

***Body, Text and Science. The Literacy of Investigative Practices and the Phenomenology of Edith Stein* by Marianne Sawicki, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997.
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Body, Text and Science establishes Marianne Sawicki as the contemporary authority on the phenomenology of Edith Stein in the English language. It builds on the foundations laid by Mary Catherine Baseheart (e.g. *Person in the World*, Kluwer, 1997), but limits itself to the philosophy of the young Edith Stein (*On the Problem of Empathy* (1916) and *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* (1922)). Its major achievement is to define the kind of contribution Stein made to Husserl's *Ideen II*. This unfinished work is often invoked to document Husserl's positions on empathy, constitution, the body and intersubjectivity. But Sawicki establishes that the work in fact was co-authored by Stein and that both authors attempted to expose their own doctrine in it. Stein thought that Husserl should rethink the problem of constitution in relation to empathy, but she also complained he never did. In contrast, Stein's doctrine of intersubjectivity relies on an understanding of constitution that integrates empathy.

So, the title of the book, at first sight quite long-winded, is justified. It is about the 'literacy of investigative practices and the phenomenology of Edith Stein', but more significantly it is about 'body, text and science'. These three keywords symbolize both what brings Stein and Husserl together and what separates them. Stein affirms that individualization takes place in relation to the body, whereas Husserl affirms that it takes place before experience. These contradictory affirmations occur in the same text, *Ideen II*. In it, moreover, Stein insists that intersubjectivity is the foundation of science, whereas Husserl holds on to the transcendental ego as what founds it. This oscillation between Stein's and Husserl's identification with and differentiation from each other's textual productions is portrayed throughout the six chapters of *Body, Text and Science*.

In Chapter One: 'The Genesis of Phenomenology' Sawicki traces the sources of *On the Problem of Empathy*. The result is spectacular. She documents the roots of phenomenology in hermeneutics, the cultivation of this germ in the Munich Circle, and its transmission from there to Göttingen. The themes of personality, motivation and science are compared in the investigation of the philosophies of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Lipps, Pfänder, Conrad-Martius, Scheler and Reinach. This, however, is only the build-up towards an investigation of the problem of empathy in Chapter Two: 'Husserl's Early Treatments of Intersubjectivity'. Husserl inherited his interest in intersubjectivity from Lipps, through his Munich-students. Lipps had (a fact somewhat overlooked by Sawicki) understood empathy to be a co-constituting (*mit-konstituierender*) factor in the object, providing it with independence (*Selbständigkeit*). He thus presented Husserl with the two terms that were to determine his later thought: constitution and empathy. These fundamental concepts are, however, traced by Sawicki through the *Logical Investigations* and *Ideen* to *Ideen II*. She discerns in this last text what she terms 'two alternative solutions' to the problem of intersubjectivity: the 'priority of bodily life' and the 'priority of transcendental constitution'. The first solution, which is Stein's, takes identification of the self and of the other to take place within experience, whereas the second solution, which is Husserl's, affirms the unity of the transcendental I as the unity of experience. Sawicki argues that Husserl did not publish the work himself because he considered it to be incoherent. Perhaps he also viewed Stein's *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* as the answer to the problems he grappled with in *Ideen II*, and saw no need to publish his own attempts. In any case Sawicki's analysis means that Husserl's doctrine of intersubjectivity no longer can be read without recourse to Stein's *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, as this latter work constitutes not only the first commentary on *Ideen II*, but also the finished form of one version of it.

Chapter Three: 'Edith Stein's Hermeneutic Theory' is a fairly literal commentary facilitating, but not dispensing with, the reading of Stein's *On the Problem of Empathy*, which in turn is necessary for the understanding of *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*. The commentary is critical to the point of being irritating, because Sawicki is annoyed by what she sees as flaws in Stein's analysis. The accusative method, addressing Stein directly as 'you', most efficiently avoids complacency, but does not entirely steer clear of being unreasonable.

The remaining three chapters of *Body, Text and Science* concern science. Chapter Four: 'Edith Stein's Hermeneutic Practices' criticizes Stein's scientific contributions, including her 'ventriloquism' in and 'chiseling' at other philosophers' publications, as well as her self-interpretation/presentation in her autobiography. Chapter Five: 'Interpretations of Edith Stein' categorizes and assesses various ways of

understanding Stein according to their ideological drift. It distinguishes three ways of reading: 'docility', 'echoing' and 'adaptive reception', whereof the author prefers the last, because it preserves a relative equality of reader and writer and airs the aggression which is subdued in the other two types. Chapter Six: 'Science as Literacy' attempts such an 'adaptive reception' of Stein's theory of science in (what has since been translated by Sawicki as) *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*. It confronts this theory with psychoanalysis and feminism, which share with phenomenology the ambition of founding science. Despite the rather insufficient analysis of *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, this chapter makes the book more than a study of the philosophy of Edith Stein, because it envisages a kind of application for it in a general theory of what happens when minds meet. An *Auseinandersetzung* with the hermeneutical theories of Heidegger and Gadamer may be indispensable to bring this theory to completion.

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