**107: PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION READING LIST**

Professor BRIAN LEFTOW

**Introduction and Textbooks**


**Collections**


(Most of these collections have selections on most of the topics listed below, and many of the readings given below are contained also in one or more of these collections)

**Influential books on the justification of religious belief generally**

Mackie, J.L. *The Miracle of Theism* (Clarendon, 1982)
Swinburne, R. *The Existence of God* 2nd edition (OUP, 1991); see also the easier version of this: *Is There a God?* (OUP, 1996)
Plantinga, A. *God, Freedom and Evil* (George Allen & Unwin 1975 or reprint)
Influential books on the nature of God generally


Topics

In the following lists, "*" marks the more central items.

1. **Omniscience**
   a. Could anyone be omniscient?

   *Kretzmann, N. ‘Omniscience and Immutability’ in *Journal of Philosophy*, vol 63 (1966), pp 409-420

   b. Can God know today what we will freely do tomorrow?

   For a “no” answer:
   Hasker, W. *God, Time and Knowledge* (Cornell UP, 1989) chs 1-7 & 10

   For the claim that foreknowledge isn’t needed:

   The major approaches to reconciling freedom and foreknowledge:


2. **Perfect Goodness.**
   A. Is what is good independent of the will of God?

   Swinburne, R. *The Coherence of Theism* 2nd edition (OUP, 1993) ch 11


B. Could God be essentially perfectly good?

*Pike, N. ‘Omnipotence and God’s ability to sin’ in Helm, P. ed *Divine Commands and Morality* (OUP, 1981), pp. 67-82


3. **Omnipotence**

A. defining omnipotence

Aquinas, ST Ia 25, 3.

R. Swinburne: *The Coherence of Theism*, ch. 9.


B. does an omnipotent being control necessary truths?


C. is omnipotence compatible with being unable to sin?


4. **Timelessness**

Could God be outside time?


5. **Necessity**

In what sense—if any—of ‘necessary’ could God be a necessary being?

* Adams, R.M. ‘Has it been proved that all real existence is contingent?’ in *American Philosophical Quarterly* vol 8 (1971), pp 284-291
  
  The two previous papers are reproduced in Adams, R. *The Virtue of Faith* (OUP, 1987), the latter also in T.V. Morris, ed., *The Concept of God* (OUP).

6. **Divine Simplicity**

Is the classical doctrine that God is "simple" coherent?

Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* Ia, q. 3.


7. **Creation, conservation and causation**

What are the metaphysical implications of the classical doctrines that God creates and sustains all other things ex nihilo? Is it possible to maintain both these doctrines and that creatures are genuine causes? Is it possible to maintain both these doctrines and belief in genuine randomness or created freedom in nature?

  
  


8. Incarnation

Could God have a body? Could God become man?

*Wainwright, W. in Morris, T. ed. The Concept of God (OUP, 1987)

Morris, T.V. The Logic of God Incarnate (Cornell UP, 1986) esp. ch 1-6


9. Analogy

In talking about God, in what sense – if any – of analogy does Theology use words in analogical senses?

St. Thomas Aquinas Summa Theologiae (Blackfriars, 1964-81) Ia.13

Sherry, P. ‘Analogy Today’ in Philosophy vol 51 1976 pp 431-446

(NB this is not his paper ‘Analogy Reviewed’).

*Alston, W.P. ‘Can we speak literally of God?’ and ‘Functionalism and Theological Language’ in his Divine Nature and Human Language (Cornell UP, 1989). The former is also in Peterson ed Philosophy of Religion (OUP, 1996); the latter is in Morris ed The Concept of God (OUP, 1987)


10. Cosmological Arguments

*Aquinas, ST Ia 2, 2.


*Leibniz, G. On the Ultimate Origination of Things (found in Leibniz, Philosophical Writings ed Parkinson, G. (Everyman, 1973) or Leibniz, Philosophical Essays tr. Ariew, R. & Garber, D. (Hacker, 1989))

Mackie, J.L. The Miracle of Theism (Clarendon, 1982) ch. 5


11. Design Arguments

*Hume, D. Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion (Routledge, 1991 or reprint)

An early edition is available online at Past Masters
12. The Problem of Evil

A. Free will defense vs. the logical problem
*Plantinga, A. God, Freedom and Evil (George Allen & Unwin, 1975) pp 7-64
Swinburne, R. Providence and the Problem of Evil (Clarendon, 1998)
Tracy, T.M. 'Victimization and the Problem of Evil' in Faith and Philosophy vol 9 (1992), pp 301-324

B. The evidential problem
*Rowe, W.L. ‘The Problem of Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism’ in American Philosophical Quarterly vol 16 (1979), pp 335-341


*Davis, C. F. The Evidential Force of Religious Experience (Clarendon, 1989) ch 7-8
Draper, P. ‘God and Perceptual Evidence’ in International Journal for Philosophy of Religion vol 32 (1992), pp 149-165
(NOTE Alston’s fuller presentation in his Perceiving God (Cornell UP, 1991))
*Swinburne, Richard, The Existence of God (OUP 1979), 244-276.

14. The Ontological Argument


15. **Assess Plantinga’s Two different accounts of what it is for religions belief to be rational, justifies or warranted**

1\(^{st}\) Account

2\(^{nd}\) Account
*Plantinga, A. *Warranted Christian Belief*, (OUP, 1999) parts 2 and 3

16. **Does the kind of faith which is required for the practice of religion involve belief that certain propositions are true; and if so, can someone rationally choose to acquire it?**

Mackie, J.L. *The Miracle of Theism* (Clarendon, 1982) ch 11

17. **The Nature of Miracles and Petitionary Prayer and their evidential force.**

Mackie, J.L. *The Miracle of Theism* (Clarendon, 1982) ch 1
*Stump, E. ‘Petitionary Prayer’ in *American Philosophical Quarterly* vol 16 (1979), pp 81-91
Brümmer, V. *What are We Doing When We Pray: a philosophical enquiry?* (SCM, 1984)

18. **Philosophical difficulties in the Christian Doctrine of Life after Death.**
*R. Swinburne, *The Evolution of the Soul*, part II and ch 15

Essays by Merricks, Corcoran and Davis in Kevin Corcoran, ed., *Soul, Body and Survival* (Cornell, 2001).

19. Religious diversity


An extensive bibliography on the Philosophy of Religion prepared by David Brown, is available from the Sub-Faculty of Philosophy (10, Merton St., Oxford)

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**Electronic texts**

Many important philosophical texts are now available on-line. The Perseus Project offers many texts in ancient philosophy. Past Masters offers an expanding range of key philosophers. These can be accessed via the philosophy section in OXLIP, see Philosophical texts online (http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/oxlip/philosophy.htm)

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