



Cambridge
Elements

Philosophy of Religion

Feminism, Religion
and Practical
Reason

Beverley Clack

Cambridge Elements

Elements in the Philosophy of Religion

edited by

Yujin Nagasawa

University of Birmingham

FEMINISM, RELIGION AND PRACTICAL REASON

Beverley Clack

Oxford Brookes University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108796866

DOI: [10.1017/9781108859653](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108859653)

© Beverley Clack 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-108-79686-6 Paperback

ISSN 2399-5165 (online)

ISSN 2515-9763 (print)

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Feminism, Religion and Practical Reason

Elements in the Philosophy of Religion

DOI: 10.1017/9781108859653
First published online: November 2021

Beverley Clack
Oxford Brookes University

Author for correspondence: Beverley Clack, bclack@brookes.ac.uk

Abstract: Pamela Sue Anderson's *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion* (1998) and Grace Jantzen's *Becoming Divine: Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Religion* (1998) set the tone for subsequent feminist philosophies of religion. This Element builds upon the legacy of their investigations, revisiting and extending aspects of their work for a contemporary context struggling with the impact of 'post-truth' forms of politics. Reclaiming the power of collective action felt in religious community and the importance of the struggle for truth enables a changed perspective on the world, itself necessary to realise the feminist desire for more flourishing forms of life and relationships crucial to feminist philosophy of religion.

Keywords: feminism, truth, evil, religion, flourishing

© Beverley Clack 2021

ISBNs: 9781108796866 (PB), 9781108859653 (OC)
ISSNs: 2399-5165 (online), 2515-9763 (print)

Contents

Introduction	1
1 Rethinking Feminism	4
2 Community and the Flourishing Life: The Struggle for Truth	30
3 God, Lies and the Problem of Evil	42
4 Principles for a Practical Feminist Philosophy of Religion	58
References	60

Introduction

Some twenty years have passed since the publication of the first books dedicated explicitly to Feminist Philosophy of Religion. Published in 1998, Pamela Sue Anderson's *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion* and Grace Jantzen's *Becoming Divine: Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Religion* set the tone for subsequent feminist approaches to the field. This Element builds upon their legacy, developing and extending aspects of their work for a much-changed contemporary context.

That this task is necessary reflects the absence of these two philosophers, whose lives were cut short and whose investigations were, as a result, nowhere near complete. Philosophical investigations, by their very nature, are rarely finished, yet the sense of these women dying in the middle of conversations they had opened up is palpable. Jantzen died in 2006 at the age of fifty-seven, the first in a series of six books she intended to write on 'Death and the Displacement of Beauty' having been published in 2004. Jeremy Carrette's memorial article (2006) offers a tantalising flavour of where she might have gone in her thinking had she lived. Anderson died in 2017 at the age of sixty-one. A dominant theme in her work at the time was human vulnerability. A piece by her, read in absentia at the British Academy conference on 'Vulnerability and the Politics of Care' a month before she died, reflected the ruthlessly honest eye she was bringing to this theme.¹

My enquiry is shaped by three aspects of their work.

The first is Anderson's unwillingness to throw over entirely the structures of philosophy of religion, which offers the possibility of an open feminist philosophy based upon a rich combination of sources. She conducts a philosophical conversation with a range of partners: some women, some men; some feminist, some not; some philosophical, some theological, some literary.

Expanding the range of conversation partners is reflected in the second aspect of her work that influences my approach. Anderson explores the ethical potential of philosophy of religion. Philosophy of religion is a form of critical practice concerned with the investigation of truth-claims. The established content of the subject clusters around arguments designed to establish (or reject) the reasonableness of belief in God; in its analytic form its account of religion is grounded in the investigation of theism and the attempt to establish (or to reject) the truth-claims attending to this concept. Anderson's feminist approach is significant as she takes this notion into the realm of practical living. Shaped by feminist concerns, philosophy of religion 'no longer focuses strictly on epistemological

¹ See 'Silencing and speaker vulnerability: undoing an oppressive form of (wilful) ignorance', in Pelagia Goulimari's collection (2021, 34–43) published in Anderson's memory.

questions to do with belief, knowledge, or the truth of a claim that “God exists”, or that “we are free agents” (Anderson 2009, 124). Rather, it is to be understood as a critical discipline that is also a practical endeavour. To adopt this approach is to expand the range of philosophers’ reflections on God and agency by ‘thinking freedom, acting virtuously and making reflective (aesthetic) judgements which would be creative spirituality’ (2009, 125).

This suggests something of the distinctive feminist approach to philosophy of religion, and leads to the third theme drawn from the work of these two foremothers. Philosophy of religion is shaped by both women as a form of practice that enables the flourishing life. The question of what it is to flourish is central to Jantzen’s approach. She argues that this involves attending to birth and natality (neglected as philosophical themes, she contends, because of their association ‘only’ with women). Taking seriously these features enables a different way of considering the focus and values of human life from one centred on death and mortality. Anderson, in similar vein, suggests that the aim of feminist philosophy of religion is to cultivate ‘the love of life’ (2009).

How to nurture the conditions for a flourishing life drives my enquiry. Rosemary Radford Ruether’s pithy definition of feminism as the promotion of that which affirms ‘the full humanity of women’ (Ruether 1983) is central to my philosophy of religion. It explains the necessary starting point – namely, the identification of and resistance to the structures and attitudes that historically denied women’s full humanity – and the development of a philosophy of religion that engages with themes beyond the specific discussion of sex and gender. If women *really are* ‘full human beings’, the reflections they develop should be capable of informing what it means to flourish, not just as a woman but also as a human being.

As I develop my feminist philosophy of religion, a number of problems must be addressed. A central contention of womanists and black feminists² is that ‘white feminists’, benefitting from the structures of western liberal societies, consistently ignore the power of collective action and thus the possibilities of religious community for shaping the lives and resistance of oppressed peoples. The concern of white feminists with personal autonomy does not allow space, it is claimed, for an understanding of religion as a collective endeavour shaping political action (Grant 1989; Armour 1999). Tina Beattie’s (2004) critique of

² For discussion of ‘womanist’ and ‘black feminist’, see Patricia Hill Collins (1996). Collins cites Alice Walker’s four features of womanism: i) a womanist is ‘a black feminist or feminist of colour’; ii) womanism resists separatism and is committed to the survival and wholeness of men *and* women; iii) a womanist loves music, dance, struggle, spirit, food, her people, her self; and iv) the connection with feminism: ‘womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender’. ‘On some basic level, Walker herself uses the two terms [womanist and black feminist] as being virtually interchangeable’ (Collins 1996, 10).

feminist philosophy of religion likewise draws attention to the problems of individualistic feminisms, framed by an unacknowledged Protestantism concerned with establishing ‘right belief’. Analysing the work of Jantzen and Anderson, Beattie identifies an implicit liberalism beneath their apparent differences. The emphasis on the critique of belief and the attention given to individual liberation limits, Beattie claims, the significance of the feminist approach for the philosophical investigation of religion. For Beattie, both Anderson and Jantzen fail to address the aesthetic and communal aspects of religion and its practice: a lacuna her Catholic approach attempts to fill.

In what follows, I build upon the foundation provided by Anderson and Jantzen, while taking seriously the force of these criticisms. My feminist philosophy of religion is defined thus:

Firstly, I understand feminism as a political and practical movement. It is a way of thinking and – crucially – acting, requiring liberating forms of praxis extending beyond the concerns of the self towards a collective response to (primarily but not only) sex-based forms of injustice.

Secondly, I offer a feminist philosophy of religion that recognises its relationship to feminist theology. The critique of religion influenced feminist theological enquiry from its earliest days (Stanton 1895; Daly 1986 [1973]). For feminist theologians like Daphne Hampson (1990; 1996; 2002), the critique of ‘patriarchal’ forms of religion reveals that, far from being an innocent phenomenon, religious systems of belief, and the institutions that support them, provide tools that, over the centuries, have been highly effective for the oppression of women. Not all agree with this analysis (Ruether 1983; 2012; Coakley 2002; Haynes 2014a), and I suggest something of the possibilities of religion for shaping liberating forms of life as we proceed. Recent work in the philosophy of religion suggests the need to reflect upon ‘living religion’ (Hewitt and Scrutton 2018), locating analysis of religion in the lived experience of religious communities (Burley 2020), rather than solely in assessment of accounts of God that can appear overly abstracted from the living out of a religious faith. The desire for more nuanced engagements with the phenomenon of religion is, similarly, reflected in what follows, and, here, the reflections of black feminist and women theologians are most helpful for the development of a feminist philosophy of religion.

Drawing upon both negative and positive strands in the feminist analysis of religion, I recognise the problems of patriarchal history for religious traditions, but also the possibilities of reclaiming the power of collective action felt in religious community. The account of ‘the religious’ that I pursue enables the kind of diversity and pluralism that political theorists like Hannah Arendt (1998 [1958]) deemed necessary for human flourishing, and that has possibilities for

shaping a more just world. Religious practice allows for the development of a changed perspective on the world and the place of human beings within it. Here is the possibility of renewed connection with others and the world that makes possible richer forms of living: an aim that connects liberating forms of religious practice with the preoccupations of feminists.

³ The American Academy of Religion Conference at Philadelphia (19–22 November 2005) included the first panel dedicated to Feminist Philosophy of Religion.

approach to be taken by the feminist philosopher of religion. Truth matters if the flourishing community is to be built; it should reflect the lived reality of human relationships; and it must be expressed in ways that enable all women to gain from it. Anderson cites bell hooks with approval, in words that make central truth-telling, while opening up the problem of lies and deceit:

To make community, we need to be able to know truth, to speak openly and honestly. Truth-telling has to be a spiritual practice for many of us because we live and work in settings where falseness is rewarded, where lies are the norm. Deceit and betrayal destroy the possibility of community. (in Anderson 2012, 125)

Locating truth in the practices of community does not gloss over the reality of lies that break the possibility of flourishing communities: if anything, identifying lies and challenging them takes on new importance for this practical work. This grounded approach to truth opens up reflections on the problem of evil – such a key topic in philosophy of religion – in surprising ways that lead towards practices enabling the flourishing life.

3 God, Lies and the Problem of Evil

3.1 Groundwork for a Feminist Approach to the Problem of Evil

Does a feminist ethic *require* an investigation of evil? To use the word ‘evil’ suggests a metaphysical distinction between what is Good (or ‘God’) and what is Evil (or ‘not-God’). It does not sound particularly promising for a *practical* feminist philosophy of religion to direct attention away from the human realm to some hypothetical otherworld where a battle is being waged between absolute cosmic forces. For Mary Midgley, focusing on human behaviour offers a better way of proceeding, for regardless of whether or not God exists, no one can escape the manifestations of evil (1984, 1–2). Midgley’s words direct attention to how wickedness arises in human life and the need to combat it. The feminist philosopher of religion might well agree with such an approach.

There are, however, good reasons for employing the language of evil, and a number of arguments are helpful for the feminist philosophical project I advocate. At times, only the word ‘evil’ is sufficient for grasping the terrible extent of human cruelty. Marilyn McCord Adams gets at this well with an extensive list of examples of what she designates as ‘evil’. These actions and events challenge easy theological answers, and in highlighting this aspect she shares common ground with Eleanor Stump’s attempt (2010) to ensure analytic philosophy of religion engages with the full horror of evil. ‘Evil’ is the only word with sufficient force to describe events where no positive value

whatsoever can be accrued *by the sufferer*, and McCord Adams makes painfully clear the experiences she has in mind: ‘the rape of a woman and axing off of her arms, psycho-physical torture whose ultimate aim is the disintegration of personality, betrayal of one’s deepest loyalties, child abuse of the sort described by Ivan Karamazov, child pornography, parental incest, slow death by starvation, the explosion of nuclear bombs over populated areas’ (1999, 26).

McCord Adams does not shape an explicitly feminist philosophy: Claudia Card does in her reflections on evil. Like McCord Adams, Card addresses the horror of evil, and her ‘atrocities paradigm’ (2005) reveals common ground between the two positions. This is evident when she claims the necessity of using the language of evil. Card identifies ‘evils’ with ‘inexcusable wrongs’: note the plural. This is not about identifying some force *outside* human life and action. Rather, this word describes actions that challenge the ability to comprehend them: ‘Evils are reasonably foreseeable harms produced (maintained, supported, tolerated, and so on) *by culpable wrong doing*’ (2010, 5; my emphasis). With McCord Adams, Card’s focus is moral evil, for this is where the ‘real’ problem of evil is located (I address ‘natural’ evil in Section 3.3). Two components are vital for Card’s identification of evil: ‘harm’ and ‘agency’. It is *deeds* and *practices*, not attempts to put ‘labels on people (or empires or alliances)’ (2010, 5), that must be central to the discussion. ‘In atrocities the ingredients of evil are writ boldly’ (2010, 6), Card says; and this means that ‘evil on the atrocities paradigm wears a human face’ (2010, 16).

Card’s practical focus alerts us to a feature common to feminist approaches to evil and suffering. If analytic philosophers of religion fall back on a construction of the problem of evil as a puzzle that requires solving – so, ‘how is the Omnigod of theism to be held alongside the reality of evil and suffering?’ – the feminist focus is on the phenomenon itself and its grounding in forms of human behaviour and social structures. At the same time, attention is paid to evils not ordinarily considered by philosophers of religion. Thus, Card emphasises evils visited overwhelmingly on the female body. How she does this is insightful, for it suggests the connection between the individual and the social that informs feminist analysis. Card details the experience of ‘rape terrorism’ (2010, 159), an atmosphere that creates a context of fear for *all* women, regardless of age, ethnicity or economic class. Susan Griffin’s classic essay on this phenomenon, ‘Rape: An All-American Crime’ (1971), illustrates Card’s point:

I have never been free of the fear of rape. From an early age I, like most women, have thought of rape as part of my natural environment – something to be feared and prayed against like fire or lightning. I never asked why men

raped; I simply thought it one of the many mysteries of human nature. (in Card 2010, 160)

Rape is not ‘merely’ a personal experience; it is a method that perpetuates the system of patriarchy. The reality of rape shores up male political power by rendering women fearful and powerless. Rape is thus socially constructed. Card’s reading is supported by her analysis of rape as a weapon of war. The female body, its abuse and ownership, becomes the arena on which male desires for political power are played out. Card’s example is from the Bosnian war of the 1990s where rape was routinely employed as a means of terrifying and demoralising one’s enemies, as well as creating ethnic homogeneity.¹⁵ Card’s argument builds on the second wave analysis of sexual violence and makes its identification and resistance to it a central part of feminist activism. Rape is personal *and* political.

Card’s atrocity paradigm is not without its critics, and these criticisms direct us to a strand in the feminist engagement with evil of importance for my practical philosophy of religion. Samantha Brennan argues that Card’s focus ignores the connection between atrocities and what she calls ‘everyday inequalities’ (Brennan 2009, 141). Brennan’s examples seem small-scale compared to the horrors of terrorism, torture and genocide peppering Card’s analysis and providing plentiful (disturbing) examples of how harm and agency unite to create all-too-human evils. Brennan’s gaze, by way of contrast, is directed to the personal and the private.

Brennan addresses the link between domestic violence (which in its most extreme forms provides examples of the horrors Card details, and which is also overwhelmingly inflicted upon women) and low pay (an everyday inequality that, again, disproportionately affects women). Identifying a connection between two such different phenomena might seem strange. Yet for Brennan ordinary inequalities, such as limited independent financial resources, are often a significant factor in limiting a woman’s ability to escape her abuser. Brennan provides empirical evidence from Rhona Mahony’s study *Kidding Ourselves: Breadwinning, Babies and Bargaining Power* (1995): ‘A woman who has a higher income can walk out on a violent man more easily. Or she can credibly threaten that she’ll walk out’ (in Brennan 2009, 154).

Brennan is convinced by Mahony’s claim: others might wonder whether purely economic factors capture the whole story. The psychology of dependence and coercive control suggests a more complex reality, as is illustrated in the

¹⁵ This is far from a purely historic example: see Matthew Hill, David Campanale and Joel Gunter, “‘Their goal is to destroy everyone’: Uighur camp detainees allege systematic rape.” BBC News 2 February 2021, www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-55794071.

case of Sally Challen, convicted for murdering her husband in 2011. Challen's conviction was converted to manslaughter at appeal in 2019. Clare Wade QC, conducting Challen's defence, drew attention to the various forms of 'coercive control' used by Challen's husband for over thirty years. Coercive control is 'bespoke abuse' 'in the sense that the perpetrator will tailor the control to his victim's specific vulnerabilities': so, 'isolating her, cutting off finances, monitoring her movements, micro-regulating domestic duties and so forth'. Economic resources are part of the context that makes leaving impossible, but so is the assault on agency and the networks that would make leaving possible. As Wade says in her reflections on the case, 'the court should approach domestic abuse from a perspective of *social and personal entrapment*' (Wade 2020; my emphasis). Brennan's more general point comes to the fore: Card's attention to atrocity runs the risk of ignoring ordinary social phenomena – limiting independent finances, undermining confidence, creating a sense of isolation – that allow evil to flourish.

Brennan's criticisms and her understanding of the nature of evil resonate with Hannah Arendt's description of the 'banality' – the ordinariness – of evil. At Eichmann's trial, Arendt is puzzled by how little he looks like the popular image of a war criminal. He presents as an administrator or a librarian, not a figure of evil. Both claims are, in fact, true: Eichmann was the chief administrator of the transportation system that took the Nazis' victims to the death camps. This meshing of the ordinary with the extraordinary is what makes Eichmann so troubling. For Arendt, he is a 'new type of criminal' (1964: 276); one whose crimes emerge from a particular set of social conditions and working practices. Arendt, like Brennan, directs attention at the social context that enables the creation of such a person.

Arendt emphasises institutional practices that created Eichmann and those like him. Dependence on bureaucratic systems for structuring the state and shaping human behaviour (Arendt 1968 [1948]) lead to the fragmentation of tasks and the focus on achieving a set of predetermined end results. Employed in such systems, individuals are rendered incapable of associating *their* specific tasks with the broader agenda of their employers. There may be good reasons for instigating systems of this kind: the efficiency of 'the System' appears preferable to reliance on the messy idiosyncrasies of fallible individuals. Yet Arendt argues that disparaging human relationships creates a problem far greater than the one the System is supposed to solve. The worker, conceived as 'a mere function' of the organisation (1968 [1948], 215), becomes 'aloof' from the ordinary human concerns that would enable them to identify the effect of their actions on the lives of others. The very precision and efficiency of the bureaucratic system obscures the reality of a common world shared with others, and it is this shared world that Arendt urges us to reclaim:

In comparison [to bureaucratic societies], exploitation, oppression, or corruption look like safeguards of human dignity, because exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed, corruptor and corrupted, still live in the same world, share the same goals, fight each other for the possession of the same things; and it is this *tertium comparationis* which aloofness destroyed. (Arendt 1968 [1948], 212)

Eichmann is disturbing because he is not a ‘monster’ detached from the rest of humanity: the conditions that created him fostered countless others without whom the Holocaust could not have happened. These conditions did not end with the liberation of the death camps and the end of the Second World War, for *they are replicated every day in the institutions and practices of daily life*. When Elizabeth Minnich offers her contemporary reworking of Arendt, it is the everyday that drives her analysis, distilled into a very ordinary question: ‘what were they thinking?’ (2017, 1–4). It is not so much that creating Eichmanns who attend only to their task in an organisation necessarily *leads to* the horrors of the Third Reich; rather, it is the construction of one’s daily activities in this way that should make us pause, for it does not take much for the dulling of critical moral thinking to be used by those wishing to do harm.

Minnich’s examples are derived from a succession of extensive, systematic evils; her concern is with the comparatively small actions and attitudes enabling such events. Consider the phrases shaping the actions of those engaging in genocide that are mirrored in the daily practices of societies not engaging in such horrors: ‘Don’t take it home with you . . . Be a team player . . . It’s not our business; I was just doing my job; everyone else seemed okay with it; who was I to question the guys in the big offices? I had a family to support. There was a promotion I could get if I played it right’ (Minnich 2017, 12). Ordinary concerns with self-advancement become anything but when used to explain one’s failure to challenge genocidal agendas: ‘the killing was a job, not a vendetta; it was nothing personal; working hours pretty well contained it. The killers could sleep well, and, next day, continue their work’ (Minnich 2017, 1). Wilful blindness to the effects of one’s actions is an important condition for evil.

The connection between the everyday and atrocity is more complex than might initially be thought. Attitudes seemingly irrelevant to acts of genocide cultivate ways of thinking that dull the moral senses and, if the circumstances are right, can be used by the perpetrators of such actions to their pernicious ends. As Arendt says of Eichmann, he ‘commits his crimes under circumstances that make it well-nigh impossible for him to know or to feel that he is doing wrong’ (1964, 276). *Thoughtlessness* – the failure to engage in empathetic and critical thought – provides fertile ground for evil to flourish. The solution to the problem of evil, Arendt and Minnich claim, requires the cultivation of *thoughtfulness*.

Arendt's analysis offers much to feminist and womanist analysis of social structures supporting oppression and violence (Welch 1989; Townes 2006). Evil is not so much a force transcending the actions of human beings as something relational, located in social structures and personal relationships. 'Evil occurs between people' (Geddes 2003, 105), as Jennifer Geddes claims in words that also permeate Minnich's analysis.

Against the backdrop of a relational account of evil, lying emerges as an important theme for feminist analysis. As bell hooks indicated at the end of Section 2, the practice of truth-telling is vital for creating the conditions for trust upon which flourishing communities depend. What we say matters, and societies where the lives of others are misrepresented by lies and falsehoods are open to everyday (and extraordinary) forms of injustice. The Holocaust depended on the lies of antisemitism that stretched back centuries; the slave trade on economically driven lies that rendered black people less than human. For feminists, attention must be paid to the social impact of lies told about women.

It can be a surprise to encounter claims that women are responsible for evil (Noddings 1989, 35). In Greek and Roman myth, the first woman, Pandora, was the source of all human suffering. Described as 'the calamity for men who live by bread' (Hesiod 1988, 39), Pandora foolishly opens the box containing all the misery of the human condition. In the Christian tradition, suffering is similarly traced to the first woman. Eve's failure to resist Satan's temptation leads to the expulsion of humans from Eden, while opening the door to the punishment of death. Such stories reflect attitudes towards women common in the times that created them, and inform later theological and social misogyny (Pagels 1989). Evil enters the world through a woman, and all women, as 'daughters of Eve', are, at worst, incapable of goodness, and, at best, limited in their ability to pursue the moral life. Without the 'weakness of woman', there would be no evil, for the devil would never have dared approach the stronger Adam (Tertullian, in Clack 1999: 50). Woman's responsibility for evil is located in her very being, and thus social constraints on women's lives are required to curb her excesses. Woman is incapable and dangerous, and requires treating as such.

So much for the refrain against the fallible female encountered in Section 1. An added dimension should be noted. Beneath the words of female culpability for a broken world is an equally troubling account of nature. The gendered division between nature and reason is replicated in the split between the world and humanity. The role of the male is to control the fallible female; the role of the human is to dominate unruly nature. Practical questions of how to live well in the world cannot escape discussion of truth, lies and evil. Here, the philosopher of religion finds himself on familiar ground, for questions about God and the truthful depiction of reality are central to the ethical life.

3.2 Rethinking God and the Ethical Life

Considered against the backdrop of these reflections on evil, the principles of accuracy and sincerity from Bernard Williams, Le Doeuff's critical thinking and Anderson's reflective critical openness become, not mere philosophical abstractions, but vital starting points for the practical work necessary for creating flourishing communities. If we do not attempt to make our language reflect reality, if our words mask our own agendas, if we are not sufficiently reflective and honest, we will not enable the conditions necessary for the flourishing not just of ourselves, but of others, and, moreover, the world itself.

Are these principles enough to create the flourishing life that is the aim and hope of feminist philosophy of religion? Nietzsche offers a rather more challenging rendition of the struggle for truth than has been encountered so far. He accepts (in an echo of Jantzen's claims) that values are not politically neutral: 'the truth' – as it is presented by individuals and in communities – is not something detached from relationship. There is indeed (as Collins says) a struggle for truth; but Nietzsche's model for this reflects a hierarchy of relations where the differing desires of 'masters' and 'slaves' inevitably come into violent conflict. The truth is determined by whoever emerges from the fray victorious; so, yes, it is not fixed: it is open to change. Thus, the 'transvaluation of values' is the project for Nietzsche's 'Übermensch', who comes after humanity and who is prepared to realise the consequences of the death of God (Nietzsche 1998 [1886], Section Two; 1969 [1883–85], Part One). Nietzsche's thoughts make for uncomfortable reading, and, while it is certainly not necessary to accept his as the only model for the struggle for truth, his words challenge any cosy account of what this involves in practice. Given what John Roth calls the 'slaughter bench' of human history (1981, 10), it is perfectly plausible to ask whether humans, understood as entirely self-creating, are sufficient to the task of creating societies that are good for all, rather than just an elite few.

Simone Weil (1952) explores this problem when she considers the advocacy of human rights in the wake of the horrors of the Second World War. It is worth the feminist reflecting on her words, for they certainly dispel easy grounds for optimism. The language of rights, Weil argues, while laudable, is not particularly helpful for enshrining respect for the lives of others. Rights can be challenged, changed, ignored: all is dependent on the context in which we find ourselves. Instead, she advocates the *impersonal* recognition of 'the human' as the frame for our values. Rather than rights, she foregrounds the *obligation* to meet the *needs* of others. Out of the construction of obligation and need emerges an ethic of the flourishing life that requires human beings to

consider their duties to each other as beings demanding attention. For Weil, the web of needs and obligations is more fundamental than the more artificial overlay of 'rights'. Moreover, her model for human relationships is grounded in the creative action of God. The 'attention' to each other that is central to Weil's ethics is love, for it is 'God in us who loves them' (1959, 107). She does not ignore the importance of human relationship and community, but these cannot stand alone. Instead, the basis of these relationships is in something transcending the preferences and desires of individuals. Only in this way can the value of each individual be secured, and this requires a shift in the understanding of God: 'we must conceive of God as impersonal, in the sense that he is the divine model of a person who passes beyond the self by renunciation' (1959, 133).

Weil's ethical concerns open up the question of the character of the God who acts as guarantor for the ethical life. To explore the significance of her claim requires revisiting some arguments I presented in previous work on the problem of evil. Then, I argued that a practical feminist philosophy of religion need not address the traditional arguments that attend to the co-existence of God and evil, for the urgency of the problem of evil is felt, 'not in the attempt to justify the ways of God to humans, but in the way it forces reflection on the conditions and attitudes that hinder human flourishing' (Clack 2018, 135). I have come to revise that view. It is necessary to include discussion of the importance of God, religion and the divine for shaping the well-lived life, for the reasons that Weil identifies. Questions that are *existential* because they turn the gaze to the nature of existence, and *theological* and *ontological* as they require us to think about the nature of reality itself, are not easily separated from ethical questions of how to live.

The accounts of evil considered so far effectively park theodical arguments in favour of practical measures that challenge moral evil. Arguments surrounding God appear as distractions from this task grounded in reality. Sure, Arendt reports that Eichmann 'feels guilty before God, but not before the law' (1964, 21), but she does not discuss what Eichmann intends by using this phrase. Instead, her discussion moves onto questions of jurisprudence: does the court in Jerusalem have the authority to try Eichmann for crimes committed outside its jurisdiction? Yes, Card uses the language of evil; but rather than muddy the waters with theological concepts, she proposes a 'secular understanding of evils' (2010, 4).

A practically focused feminist philosophy of religion will find much to approve in reconfiguring the problem thus. A philosophy concerned with the attempt to live well will look to catalogue, challenge and *change* the conditions leading to the tortures and injustices Card *et al* highlight. However, excluding

discussion of God neglects an important aspect of the investigation of the conditions that allow for evil, while limiting discussion of what exactly is meant by ‘the good’: that aspect of life so relevant for the feminist concern with flourishing. Minnich makes discussion of the ‘ordinariness of the good’ the companion theme to the banality of evil, and in doing so she brings the religious life into sharp focus, while opening up space for discussion of what, precisely, is meant by God or the Divine.

Minnich explores Philip Hallie’s (1979) investigation of the village of Le Chambon and the role that daily religious practice played in framing that community’s hospitality to Jews fleeing Nazi persecution. Hers is a secular study, yet Minnich notes ‘that religion plays an important role in this story’ (2017, 120): those offering the hand of friendship to the persecuted were members of a Huguenot religious community. While religious practice is central to this case, Minnich is not convinced that this is necessary for cultivating the well-lived life. Religious people, after all, are just as capable of unthinking wickedness as anyone else.

Grist to Minnich’s mill is provided by the observations of Le Chambon’s Pastor Andre Trocme and his wife Magda Grilli Trocme on why they and their fellow villagers acted as they did. They speak ‘largely in secular terms’ out of ‘the profound conviction that whatever your religion, it is *how you choose to act with and for others daily, in ordinary life and when the ordinary has been perverted, that matters*’ (Minnich 2017, 120; my emphasis). The practices of kindness to the stranger or outsider, enshrined in peace time, meant that when the villagers were faced with refugees fleeing persecution they held out the hand of friendship and hid them from their persecutors. This was not about ‘heroism’, but about responding to the needs of the stranger. ‘It had to be done, that’s all’, was Magda Grilli Trocme’s rather dismissive response to those seeking to frame their practical humanity as an act of extraordinary goodness (in Minnich 2017, 122).

There may be no easy correlation between religious belief and ethical action, yet this example of ‘extensive goodness’ (Minnich 2017, 124) casts light on the practical possibilities of religious faith. Cultivating daily practices, developing a mindset of compassion towards others through religious practices that ground faith in the love of God and of neighbour, shaped the life of this little community, and made possible – provided the ground for – their acts of heroism. The philosopher of religion might usefully probe the question of *which* concepts of God best nurture this kind of ethical faith. This task is rather different from that arising from discussion of the qualities of the OmniGod. When God is defined as an agent with a particular set of characteristics, ethical questions get caught up in the attempt to explain the presence of evil and suffering in the world ‘He’

created. The God who is ‘like us only greater’ emerges from such discussions as a rather inept cosmic architect, the world ‘He’ created scarce fit to live in (see [Hume 1998 \[1779\]](#): Part X). But adjust the meaning of the word ‘God’ towards something more radically non-human and impersonal in the way Weil suggests – say, to Melissa Raphael’s Shekinah, ‘the female face of God’ who hides that face in Auschwitz, but is ‘still there, because there is no place where she is not’ (2003, 154); or Richard Rohr’s ‘another word for everything’ (2018, 34); or Paul Tillich’s ‘the God above God’ (1977 [1952], 180) – and the discussion develops quite differently. Questions concerning God and evil become less about solving an ‘inconsistent triad’ ([Mackie 1955](#)), and more about how to respond to the challenges of life. Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl makes explicit this ethical framing. We are ‘questioned by life’ (2004, 85) when the things that happen to us and those we love force us to address what exactly we live by. This is a much more useful way of proceeding than thinking of ‘the problem’ of evil, for it is a task that none can escape, regardless of the religious positions held. All of us have to find ways of living with the things that happen.

Yet the question of ‘God’ remains. Let us return to Weil’s contention that only a *transcendent perspective* enables a firm foundation for the ethical life. Dancing as she does on the boundary between Christianity and Judaism, her thought resists attempts to pin down too rigidly the language of the divine. Using theological language, however, is almost inevitable if we are to follow her lead and think seriously about what makes for an adequate grounding for the well-lived life. While the philosopher of religion may feel a sense of relief as the question of God returns to the discussion, the focus that emerges out of feminist reflection on the practice evil is different: the concern is now with rejecting models of the divine that do not take seriously the reality of evil and suffering, while identifying those that enable the flourishing life.

The OmniGod seems less than helpful for this ethical endeavour. The attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and perfect goodness do not easily survive an acceptance of evil and suffering as features of this world. Either the crushing reality of evil and suffering has to be diminished – so, ‘it is a necessary part of God’s plan for human beings’ – or one of the divine attributes has to be modified or removed. God is either not all-powerful (so the suffering God of [Moltmann \(1973\)](#), [Soelle \(1975\)](#) and [Bonhoeffer \(1971 \[1953\]\)](#)); or God is not all-loving ([Roth’s \(1981\)](#) terrifying God, responsible for the bloody history of the world).

Jantzen’s solution is to shift the discussion of God into the realm of individual subject formation. In so doing, she builds upon Irigaray’s claim that men have always had a model of the divine that enables the development of their masculinity. Consciously or not, the availability of male models for God has provided men with a transcendent perspective – a template, if you will – for the work of

identity formation. Women, Irigaray argues, lack a divine horizon that aids the creation of *their* distinctive subjectivity. Acknowledging this lacuna goes beyond discussion of the limitations of holding to the male generic in theological language. In the context of female self-creation, the ‘maleness of God’ does real harm. Women cannot without difficulty apply masculine theological language to their understanding of themselves, and thus are forced, if they remain within the Abrahamic faiths, to contorted forms of self-understanding (Jantzen 1998, chapter 2).

Jantzen’s solution is not to follow Carol Christ (1979) in replacing the male ‘God’ with the female ‘Goddess’. Instead, Jantzen’s focus is on the activity of ‘becoming’ (1998, 257). By moving towards a divine horizon, there is the possibility of transformation: and the divine is located in this ‘*process* of becoming’ (1998, 255). This solution resonates with the language of feminists who would employ Butler’s philosophy of gender to reshape the work of religion.

Jantzen’s understanding of ‘God’ is shaped by the notion of a divine horizon towards which we move as we create the self. There is a form of transcendence here, but it is a ‘*sensible* transcendent’ (1998, 266; my emphasis). This phrase reflects the role of pantheism in Jantzen’s earlier philosophy of religion (Jantzen 1984). The transcendent is grounded in the immanent, and a phrase from Irigaray gives a tangible sense of what Jantzen has in mind: in our becoming, we are ‘bringing the god to life through us’ (1998, 272). ‘God’/the divine is located in the activity of human becoming. Denying the binary construction of ‘transcendence’ as opposed to ‘immanence’ makes plain, she contends, our obligations to this fragile world. She has little patience for those who would make of their ‘desire for a “better world”’ (1998, 147) an enemy of *this* world. *This* is the world we have, and each life in it ‘special . . . to be affirmed and celebrated’ (1998, 148). This has practical implications for the work of flourishing: if the divine is becoming, so ‘becoming divine is inseparable from solidarity with human suffering’ (1998, 263). Political action emanates from this embodied notion of the divine, while also highlighting Jantzen’s framing of the problem of evil.

At this point, Weil’s questions reemerge in ways that reflect my own pre-occupations. In collapsing the transcendent into the immanent, does Jantzen endow the vagaries of human preference with a kind of permanence? Is everything reducible to human desire and action?

An alternative approach to transcendence and immanence is found in Patrice Haynes’ theological materialism. Haynes draws upon the classical formulation of the transcendent God. With Jantzen, she is influenced by Irigaray, but her resulting theology is different, Haynes claiming that ‘theology can articulate

a non-reductive materialism whereby the affirmation of divine transcendence neither inhibits the becoming of material creation nor assumes that pure, self-forming activity must be the hallmark of lively matter' (2014b, 143). As Annie Dillard says: 'not only is God immanent in everything, but more profoundly everything is simultaneously in God, within God the transcendent. There is divine, not just bushes' (1999, 176–7).

A further aspect of Haynes' account of transcendence is helpful for my approach, as she 'challenge[s] an uncritical humanism' (2014b, 143). Her God is one whose 'agency is wholly unique and, thus, cannot be contrasted with the agencies of this world, or with the agency of the world itself' (2014b, 143). Becoming is supplemented with an emphasis on 'the *coming to be* of matter' (2014b, 143). This latter concept highlights the sheer givenness of life, while challenging any account that makes God a cipher for the act of human becoming. Rather, 'God grants each thing its space to be and become' (2014b, 143).

The anthropomorphic framing of God disappears, and with it the traditional framing of the 'problem' of evil. At this point, Stewart Sutherland's revisionist theism becomes relevant, as he places the question of what grounds the ethical life centre stage. Sutherland begins with the problem of evil and suffering: taking seriously its reality must lead to the rejection of God as a being like ourselves only greater. But this does not mean that the idea of God loses its power: far from it. Released from the millstone of anthropomorphism, the language of theism is freed up to address questions of how to live well. 'God' is reframed as a way of living made possible by 'how the world is seen when it is seen *sub specie aeternitatis*' (1984, 99). A similar idea can be identified in Weil's approval of Taoism's depiction of the divine as 'The Way' (Little 1988, 57). A fundamental connection is made between the divine and the question of how to live.

Sutherland directs attention to the nature of the physical world. Far from reflecting a crude Darwinism that ignores the possibility of bravery or self-sacrifice or justice, the fact that such ways of living *are* possible opens up reflection on the nature of the universe that supports such values. Willem Drees expresses the benefit of this kind of revised theism, for the questions to which theism traditionally directed attention are 'too important to be disregarded'. These are questions 'about existence, the fact that somehow our world with its regularities seems given, and the question about values and perfection, *beyond the biases of human self-interests and limitations*' (Drees 2016, 197; *my emphasis*). It is the latter point that lies at the heart of Sutherland's ethical project. The divine – the way of life that is *sub specie aeternitatis* – offers 'the hope, and indeed the belief, that there is an understanding of the affairs of men

[sic] that is not relative to the outlook of individual, community or age' (1984, 88). This anchoring is necessary if our obligations to each other are not to be eroded by the (not-infrequently selfish) preferences of human beings and the workings of the will-to-power.

If Jantzen's divine is anchored in the creation of human subjectivity, a different hope informs the ideas of Sutherland and Drees. God is a lived reality, 'a way of being in the world' (Pattison 2018, 71); but this way of being transcends the human, for it indicates a fundamental feature of the universe that will survive, *regardless of the fate of humanity itself*. This is the additional hope to which Sutherland draws attention. Values are not created solely by human beings. When he frames the life lived 'under a kind of eternity', he highlights the possibility that 'such a view is not even relative to the outlook of mankind [sic]' (1984, 88). Another kind of orientation is possible: away from human preferences towards consideration of the world, of life, of 'God' itself. A new framing for an ethic of flourishing becomes possible. Weil describes this in words that inform the argument of the [next section](#). We are 'to empty ourselves of our false divinity, to deny ourselves, *to give up being the centre of the world in imagination*' (1959, 115; my emphasis). This radical de-centring of the human opens up new vistas for feminist philosophy of religion. This is made possible by revisiting the phenomenon of 'natural' evil: a seemingly unpromising, yet ultimately helpful, gateway to an account of flourishing that resists the self-centredness of individualism, while valuing the the physical world itself.

3.3 Revisiting 'Natural Evil': Embracing the Physical World

Feminists challenge the construction of natural forces as evil on the grounds that this reflects a false binary between humans and the natural world (Ortner 1972; Plumwood 1993). Rather than reject the category of natural evil, I want to suggest that consideration of the themes revolving around it open up reflection on what it means to flourish as a human being, while placing at the heart of a feminist philosophy of religion renewed consideration of the importance of the physical world. Understanding human beings as part of an ecosystem requires resistance to constructions of the human as somehow detached from the rest of the physical world. More complex, interwoven understandings of 'natural evil', that pay attention to the realities of this holistic vision, make *de-centring* the human an important part of a revised feminist philosophy of religion.

Accepting humans as part of an integrated ecosystem need not ignore the differences between human and other forms of life. Ellen Armour's case study of Hurricane Katrina reveals the difficulties of separating natural forces from

human decision-making. When Katrina devastated the southern United States in August 2005, suffering arose, not just from the event of the hurricane itself, but from the failures of governmental responses to the emergency. As Armour's analysis reveals, attitudes to race and economic class contributed to the suffering that arose from a seemingly 'natural' phenomenon. Katrina was 'as much a social as a physical catastrophe; it is an (un)making shaped as much by human action and inaction as by natural forces' (Armour 2016, 183). Falling back on a simple binary division between moral and natural evil cannot explain the events surrounding Katrina. Hurricanes are not 'evil', even if they bring suffering to human beings. They are part of the processes of a living planet; and as climate change is revealing, they are forces being shaped by human actions.

Good reasons remain, however, for retaining the category of natural evil, albeit in a way rather different from its role in theological arguments. There, natural events that bring with them considerable suffering – principally, but not only, to human beings (Rowe 1979, 337) – bring in their wake problems for a God constructed as an agent who created this world. If *we* would act to ameliorate suffering, why doesn't God? Anthropocentrism also contributes to the problem. If, following Feuerbach, the concept of God reflects human values, a special place is assigned to the human, reflected in the image of God. Processes that impact negatively on the human are then rendered 'obviously evil' because they challenge the centrality and importance of the human.

An alternative way of proceeding is to consider the way events designated as forms of natural evil destabilise the hierarchical relationship between humans and nature on which this category depends. If human beings are part of a web of life, the reality of human vulnerability comes to the fore. Rather than beings defined by independence, we are dependent on a network of relationships and the world itself. The events we formulate as 'natural evils' prompt different questions when filtered through the imperative for finding ways of living that enable human flourishing *within the context* of this fragile world.

A new way of envisioning humanity is required to make this move. Weil describes the human predicament in a phrase that shapes my reflections: 'we live in a world of unreality and dreams' (1959, 115). 'To see the true light and hear the true silence' – to understand ourselves correctly in the world – requires that we 'give up our imaginary position as the centre, to renounce it, not only intellectually but in the imaginative part of our soul' (1959, 115). These words are of utmost importance for feminist philosophers of religion. We might *intellectually* reject the anthropocentrism that misrepresents the place of human beings in the broader cosmos, but have far more difficulty giving up the centrality of the human in our *imaginations* and the ideas we formulate.

For this reason, attending to natural evil is important because it enables a recalibration of our perspective. In natural phenomena (earthquakes, hurricanes, volcanoes, illness, death), formulated as ‘evil’ because of their adverse effects on human life, we run up against the limits of human wishing. That we are physical bodies, intimately connected to and shaped by a physical world, is not a fact to be evaded but accepted, perhaps even embraced. The feminism that starts from this premise must resist ideas of the human centred on accounts of subjectivity that render the body as little more than malleable matter. Desires to master the self are not far from desires for mastery over the world itself.

Disrupting ideas of mastery does not mean evading responsibility for the effect human actions have on the subtle balances of the ecosystem. As Arendt notes, the ability of human beings to create is caught up in the image of *homo faber*, where a radical distinction is made between human action and the world it seeks to shape. The capacity for industry is not an unmitigated good, and Arendt’s analysis establishes, instead, the *vita activa* (the active life), which has at its heart ‘love for the world’ (1998 [1958], 324). Human creativity is best placed within the limits imposed by the physical. We are fleshy beings who can hurt and be hurt. We may not like this; we may kick against this; but we are mortal beings, dependent on a physical world, who suffer and die. Without the flourishing of the world, our ability to flourish is impossible.

Jantzen’s emphasis on natality and Anderson’s later preoccupation with the possibilities of ‘enhancing life’¹⁶ suggest the importance of this focus for feminist philosophy of religion. My reflections on life are shaped differently from theirs, and reflect a desire to challenge accounts of human subjectivity that pay insufficient attention to the physical world that enables human flourishing. Predrag Cicovacki’s reclamation of Albert Schweitzer’s ethical vision (2012) offers a helpful framework, offering fertile ground for a feminist philosophy of religion focused on resisting the differing forms anthropocentrism may take.

Schweitzer’s reflections were formed by the context of the 1920s, a post-war period of considerable upheaval. They fit, as a result, rather well with the context framing the writing of this Element: the shadow of the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, and the Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020–21. Schweitzer is dissatisfied with the philosophy of his day, for it has failed to provide a compelling worldview, effectively reducing itself to ‘largely the history of philosophy’ (1959 [1923], 7). He aims to correct this by providing a theory of the universe ‘which gives existence the preference as against non-existence and thus affirms life as something possessing value in itself’ (1959 [1923], 57). He

¹⁶ The title of the John Templeton Foundation project (September 2014 to August 2017), with which Anderson was involved.

directs attention to the ‘will-to-live’, the *feeling* of life that flows through all living beings. This is more than phenomenological, for it opens up the arena for ethics. We should start our reflections from the experience of life: ‘what is decisive for our life-view is not our knowledge of the world but the certainty of the volition which is given in our will-to-live’. The experience of life, flowing through us, directs us to those with whom we share this world and this feeling of life: ‘*the eternal spirit meets us in nature as mysterious creative power*. In our will-to-live we experience it within us as volition which is both world- and life-affirming and ethical’ (1959 [1923], 78).

How he makes the move to the ethical is telling. Reverence for life is grounded in the connection to be made between the feeling of life in our bodies and the rest of the living world: ‘Ethics grow out of the same root as world- and life-affirmation, for ethics, too, are nothing but reverence for life. This is what gives me the fundamental principle of morality, namely, that good consists in maintaining, promoting, and enhancing life, and that destroying, injuring, and limiting life are evil’ (1959 [1923], 79).

Just as we value the life of our own bodies, so we must make an imaginative connection to the lives of all others: human and non-human. The value of *being alive* thus forms the basis for his understanding of the sacred and for his ethic of how to live well. We are returned to the physical and, crucially, to the experiences of the body. Schweitzer’s is thus a grounded ethic that requires resistance to the thinking Weil defines as the imagination of the centre. The life that runs through our veins is not unique to human beings but connects us to all the varied forms of life making up the cosmos. Weil’s impersonal account of the divine sits rather well with this. It is life, and crucially *the shared experience of life*, that opens up reflection on our connection to that which transcends the human realm: the universe (God) itself.

Schweitzer’s ethic centres on doing ‘everything in our power to prevent suffering’ (1959 [1923], 30). *All* life should be treated with respect, even when we kill it for food or in order to safeguard other lives. With Arendt and Minnich, this demands the cultivation of thoughtful practice: ‘Don’t destroy out of thoughtlessness’ (1959 [1923], 26). Schweitzer is no naive sentimentalist; he is fully aware that ‘nature knows no reverence for life’ (1988 [1919], 15). The horrors of the natural world are not avoided: ‘nature leads ants to band together and to attack a small creature and hound it to death’ (1988 [1919], 15). *But acknowledging these horrors makes the human ability to lessen suffering even more imperative.*

Schweitzer’s is not an easy vision of life or how to live well. It might be difficult to connect his reflections on the feeling of life with Weil’s grounding of the ethical in the love of God. There is certainly a tension between the two

claims, but that very tension indicates something important. The desire for coherence can slide into acceptance of the simplistic binaries that create the problem of evil in the first place: the world is either 'good' or it is 'evil'; it is either the creation of God or it is not; God either cares or 'He' doesn't. More complex accounts of the divine are offered by Weil, Sutherland and Drees, and, at its best, religion does not avoid such complexity, but seeks to hold it together: 'in the midst of life, we are in death'; the torture of the Cross is the path to resurrection; the Buddhist claim that all is suffering. The teeming world of the struggle and celebration of life is met by the human ability to connect to that shared life *and* to live differently: to be loving, self-sacrificing, self-renouncing, altruistic. For Schweitzer, a religious sensibility is required to anchor the reverence for life: 'every being must be holy for us' (1959 [1923], 26). An eternal perspective is required to enable this step: a perspective that grapples with the tensions of life and accepts that faith and ethics are far from straightforward.

Schweitzer's ethic resists the temptation to make human beings central to the imagination. The concern with personal transformation that pervades the spiritual turn in feminist philosophy of religion is not altogether amenable to the reorientation of ourselves towards the universe required by Schweitzer and Weil. Rediscovering the significance of the body opens up new vistas for a feminist politics, and it also enables the feminist philosopher of religion to consider models of the divine that help foster new ways of being in the world.

My argument thus comes full circle. A feminist philosophy of religion is required that disrupts binary thinking, that attends to the practice of living, and that is anchored in reflections on the value of life itself. This kind of reflection urges us to move out of our self-centredness and into a place where we might embrace the connection between ourselves and other forms of life in all their variety and diversity. Feminist thinking thus makes possible new ways of seeing the world and others.

References

- Adkins L** (2002) *Revisions: Gender and Sexuality in Late Modernity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Anderson PS** (1993) *Ricoeur and Kant*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Anderson PS** (1998) *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Anderson PS** (2009) 'A thoughtful love of life': a spiritual turn in philosophy of religion. *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift* **85**, 119–29.
- Anderson PS** (2012) *Re-visioning Gender in Philosophy of Religion: Reason, Love and Epistemic Locatedness*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Anderson PS** (2021 [2016]) Silencing and speaker vulnerability: undoing an oppressive form of (wilful) ignorance. In Goulimari P (ed.), *Love and Vulnerability: Thinking with Pamela Sue Anderson*. London: Routledge, pp. 34–43.
- Anderson PS and Clack B** (eds.) (2004) *Feminist Philosophy of Religion: Critical Readings*. London: Routledge.
- Arendt H** (1968 [1948]) *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt.
- Arendt H** (1998 [1958]) *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arendt H** (1964) *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Armour ET** (1999) *Deconstruction, Feminist Theology and the Problem of Difference: Subverting the Race/Gender Divide*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Armour ET** (2016) *Signs and Wonders: Theology after Modernity*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Armour ET** (2018) Transing the study of religion: a Christian theological response. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* **34**, 58–63.
- Armour ET and St Ville S** (eds.) (2006) *Bodily Citations: Religion and Judith Butler*. New York: Columbia Press.
- Ayer AJ** (1971 [1936]) *Language, Truth and Logic*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Barth K** (2014 [1934]) No! Answer to Emil Brunner. In Fraenkel P (ed.), *Natural Theology*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 65–128.
- Beattie T** (2004) Redeeming Mary: the potential of Marian symbolism for feminist philosophy of religion. In Anderson PS and Clack B (eds.), *Feminist Philosophy of Religion: Critical Readings*. London: Routledge, pp. 107–22.
- Beauvoir S d** (1972 [1949]) *The Second Sex*. London: Penguin.

- Bellah R** (1964) Religious evolution. *American Sociological Review* **29**, 358–74.
- Bonhoeffer D** (1971 [1953]) *Letter and Papers from Prison*. London: SCM Press.
- Braithwaite RB** (1971 [1955]) An empiricist's view of the nature of religious belief. In Mitchell B (ed.), *The Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 72–91.
- Brennan S** (2009) Feminist ethics and everyday inequalities. *Hypatia* **24**, 141–59.
- Browne V** (2014) *Feminism, Time and Nonlinear History*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brownmiller S** (1975) *Against Our Will*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Burley M** (2020) *A Radical Pluralist Philosophy of Religion*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Butler J** (2006 [1990]) *Gender Trouble*. London: Routledge.
- Butler J** (2006) *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso.
- Butler J** (2014) *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. London: Routledge.
- Cameron D and Frazer E** (1987) *The Lust to Kill*. New York: New York University Press.
- Card C** (2005) *The Atrocity Paradigm*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Card C** (2010) *Confronting Evils: Terrorism, Torture, Genocide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carrette J** (2006) Bringing philosophy to life: a review article in memory of Grace M Jantzen. *Literature and Theology* **20**, 321–5.
- Christ C** (1979) Why women need the Goddess. In Christ C P and Plaskow J (eds.), *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader on Religion*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, pp. 273–87.
- Christ CP** (2003) *She Who Changes*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cicovacki P** (2012) *The Restoration of Albert Schweitzer's Ethical Vision*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Clack B** (1999) *Misogyny in the Western Philosophical Tradition: A Critical Reader*. London: Macmillan.
- Clack B** (2018) Evil, feminism and a philosophy of transformation. In Trakakis N (ed.), *The Problem of Evil: Eight Views in Dialogue*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 123–50.
- Coakley S** (2002) *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy and Gender*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Collins PH** (1990) *Black Feminist Thought*. London: Routledge.

- Collins PH** (1996) What's in a name? Womanism, black feminism and beyond. *The Black Scholar* **26**, 9–17.
- Collins PH and Bilge S** (2020) *Intersectionality*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Cone J** (1990) *A Black Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Crenshaw K** (2017) *On Intersectionality: Essential Writings*. New York: New Press.
- Daly M** (1978) *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Daly M** (1986 [1973]) *Beyond God the Father*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Day K** (2016) *Religious Resistance to Neoliberalism: Womanist and Black Feminist Perspectives*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- DiCenzo M** (2014) 'Our freedom and its results': measuring progress in the aftermath of suffrage. *Women's History Review* **23**, 421–40.
- Dillard A** (1999) *For the Time Being*. New York: Vintage.
- Drees W** (2016) The divine as ground of existence and of transcendental values: an exploration. In Buckareff A and Nagasawa Y (eds.), *Alternative Concepts of God: Essays on the Metaphysics of the Divine*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 195–212.
- Dworkin A** (1981) *Pornography: Men Possessing Women*. London: The Women's Press.
- Eliade M** (1959) *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. New York: Harcourt Brace.
- Ellis AJ et al** (2020) New hope or old futures in disguise? Neoliberalism, the Covid-19 pandemic and the possibility for social change. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* **40**, 831–48.
- Flax J** (1995) Race/gender and the ethics of difference: a reply to Okin's 'gender inequality and cultural differences'. *Political Theory* **23**, 500–10.
- Frank A** (2002 [1991]) *At the Will of the Body: Reflections on Illness*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Frankl V** (2004) *Man's Search for Meaning*. London: Rider.
- Freud S** (1907) Obsessional practices and religious rituals. In Strachey J (ed.), *Standard Edition of the Works of Sigmund Freud Volume 9*. London: Hogarth Press, pp.115–27.
- Freud S** (1919) The 'uncanny'. In Strachey J (ed.), *Standard Edition of the Works of Sigmund Freud Volume 17*. London: Hogarth Press, pp.217–56.
- Fricker M** (1994) Knowledge as construct: theorising the role of gender in knowledge. In Lennon K and Whitford M (eds.), *Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology*. London: Routledge, pp. 95–109.
- Gamble S** (1998) *Companion to Feminism and Post-Feminism*. London: Routledge.

- Geddes J** (2003) Banal evil and useless knowledge: Hannah Arendt and Charlotte Delbo on evil after the Holocaust. *Hypatia* **18**, 104–15.
- Goulimari P** (ed.) (2021) *Love and Vulnerability: Thinking with Pamela Sue Anderson*. London: Routledge.
- Grant J** (1989) *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Hallie P** (1979) *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Hamilton K** (1965) Homo religiosus and historical faith. *Journal of American Academy of Religion* **33**, 213–22.
- Hampson D** (1990) *Theology and Feminism*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hampson D** (ed.) (1996) *Swallowing a Fishbone? Feminist Theologians Debate Christianity*. London: SCM Press.
- Hampson D** (2002) *After Christianity*. London: SCM Press.
- Haraway D** (1991) *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. London: Routledge.
- Harding S** (1993) Rethinking standpoint epistemology: what is 'strong objectivity'? In Alcoff L and Potter E (eds.), *Feminist Epistemologies*. London: Routledge, pp. 49–82.
- Harris H** (2004) Struggling for truth. In Anderson PS and Clack B (eds.), *Feminist Philosophy of Religion: Critical Readings*. London: Routledge, pp. 73–86.
- Harvey D** (2005) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Haynes P** (2014a) Transcendence, materialism and the reenchantment of nature: toward a theological materialism. In Howie G and Jobling J (eds.), *Women and the Divine: Touching Transcendence*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 55–78.
- Haynes P** (2014b) Creative becoming and the patency of matter: feminism, new materialism and theology. *Angelaki* **19**, 131–50.
- Heidegger M** (1983 [1947]) *Basic Writings*. London: Routledge.
- Hekman S** (2014) *The Feminine Subject*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hesiod** (1988) *Theogony and Works and Days*. Translated by ML West. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hewitt S and Scrutton A** (2018) Philosophy and living religion: an introduction. *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* **79**, 349–54.
- Hick J** (1989) *An Interpretation of Religion*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Hollywood A** (2004) Practice, belief and feminist philosophy of religion. In Anderson PS and Clack B (eds.), *Feminist Philosophy of Religion: Critical Readings*. London: Routledge, pp. 225–40.

- hooks b** (1982) *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. London: Pluto Press.
- hooks b** (2000) *Where We Stand: Class Matters*. London: Routledge.
- Hume D** (1998 [1779]) *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett.
- Jantzen G** (1984) *God's World, God's Body*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.
- Jantzen G** (1996) What's the difference? Knowledge and gender in (post) modern philosophy of religion. *Religious Studies* **32**, 431–48.
- Jantzen G** (1998) *Becoming Divine: Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Religion*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Kakutani M** (2018) *Death of Truth: Notes on Falsehood in the Age of Trump*. London: Penguin.
- Le Doeuff M** (2003) *The Sex of Knowing*. New York: Routledge.
- Le Doeuff M** (2007 [1989]) *Hipparchia's Choice*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lemke T** (2001) The birth of bio-politics: Michel Foucault's lecture at the Collège de France on neo-liberal governmentality. *Economy and Society* **30**, 190–207.
- Little JP** (1988) *Simone Weil: Waiting on Truth*. Oxford: Berg.
- Lloyd G** (1984) *The Man of Reason*. London: Methuen.
- Lloyd M** (2005) *Beyond Identity Politics: Feminism, Power and Politics*. London: Sage.
- Mackie JL** (1955) Evil and omnipotence. *Mind* **64**, 200–12.
- Mahmood S** (2001) Feminist theory, embodiment, and the docile agent: some reflections on the Egyptian Islamic revival. *Cultural Anthropology* **16**, 202–36.
- Mantel H** (2020) *The Mirror and the Light*. London: Fourth Estate.
- Mawson T** (2005) *Belief in God*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCord Adams M** (1999) *Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- McNay L** (1992) *Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender, and the Self*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Midgley M** (1984) *Wickedness*. London: Ark.
- Miller D** (1966) 'Homo religiosus' and the death of God. *Journal of Bible and Religion* **34**, 305–15.
- Minnich E** (2017) *The Evil of Banality*. London: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Mirowski P** (2014) *Never Let a Serious Crisis Go To Waste: How Neoliberalism Survived the Financial Meltdown*. London: Verso.
- Moltmann J** (1973) *The Crucified God*. London: SCM Press.

- Morin R and Cohen D** (2018) Giuliani: ‘Truth Isn’t Truth’. Available from www.politico.com/story/2018/08/19/giuliani-truth-todd-trump-788161 (accessed 6 March 2021).
- Nagasawa Y** (2018) Response to Clack. In Trakakis N (ed.), *The Problem of Evil: Eight Views in Dialogue*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 138–9.
- Neale RS** (1967) Working-class women and women’s suffrage. *Labour History* **12**, 16–34.
- Nelson L** (1999) Bodies (and spaces) do matter: the limits of performativity. *Gender, Place and Culture* **6**, 331–53.
- Newman A** (1994) Feminist social criticism and Marx’s theory of religion. *Hypatia* **9**, 15–37.
- Nicholson L** (2010) Feminism in “waves”: useful metaphor or not? *New Politics* **12**. Available from https://newpol.org/issue_post/feminism-waves-useful-metaphor-or-not/ (accessed 10 March 2021).
- Nietzsche F** (1969 [1883–5]) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Nietzsche F** (1998 [1886]) *Beyond Good and Evil*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nixon J** (2015) *Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Friendship*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Noddings N** (1989) *Women and Evil*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Nussbaum M** (1999) The professor of parody: the hip, defeatist feminism of Judith Butler. *New Republic* **220**, 37–44.
- Oborne P** (2021) *The Assault on Truth*. London: Simon & Schuster.
- O’Brien CC** (2015 [1972]) *The Suspecting Glance*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Okin SM** (1998) Feminism and multiculturalism: some tensions. *Ethics* **108**, 661–84.
- Ortner S** (1972) Is female to male as nature is to culture? *Feminist Studies* **1**, 5–31.
- Pagels E** (1989) *Adam, Eve and the Serpent*. New York: Vintage.
- Panchuk M** (2019) That we may be whole: doing philosophy of religion with the whole self. In Panchuk M, Hereth B and Timpe K (eds.), *The Lost Sheep in Philosophy of Religion: Essays on Disability, Gender, Race and Animals*. New York: Routledge, pp. 55–76.
- Pattison G** (2018) *A Phenomenology of the Devout Life: A Philosophy of Christian Life, Part 1*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Peck J** (2010) Zombie neoliberalism and the ambidextrous state. *Theoretical Criminology* **14**, 104–10.

- Perez CC** (2019) *Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed by Men*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Plumwood V** (1993) *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*. London: Routledge.
- Raphael M** (1996) *Theology and Embodiment: The Post-Patriarchal Reconstruction of Female Sacrality*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Raphael M** (2003) *The Female Face of God in Auschwitz*. London: Routledge.
- Rohr R** (2018) *A Spring within Us*. London: SPCK.
- Rose N** (1999) *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*. London: Free Association.
- Roth J** (1981) A theodicy of protest. In Davis S (ed.), *Encountering Evil*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, pp. 7–22.
- Rowe W** (1979) The problem of evil and some varieties of atheism. *American Philosophical Quarterly* **16**, 335–41.
- Ruether RR** (1983) *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*. London: SCM.
- Ruether RR** (2012) *Women and Redemption: A Theological History*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Sanders LS** (2007) ‘Feminists love a utopia’: collaboration, conflict and the futures of feminism. In Howie G and Mumford R (eds.), *Third Way Feminism: A Critical Exploration*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 3–15.
- Saul J** (2013) Implicit bias, stereotype threat, and women in philosophy. In Hutchison K and Jenkins F (eds.), *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 39–60.
- Schweitzer A** (1959 [1923]) *The Philosophy of Civilisation*. New York: Macmillan.
- Schweitzer A** (1988 [1919]) *A Place for Revelation*. London: Macmillan.
- Soelle D** (1975) *Suffering*. London: DLT.
- Stanton CS** (2016 [1895]) *The Women’s Bible*. Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Publishing.
- Stock K** (2021) *Material Girls: Why Reality Matters for Feminism*. London: Fleet.
- Stump E** (2010) *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sutherland S** (1984) *God, Jesus and Belief*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Taliaferro C and Griffiths P** (eds) (2003) *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Thomas R, Eliot O and Clark D** (2021) UK gender pay gap widens despite pressure on business to improve. Available from www.ft.com/content/239c95cc-d34f-43e9-a61e-faa7954277b6 (accessed 11 October 2021).
- Tillich P** (1965) *Theology of Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Tillich P** (1977 [1952]) *The Courage to Be*. Glasgow: Fount.
- Townes E** (2006) *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wade C** (2020) Coercive control post-Challen'. Available from www.counselmagazine.co.uk/articles/coercive-control-post-challen (accessed 16 March 2021).
- Warner M** (1990 [1976]) *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary*. London: Picador.
- Weil S** (1952) *The Need for Roots*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Weil S** (1959) *Waiting on God*. London: Fontana.
- Welch S** (1989) *Feminist Ethic of Risk*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Williams B** (2002) *Truth and Truthfulness*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Williams D** (1993) *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Philosophy of Religion

Yujin Nagasawa

University of Birmingham

Yujin Nagasawa is Professor of Philosophy and Co-Director of the John Hick Centre for Philosophy of Religion at the University of Birmingham. He is currently President of the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion. He is a member of the Editorial Board of *Religious Studies*, the *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* and *Philosophy Compass*.

About the Series

This Cambridge Elements series provides concise and structured introductions to all the central topics in the philosophy of religion. It offers balanced, comprehensive coverage of multiple perspectives in the philosophy of religion. Contributors to the series are cutting-edge researchers who approach central issues in the philosophy of religion. Each provides a reliable resource for academic readers and develops new ideas and arguments from a unique viewpoint.

Philosophy of Religion

Elements in the Series

God and Human Freedom

Leigh C. Vicens and Simon Kittle

God and Abstract Objects

Einar Duenger Bøhn

The Problem of Evil

Michael Tooley

God and Emotion

R. T. Mullens

The Incarnation

Timothy J. Pawl

Ontological Arguments

Tyron Goldschmidt

Religious Language

Olli-Pekka Vainio

Deprovincializing Science and Religion

Gregory Dawes

Divine Hiddenness

Veronika Weidner

The Axiology of Theism

Klaas J. Kraay

Religious Experience

Amber L. Griffioen

Feminism, Religion and Practical Reason

Beverley Clack

A full series listing is available at: www.cambridge.org/EPREL