

RELIGION, EPISTEMOLOGY OF

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INTRODUCTION

There has been a resurgence of interest in the epistemology of religion in the last twenty-five years, prompted for the most part by the rise of reformed epistemology which has energised the debate and brought this topic into mainstream epistemology. Alongside standard topics in the epistemology of religion, such as concerning the effectiveness of putative demonstrations of God's existence, there are also some new topics coming to the fore in the contemporary debate, such as the issue of how the epistemology of disagreement relates to specifically religious disagreements.

GENERAL OVERVIEWS

The dramatic increase in interest in the epistemology of religion is reflected in the wide range of overview articles that are now available. Wolterstorff (1999) and Plantinga (2009) have the distinctive merit of having been written by two of the leading figures in the reformed epistemology movement. Plantinga (2009) needs to be read in conjunction with Bergmann (2009), since the latter covers ground left uncovered by the former. Forrest (2009) and Clark (2009) are two excellent introductions to the topic which are also freely available on the internet. Plantinga & Tooley (2008) is a series of exchanges between two prominent philosophers on the epistemology of religion. Bishop (2006) is an overview of contemporary philosophy of religion rather than the epistemology of religious belief, but it would still be very useful to someone interested in the latter topic because it approaches the philosophy of religion largely via epistemological issues. Quinn (2002) is an in-depth survey of the main issues in the epistemology of religious belief, while Zagzebski (2010) is far more introductory, though it has the additional merit of being very up-to-date.

Bergmann, M. (2009). 'Religious Belief, Epistemology of: Recent Developments', *A Companion to Epistemology*, (eds.) J. Dancy, E. Sosa & M. Steup, Oxford: Blackwell. [This piece should be read in conjunction with Plantinga (2009), since it covers ground left uncovered by that article. Collectively, they represent an excellent up-to-date overview of the main issues as regards the epistemology of religion].

Bishop, J. (2006). 'The Philosophy of Religion: A Programmatic Overview', *Philosophy Compass* 1, 506-34.

[Although this article is focused on philosophy of religion rather than specifically on the epistemology of religion, the author's approach to this topic is primarily epistemological, and so it will be very helpful to those interested in contemporary epistemology of religion].

Clark, K. J. (2009). 'Religious Epistemology', *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, (eds.) B. Dowden & J. Fieser, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/r/relig-ep.htm>.

[A thorough and up-to-date overview of the main issues in contemporary epistemology of religion. This article is freely accessible on the internet].

Forrest, P. (2009). 'The Epistemology of Religion', *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, (ed.) E. Zalta, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/religion-epistemology/>.

[A comprehensive introduction to the main topics in the epistemology of religion. This article is freely accessible on the internet].

Plantinga, A. (2009). 'Religious Belief, Epistemology of', *A Companion to Epistemology*, (eds.) J. Dancy, E. Sosa & M. Steup, Oxford: Blackwell.

[Plantinga is one of the main philosophers behind so-called reformed epistemology, which has been one of the most widely discussed proposals in religious epistemology in recent years, and he is almost certainly the most influential epistemologist of religion of his generation. This relatively concise introduction to the field, while somewhat partisan, is thus of intrinsic interest. This article should be read in conjunction with Bergmann (2009), since the latter covers ground left uncovered by this article. Collectively, they represent an excellent up-to-date overview of the main issues as regards the epistemology of religion].

Plantinga, A., & Tooley, M. (2008). *Knowledge of God*, Oxford: Blackwell.

[An extremely useful book, this is a series of exchanges between two prominent philosophers on the epistemology of religion].

Quinn, P. L. (2002). 'Epistemology in Philosophy of Religion', *The Oxford Handbook of Epistemology*, (ed.) P. K. Moser, 513-38, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[This is an in-depth discussion of the epistemology of religion, by one of the leading figures in the debate].

Wolterstorff, N. (1999). 'Epistemology of Religion', *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*, (eds.) J. Greco & E. Sosa, 303-24, Oxford: Blackwell.

[This is an excellent overview of the epistemology of religion. It is written by one of the main philosophers behind so-called reformed epistemology, which has been one of the most widely discussed proposals in religious epistemology in recent years. While offering a snapshot of the main issues in contemporary debate, this article also has the added virtue of introducing some of the main historical discussions that are relevant to the contemporary debate].

Zagzebski, L. (2010). 'Religious Knowledge', *The Routledge Companion to Epistemology*, (eds.) S. Bernecker & D. H. Pritchard, New York: Routledge.

[This article offers a quite introductory overview of the main issues in the epistemology of religion. It is written by one of the leading figures in the debate and has the added merit of being very up-to-date].

ANTHOLOGIES

The classic anthology in contemporary epistemology of religion is Plantinga & Wolterstorff (1983), since this played a large part in the surge of interest in reformed epistemology over the last twenty years which has in turn revitalized epistemology of religion more generally. Helm (1999) is an excellent resource for those working in the epistemology of religion, since not only does it bring together a number of important contemporary readings, but also a wealth of relevant historical texts as well. Geivett & Sweetman (1992) offer a well-organized

and thorough selection of readings in contemporary epistemology of religion, usefully divided into expository and critical readings. These are the only three anthologies currently available which exclusively focus on the epistemology of religion, but there are a number of other more general anthologies which focus in large or significant part on this topic. Audi & Wainwright (1986) is mostly concerned with the epistemology of religion, though this book can be somewhat hard to get hold of now. Loades & Rue (1991) and Clark (2000) both contain a nice selection of classic contemporary papers on faith and rationality, with very little overlap; the latter also includes some relevant historical readings. Peterson & VanArragon (2004) is a collection of new articles which cover a selection of topics. For each topic, two authors take opposing views and there are several topics covered in this volume which are relevant to the epistemology of religion (e.g., concerning religious experience, whether one can be justified in believing in miracles, and the cosmological argument for God's existence). Pojman (2003) reprints a fairly extensive range of classic and contemporary readings in the epistemology of religion. The volume is organized into sections covering particular topics, with the editor offering a useful introduction to the articles reprinted as part of each section.

Audi, R., & Wainwright, W. J., (eds.) (1986). *Rationality, Religious Belief, and Moral Commitment: New Essays on the Philosophy of Religion*, Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press.

[This volume is mostly concerned with the epistemology of religion, and contains a number of important articles that are only available in this text. Note that this book can be somewhat hard to get hold of now].

Clark, K. (ed.) (2000). *Readings in the Philosophy of Religion*, Buffalo, NY: Broadview.

[Reprints a significant number of classic articles in the epistemology of religion, both historical and contemporary].

Geivett, D. R., & Sweetman, B. (eds.) (1992). *Contemporary Perspectives on Religious Epistemology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[This anthology offers a well-organized and thorough selection of readings in contemporary epistemology of religion, usefully divided into expository and critical readings].

Helm, P. (ed.) (1999). *Faith and Reason*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[An excellent resource for those working in the epistemology of religion, since not only does it bring together a number of important contemporary readings, but also a wealth of relevant historical texts as well].

Loades, A., & Rue, L. D. (eds.) (1991). *Contemporary Classics in the Philosophy of Religion*, La Salle, IL: Open Court.

[Although this volume is not focused on epistemology of religion, it does contain a nice selection of important contemporary papers on faith and rationality].

Peterson, M. L., & VanArragon, R. J. (eds.) (2004). *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion*, Oxford: Blackwell.

[This is a collection of new articles which cover a selection of topics. For each topic, two authors take opposing views and there are several topics covered in this volume which are relevant to the epistemology of religion (e.g., concerning religious experience, whether one can be justified in believing in miracles, and the cosmological argument for God's existence)].

Plantinga, A., & Wolterstorff, N. (eds.) (1983). *Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

[The classic anthology in contemporary epistemology of religion which played a large part in the surge of interest in reformed epistemology over the last twenty years].

Pojman, L. (ed.) (2003). *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

[This offers a fairly extensive range of classic and contemporary readings in the epistemology of religion. The volume is organised into sections covering particular topics, with the editor offering a useful introduction to the articles reprinted as part of each section].

ARGUMENTS FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE

Historically, the dominant way of defending the epistemic standing of religious belief was by appeal to the evidence provided by reason and experience, what is known as natural theology. In its strongest form, natural theology attempts a demonstration of God's existence, and key contemporary works that fall into this category are Plantinga (1974), Craig (1979) and Braine (1988) and Miller (1991). Less ambitiously, some philosophers, following an influential book by Swinburne (1979), attempt something weaker, such as an abductive or probabilistic defence of the existence of God. Mitchell (1973) and Forrest (1996) fall into this category. See Oppy (2006) for a very thorough discussion of the various arguments for God's existence, with strong historical emphasis.

Braine, D. (1988). *The Reality of Time and the Existence of God: The Project of Proving God's Existence*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

[A sustained attempt to offer a demonstration of God's existence].

Craig, W. L. (1979). *The Kalam Cosmological Argument*, London: Macmillan.

[Offers a contemporary defence of the cosmological argument for God's existence].

Forrest, P. (1996). *God without the Supernatural: A Defense of Scientific Theism*, Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press.

[Offers an abductive defence of the existence of God].

Miller, B. (1991). *From Existence to God: A Contemporary Philosophical Argument*, London: Routledge.

[Attempts to defend the thesis that God exists by arguing that there is something contradictory about the idea that the universe exists without God].

Mitchell, B. (1973). *The Justification of Religious Belief*, London: Macmillan.

[Discusses the possibility of a broadly abductive defence of the existence of God].

Oppy, G. (2006). *Arguing about Gods*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[A thorough investigation of the various arguments for the existence of God, with a strong historical emphasis].

Plantinga, A. (1974). *The Nature of Necessity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[Offers a famous modal variant of the ontological argument for God's existence].

Swinburne, R. (1979). *The Existence of God*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

[Adduces a number of arguments to show that the existence of God is more probable than not].

CRITICISM OF ARGUMENTS FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE

The classic text for critical discussion of the various arguments for God's existence is Mackie (1982), but see also the more recent Sobel (2004). Martin & Monnier have brought together an impressive collection of articles critical of arguments for God's existence, including papers by J. L. Mackie, John Pollock and Anthony Kenny, amongst others. See Gale & Reichenbach (2004) for a useful recent symposium on the effectiveness of the cosmological argument for God's existence (albeit one that is on the whole broadly sympathetic to this argument).

Gale, R. M., & Reichenbach, B. R. (2004). 'Is God's Existence the Best Explanation of the Universe?', *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion*, (eds.) M. J. Peterson & R. J. VanArragon, 95-134, Oxford: Blackwell.

[This is a symposium between Gale and Reichenbach. Reichenbach offers a defence of the cosmological argument for God's existence. Gale responds by criticising this argument, but also claims that a cosmological argument which has more limited ambitions could succeed].

Mackie, J. L. (1982). *The Miracle of Theism*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

[A systematic and sophisticated critique of arguments for the existence of God. Very influential].

Martin, M., & Monnier, R. (eds.) (2003). *The Impossibility of God*, Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

[An anthology which collects together a number of important papers making the case against the existence of God. Contains contributions from, amongst others, J. L. Mackie, John Pollock, Anthony Kenny, Quentin Smith and Michael Martin].

Sobel, J. H. (2004). *Logic and Theism: Arguments for and Against Beliefs in God*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[A thorough and careful critical discussion of the main arguments for the existence of God].

RELIGIOUS SCEPTICISM

Ever since Hume, there has always been a rich sceptical vein of debate running through the literature in the philosophy of religion. In the contemporary literature, the figurehead for such sceptics has been Flew (1976), who argues that unless we have strong positive reasons to believe in God (Flew thinks we don't), then we are rationally obliged to be atheists. See also Scriven (1966) on this point. Martin (1990) offers a more recent in-depth defence of scepticism about religious belief, while Moser (2008) makes the anti-sceptical case for religion.

Flew, A. (1972). 'The Presumption of Atheism', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 2, 29–46

[A much discussed defence of the idea that atheism occupies a kind of 'default' position, such that if there are not adequate positive reasons available to believe in God then one is rationally obliged to be an atheist. See also Scriven (1966)].

Martin, M. (1990). *Atheism: A Philosophical Justification*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

[An in-depth defence of atheism which presents a thorough-going scepticism about religious belief].

Moser, P. K. (2008). 'Religious Skepticism', *The Oxford Handbook of Skepticism*, (ed.) J. Greco, 200-24, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[Offers a defence of religious belief from various sceptical challenges].

Scriven, M. (1966). 'The Presumption of Atheism', from his *Primary Philosophy*, New York: McGraw-Hill.

[Offers a very clear and accessible defence of the idea that unless we have strong positive reasons to believe in God then we are rationally obliged to be atheists. See also Flew (1976)].

FIDEISM

In marked contrast to natural theology there is the fideistic idea that religious belief does not require grounds (in its strongest form, the claim is that religious belief is in some sense opposed to reason). This view is often attributed to Wittgenstein (1966), and a number of writers in the contemporary literature argue for a specifically Wittgensteinian form of fideism. For two classic defences of this view, see Malcolm (1977) and Phillips (1970). For an important critical treatment, see Nielsen (1967). For a recent presentation of the main themes

in Wittgensteinian fideism, written by one of its chief proponents, see Phillips (2005). For a strong contemporary defence of a form of fideism which takes its inspiration from the work of Kierkegaard, see Evans (1998). For a helpful overview of the philosophical issues with regard to fideism, see Amesbury (2005).

- Amesbury, R. (2005). 'Fideism', *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, (ed.) E. Zalta, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/fideism/>.
[A very helpful overview of the main issues in this debate].
- Evans, C. S. (1998). *Faith Beyond Reason: A Kierkegaardian Account*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
[An important contemporary defence of fideism which takes its inspiration from Kierkegaard].
- Malcolm, N. (1977). 'The Groundlessness of Belief', *Reason and Religion*, (ed.) S. C. Brown, Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press.
[One of the classic papers on Wittgensteinian fideism].
- Nielsen, K. (1967). 'Wittgensteinian Fideism', *Philosophy* 42, 237-54.
[An important critical treatment of Wittgensteinian fideism].
- Phillips, D. Z. (1970). *Faith and Philosophical Enquiry*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
[An influential defence of Wittgensteinian fideism from one its chief proponents].
- (2005). 'Wittgensteinianism: Logic, Reality and God', *Oxford Handbook to the Philosophy of Religion*, (ed.) W. J. Wainwright, ch. 18, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[A helpful recent survey of the main themes in Wittgensteinian fideism, written by one of its main advocates].
- Wittgenstein, L. (1966). *Wittgenstein's Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, (ed.) C. Barrett, Oxford: Blackwell.
[Although there are a number of aspects of Wittgenstein's writings which are relevant to the philosophy of religion, it is this text that has inspired most of the interest in the brand of fideism with which he is associated].

REFORMED EPISTEMOLOGY

The main reason why epistemology of religion has witnessed such growth in the last twenty of so years is the interest in reformed epistemology. This view argues against the austere epistemic demands imposed on religious belief by evidentialism and instead puts forward a new way of thinking about the epistemology of religious belief on which it is far more plausible that such belief can enjoy a positive epistemic standing. The foremost exponent of reformed epistemology is Plantinga, who has argued for this view in a number of works. Although it is hard to separate out two key texts, Plantinga (1983) offers a useful overview of the main elements of reformed epistemology as he understands it, while Plantinga (2000) presents an in-depth and more up-to-date book-length account of his view. Wolterstorff (1976) has also been extremely influential in this debate. See also Wolterstorff (1986) for a subtle account of the historical background to the evidentialist thesis that reformed epistemologists like Wolterstorff object to. Greco (2007) is an excellent recent overview of the proposal.

- Greco, J. (2007). 'Reformed Epistemology', *The Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Religion*, (eds.) C. Meister & P. Copan, 629-39, London: Routledge.
[An excellent recent overview of the reformed epistemology proposal].

- Plantinga, A. (1983). 'Reason and Belief in God', *Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God*, (eds.) A. Plantinga & N. Wolterstorff, 16–93, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
[A clear and accessible early statement of reformed epistemology from its foremost exponent].
- (2000). *Warranted Christian Belief*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[An in-depth book-length account of his view from the foremost exponent of reformed epistemology].
- Wolterstorff, N. (1976). *Reason within the Bounds of Religion*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
[A tremendously influential work in the development of reformed epistemology].
- (1986). 'The Migration of the Theistic Arguments: From Natural Theology to Evidentialist Apologetics', *Rationality, Religious Belief, and Moral Commitment: New Essays on the Philosophy of Religion*, (eds.) R. Audi & W. J. Wainwright, Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press.
[A very useful overview of the historical background to the evidentialist thesis that reformed epistemologists object to].

CRITICISMS OF REFORMED EPISTEMOLOGY

There has been a wealth of critical literature on reformed epistemology. Some of it has been quite trenchant in opposing the view; Kretzmann (2000) falls into this category. Alston (1985) is interesting in that it exposes some tensions between different forms of reformed epistemology, in this case the variety endorsed by Alston and the more influential proposal put forward by Plantinga. Pritchard (2003) also argues for modest alterations to the view. A helpful introduction to some of the critical issues is provided by the exchange between Quinn (1985) and Plantinga (1986), which is also usefully discussed by Hasker (1998). Zagzebski (1993) brings together a range of new critical—but also for the most part broadly sympathetic—essays on reformed epistemology, including a further paper by Quinn which extends his debate with Plantinga.

- Alston, W. (1985). 'Plantinga's Epistemology of Religious Belief', *Alvin Plantinga* (eds.) J. E. Tomberlin & P. van Inwagen, Dordrecht: D. Reidel.
[A subtle discussion of Plantinga's view by a leading epistemologist of religion who also endorses a version of reformed epistemology].
- Hasker, W. (1998). 'The Foundations of Theism: Scoring the Quinn-Plantinga Debate', *Faith and Philosophy* 15, 52-67.
[Offers a neat and helpful overview of the issues raised by the exchange between Quinn (1985) and Plantinga (1986)].
- Kretzmann, N. (2000). 'Evidence and Religious Belief', *Philosophy of Religion* (ed.) B. Davies, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[A trenchant defence of evidentialism in the light of the reformed epistemologist's rejection of this thesis].
- Plantinga, A. (1986). 'The Foundations of Theism: A Reply', *Faith and Philosophy* 3, 298-313.
[A response by the leading exponent of reformed epistemology to the critique offered by Quinn (1985). Should be read in conjunction with Quinn (1985) and Hasker (1998)].
- Pritchard, D. H. (2003). 'Reforming Reformed Epistemology', *International Philosophical Quarterly* 43, 43-66.
[A sympathetic critique of reformed epistemology which argues that the view should be recast along foundherentist lines].

Quinn, P. L. (1985). 'In Search of the Foundations of Theism', *Faith and Philosophy* 2, 469-86.

[An interesting critique of reformed epistemology by a leading epistemologist of religion. Should be read in conjunction with Plantinga (1986) and Hasker (1998)].

Zagzebski, L. (ed.) (1993). *Rational Faith: Catholic Responses to Reformed Epistemology*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

[Brings together a range of new critical—but also for the most part broadly sympathetic—essays on reformed epistemology].

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

One the key topics in the epistemology of religion is whether religious experiences can offer epistemic support for religious belief, and if so how. In the contemporary literature this debate has tended to run side-by-side with the discussion regarding reformed epistemology. This is because one way of developing the reformed epistemology proposal is by claiming that once we reject the austere epistemic demands imposed on religious belief by evidentialism then the path is clear to allow religious experiences to justify religious belief in much the same way that perceptual experiences can justify perceptual belief. For the key contemporary defence of this line of thought, see Alston (1991). See also Yandell (1993) which also has the unusual feature of considering religious experiences from the perspective of both eastern and western religions. For a helpful recent symposium on this topic, with each symposiast taking an opposing line, see Alston & Fales (2004). See Kwan (2006) for a detailed critical discussion of the recent literature on this topic. See Alston (2005) and Gellman (2005) for two recent overviews of the main issues in this area.

Alston, W. P. (1991). *Perceiving God: The Epistemology of Religious Experience*, Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press.

[This is the key contemporary text discussing the possibility that religious experience can justify religious belief in much the same way that perceptual experience can justify perceptual belief. Very influential].

——— (2005). 'Mysticism and Perceptual Awareness of God', *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Religion*, (ed.) W. E. Mann, 198-219, Oxford: Blackwell.

[A useful recent survey of the main issues in this debate, from one of the foremost figures working in this area].

Alston, W. P., & Fales, E. (2004). 'Does Religious Experience Justify Religious Belief?', *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion*, (eds.) M. J. Peterson & R. J. VanArragon, 135-63, Oxford: Blackwell.

[This is a symposium between Alston and Fales, with Alston arguing that religious experience can justify religious belief and Fales arguing that it cannot. It offers a very useful overview of the main issues in this debate].

Gellman, J. I. (2005). 'Mysticism and Religious Experience', *Oxford Handbook to the Philosophy of Religion*, (ed.) W. J. Wainwright, ch. 6, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[A useful recent survey of the main issues in this debate].

Kwan, K. (2006). 'Can Religious Experience Provide Justification for the Belief in God? The Debate in Contemporary Analytic Philosophy', *Philosophy Compass* 6, 640-61.

[A detailed critical discussion of the recent literature on this topic].

Yandell, K. E. (1993). *The Epistemology of Religious Experience*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[An important recent defence of the idea that religious experience can justify religious belief. Unusually, the author considers religious experiences from the perspective of

both western and eastern religions].

SCIENCE AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF

The conflict between science and religion is of course long-standing, but it is notable that it has become more heated in recent years, in large part because of the debate surrounding creationism (in particular, whether this view should be taught alongside evolutionary theory in public schools). Kitcher (1982) is a seminal discussion of the issues regarding creationism. Plantinga (1993) offers a spirited defence of religious belief in the light of the challenge posed by science via an influential argument to the effect that the combination of evolutionary theory and naturalism is self-defeating. See Beilby (2002) for a collection of new articles discussing Plantinga's argument, along with a response from Plantinga himself. See Padgett (2008) for a good up-to-date critical discussion of the relationship between science and religion, and see Ratzsch & Worrall (2004) for a very helpful symposium on this issue, with each symposiast taking an opposing position.

Beilby, J. (ed.) (2002). *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism*, Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press.

[A collection of new articles discussing the evolutionary argument against naturalism put forward by Plantinga (1993). Many of the most prominent philosophers involved in this debate are represented here, including William Alston, Jerry Fodor and Ernest Sosa. Plantinga also replies to his critics].

Kitcher, P. (1982). *Abusing Science: The Case Against Creationism*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

[A seminal critical discussion of creationism].

Padgett, A. G. (2008). 'Science and Religion: Philosophical Issues', *Philosophy Compass* 3, 222-30.

[A good up-to-date critical discussion of the topic].

Plantinga, A. (1993). *Warrant and Proper Function*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[Offers a widely discussed argument to the effect that the combination of evolutionary theory and naturalism is self-defeating. In doing so, Plantinga attempts to turn the evolutionary case against religion back on science itself].

Ratzsch, D., & Worrall, J. (2004). 'Does Science Discredit Religion?', *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion*, (eds.) M. J. Peterson & R. J. VanArragon, 59-94, Oxford: Blackwell.

[A very helpful symposium on the relationship between science and religion, with each symposiast taking an opposing position].

PLURALISM AND RELIGIOUS DISAGREEMENT

One of the key problems in the philosophy of religion is how to deal with religious pluralism and, relatedly, religious disagreements. For two helpful recent overviews of the problem posed by religious diversity, see Hick (1997) and Wainwright (2005). King (2006) offers a good critical discussion of the issues in this regard. See van Inwagen (1995) for an influential defence of the idea that religious pluralism doesn't pose any special epistemological problems. Recently the discussion in this area has tended to focus on the more general issue of religious disagreement, and what implications this has for religious belief. This literature draws upon important recent work on the epistemology of disagreement. See especially Feldman (2007) for an influential discussion in this regard. Kraft (2007) is a good recent article on the relevance of the epistemology of disagreement to philosophy of religion. Frances (2008) motivates a distinctive kind of scepticism about religion by appeal to the epistemology of disagreement. Pritchard (2009) discusses religious disagreement in the

specific context of epistemological relativism.

- Feldman, R. (2007). 'Reasonable Religious Disagreements', *Philosophers without God: Meditations on Atheism and the Secular Life*, (ed.) L. Antony, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[A recent paper on the relevance of the epistemology of disagreement to philosophy of religion which is already quite influential in the field. Argues that in the context of such disagreement one is epistemically obliged to suspend judgement].
- Frances, B. (2008). 'Spirituality, Expertise and Philosophers', *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion* 1, 44-81.
[Motivates a kind of scepticism about religion by appeal to the epistemology of disagreement].
- Hick, J. (1997). 'Religious Pluralism', *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, (eds.) P. L. Quinn & C. Taliaferro, 607-14, Oxford: Blackwell.
[A helpful overview of the issues regarding religious pluralism from one of the main figures in the debate].
- King, N. (2006). 'Religious Diversity and its Challenges to Religious Belief', *Philosophy Compass* 3, 830-53.
[A good critical discussion of the main issues as regards religious diversity].
- Kraft, J. (2007). 'Religious Disagreement, Externalism, and the Epistemology of Disagreement: Listening to our Grandmothers', *Religious Studies* 43, 417-32.
[A good recent article on the relevance of the epistemology of disagreement to philosophy of religion].
- Pritchard, D. H. (2009). 'Epistemic Relativism, Epistemic Incommensurability and Wittgensteinian Epistemology', *The Blackwell Companion to Relativism*, (ed.) S. Hales, Oxford: Blackwell.
[Discusses the topic of religious disagreement in the specific context of epistemological relativism].
- van Inwagen, P. (1995). 'Non est Hick', *The Rationality of Belief and the Plurality of Faith*, (ed.) T. Senor, 216-41, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
[An influential paper which defends the idea that religious pluralism doesn't pose any special epistemological problems].
- Wainwright, W. J. (2005). 'Competing Religious Claims', *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Religion*, (ed.) W. E. Mann, 220-41, Oxford: Blackwell.
[A helpful overview of the issues regarding religious pluralism].

MIRACLES

As Hume famously pointed out, miracles pose a serious challenge to the epistemic standing of religious belief. For while belief in miracles is an essential part of most systems of religious belief, it is hard to see how one could have an adequate epistemic basis for one's belief that a miracle has occurred, especially if one does not have first-hand experience of the event in question. Burns (1981) offers a good historical discussion of this issue. Earman (2000) is a highly critical assessment of Hume's argument against rational belief in the existence of miracles, while Fogelin (2005) is a subtle defence of this argument which is written by a leading epistemologist and Hume scholar. Both works have been influential in the contemporary debate. See also Levine (1989) for a subtle and in-depth exploration of the epistemological problem posed by miracles. For a good survey of this topic, see Corner (2009).

Burns, R. M. (1981). *The Great Debate on Miracles: From Joseph Glanvill to David Hume*,

- Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press.
 [A solid historical discussion of the problem posed by miracles for religious belief].
- Corner, D. (2009). 'Miracles', *The Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, (eds.) B. Dowden & J. Fieser, www.iep.utm.edu/m/miracles.htm.
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