the sentence correlates are distinguished by the horizon of expectations of the reader or community of readers. Complementing this with Jauss' emphasis on history, we might say that these horizons of expectation must be understood within the history of a text's reception. The act of religious reading in different temporal and social locations, in variable senses with variable degrees of intensity, brings with it the memory of tradition. Religious reading invokes the memory of tradition in solitary, devotional reading and in communal, liturgical reading and recitation. The protentions of the sacred text are configured within the reader's imagination, which entails a kind of attentiveness, a bringing to mind the memory of tradition.

There are, then, two poles in the reception of the text; the pole of the author or more specifically the authorial intention or voice within the text and the pole of the reader (Iser calls these the artistic and the aesthetic). While we must recognise the highly contested claims about authorial intention (especially as regards sacred text where, in many cases, the "author" is believed to be God), we can distinguish between the extra-textual author and the author's voice or authors' voices within the text.¹⁵ The narrator of the text is the intentionality of the text, which is distinct from its author or authors. This distinction between author(s) and narrator allows us to claim that the act of reading is guided by the narrator and received within the horizon of expectations of the reader or community of readers. Tzvetan Todorov is helpful here in mapping out this relationship. No two accounts of the same text will be identical, he claims. This diversity is explained by "the fact that these accounts describe, not the universe of the book itself, but this universe as it is transformed by the psyche of each individual reader."¹⁶ The vision or *imaginaire* of a sacred text, perhaps produced over several hundred years, constantly interacts with the readers' imagination where it is reconfigured and brought to life in the present moment, under contemporary circumstances. The protentions of the text from the past are configured in the imagination of the reader or community of readers afresh in each reading. Emplotment is refigured as action in the world; the narrative of a life is made to conform to the narrative of tradition. This chain of readings is a chain of memory that functions to inform the present and offer a model of thought and behaviour re-confirmed by the community in its repeated acts of reading, which are simultaneously its repeated acts

of re-constructing tradition. "For whom is scripture an index?" is therefore a question about the nature of reception, inseparable from the question "how is scripture an index?"

How is Scripture an Index?

The text is made present for a reader or community of readers in the act of "reading". I put inverted commas around the word "reading" because while reading is an important model of the reception of sacred text, there are other modes of reception that are intimately linked to it. To the question "how is scripture an index?" we might answer "through acts of reception". Scripture is made present through not only religious reading, but through liturgy and the development of certain kinds of interiority in asceticism.¹⁷ Scriptures are enacted through liturgical performance and even solitary prayer is not private for it participates in the memory of tradition in looking back to a past origin which is simultaneously the anticipation of a telos. All this is brought to life in the present through the enactment of the text or what might be called the entextualisation of the body.¹⁸ But this is not the place to develop a description of ritual, reading and scribal practices of the traditions, but rather to present a hermeneutical phenomenology of the process of scriptural reception. I shall therefore simply assume that acts of reception of scriptures can be adequately described (as I have tried to do elsewhere with a range of Sanskrit textual material).¹⁹ Here we need to inquire more deeply into the process of reception and the formation of readers by showing some of the limitations of the phenomenological project I have so far proposed, and then suggesting a complementary approach that ends up as SR.

A phenomenology of scripture is constrained by a number of intimately related problems, firstly descriptive phenomenology on its own is bound by Husserlian assumptions about the self as the detached agent viewing appearances to consciousness as though from a distance, even outside of the world. Secondly this notion of subjectivity entails the idea of a universal rationality; and, thirdly, it entails the separation of meaning from existence through the act of bracketing. I have developed these critiques elsewhere,²⁰ but we can encapsulate the heart of the problem by saying that a phenomenological philosophy of consciousness is brought into question by what V. N. Voloshinov called the philosophy of the sign; that consciousness itself becomes "a viable fact only in the material embodiment of signs".²¹ The implications for us are that any phenomenology of scripture needs to take account of the embodied nature of scripture seen in its modes of reception (reading, ritual, asceticism). This is where a hermeneutical phenomenology is an improvement on a purely descriptive phenomenology in that it recognizes the temporality of scripture and the need to relate the description of first level phenomenology to an account of narrative and history.

Scripture must be understood in the context of historical reception by human beings bound within the constraints of their time and place, including the phenomenological inquiry itself.

While the questions “of what is scripture an index?” and “for whom is scripture an index?” can be addressed in terms of *noesis* and *noema*, narrator and narratee, as I have attempted above, to address the question of “for whom?” we need to extend our analysis beyond that of subject and object. Hermeneutical phenomenology can take account of the material nature of signs and the historical context of inquiry. Indeed, we might ask not only “for whom is scripture an index?”, but “for whom is phenomenological inquiry?” At one level the answer is for “the academy” outside of scriptural traditions, but this is not necessarily the case and a phenomenology of scripture is revealing for practitioners of scriptural hermeneutics within traditions. But certainly the question “for whom?” entails us going further and developing a semiotics of reception which flows naturally from phenomenology. The questions “for whom is scripture an index?” and “for whom is phenomenological inquiry?” both entail not only a subject and an object, a *noesis* and a *noema*, but an interaction through time that creates a third entity in the space of rational discourse. Scripture is a sign for a community or person. This is true of scriptural traditions themselves but also true of the scholar inquiring into scriptural traditions in the mode of detachment. This is where the practice of scriptural reasoning becomes interesting. The practice of SR involves a hermeneutical phenomenology in so far as those engaged in the practice must implicitly suspend judgement about the being behind the appearance of others’ scriptures. This might not be recognized by practitioners of SR but it seems to me that it must be a part of the process in which there is resistance to reducing a plurality of scriptural claims to a shared vision at the cost of the particularity of tradition. To maintain the particularity of scriptural tradition we must suspend judgement about the being behind the scripture. Scripture is an index of something, but that something is implicitly bracketed in the act of scriptural reasoning with others. This is not a restriction but a liberating process. Secondly SR entails a semiotics of scripture in that it creates a discourse outside of particular scriptural traditions. This discourse is hospitable to others and is fundamentally text-based, but the emergent readings of the practice are not those of any one tradition. The third space of scriptural reasoning is semiotically rich and might be seen as a consequence of a phenomenological process in which the dynamics of scripture and scriptural reception, described in a phenomenological account, come into play across different traditions of reception.

By way of conclusion we might say that a phenomenology of scripture can address the three questions “of what is scripture and index?”, “for whom is scripture an index?” and “how is scripture an index?” in a

process that begins with a description of the *noesis-noema* structure, moves on to a deeper engagement in a hermeneutical phenomenology that can provide an account of textual reception, and from which follows a semiotics that recognizes the emergent discourse and discovery of new worlds characteristic of Scriptural Reasoning. Traditional communities of textual reception change through history and new communities of reception emerge. Scriptural Reasoning might be seen as one such new community, true to the spirit of dialogue but grounded in text and hermeneutically sensitive.

NOTES

- 1 E.g. Timothy Fitzgerald, *The Ideology of Religious Studies* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 6, 54–71, 237; Gavin Flood, *Beyond Phenomenology: Rethinking the Study of Religion* (London and New York: Cassell, 1999), pp. 91–116; Russell T. McCutcheon, *Manufacturing Religion: the Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 118–119.
- 2 E.g. David Chidester, *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 1996), pp. 5–29. For a critique of textual bias see Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India, and the "Mystic East"* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 62–81.
- 3 Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns, (Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991), pp. 39–46.
- 4 Donn Welton, *The Other Husserl: The Horizons of Transcendental Phenomenology* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), chapters 8 and 9.
- 5 These questions echo Ricoeur's question in the context of memory "from 'What?' to 'Who?' passing by way of 'How?'" See Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 4.
- 6 Husserl, *Cartesian Mediations*, pp. 31–33.
- 7 But we must not forget that Heidegger rejected Husserl's understanding of intentionality providing an analysis of phenomena within the field of *Dasein's* operation, such as this example, as "present to hand".
- 8 Exodus, 3:2–6 (*Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*).
- 9 Paul Ricoeur *Time and Narrative*, Vol. 1, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 64.
- 10 Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, p. 261.
- 11 Hans-Robert Jauss, "Literary History as Challenge to Literary Theory", *New Literary History* Vol. 2 (1970), pp. 7–37; p. 14; Hans-Robert Jauss "The Idealist Embarrassment: Observations of Marxist Aesthetics", *New Literary History* Vol. 7 (1975), pp. 191–207.
- 12 Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins (Gesammelte Werke X)* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1966), p. 52. Quoted in Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 110–111.
- 13 Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading*, p. 110, quoting Roman Ingarden.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- 15 For Genette the author is outside the text and the narrator is within it. Only the narrator is the concern of narratology. Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), pp. 25–27.
- 16 Tzvetan Todorov, "Reading as Construction", p. 72 in Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman (eds.), *The Reader in the Text* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 67–82.
- 17 I have developed this idea in *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory and Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

- 18 *Ibid.*, pp. 166, 181.
- 19 Gavin Flood, *The Tantric Body: The Secret Tradition of Hindu Religion* (London: I. B. Tauris Press, 2006).
- 20 Gavin D. Flood, *Beyond Phenomenology: Rethinking the Study of Religion* (London: Cassell, 1999), pp. 91–116.
- 21 V. N. Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 11.