

Gender and the infinite: On the aspiration to be all there is

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1. Introduction

Twentieth-century philosophers of religion made strides forward in advancing sophisticated arguments about religious knowledge, language, experience and arguments for the existence of the theistic God. However, by the end of the century Anglo-American philosophers in particular tended to treat philosophy of religion as synonymous with a Christian account of the divine. Male and female philosophers assumed an uncritical familiarity with, and so unquestioning acceptance of, the classical model of traditional theism as the subject matter for philosophers of religion. Nevertheless, before the turn of the century a number of feminist philosophers of religion had begun to challenge this account for its gender-bias; and non-western philosophers criticized the ethnocentrism or racism of western claims to neutrality in philosophy of religion. Feminist philosophers directed their criticism to the traditional theistic conception of God for its idealization of exclusively male attributes.¹

Whether theist or atheist, twentieth-century philosophers of religion in the Anglo-American world too readily accepted the theistic frame of reference, failing to notice the uncritical – and in this sense unphilosophical – nature of the traditional conception of God as a personal being who is the omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent, eternal creator and sustainer of all creation. Why should the overall conception itself remain while endless debates centre on each of the divine attributes, especially in relation to the frequently debated philosophical problem of evil? Feminist philosophers were not alone in arguing that it would be far more constructive to try to alleviate suffering than to justify the existence of evil *and* a good, all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal God? This would change the nature of the philosophical problem. The radical question is, whose conception is the God of contemporary philosophy of religion? If not our own, or if a male projection of who we are, why focus philosophical debate exclusively on it?

So the familiarity and neutrality of philosophical claims about the divine have been challenged. For some, a new starting point for philosophy of religion is now necessary. At least a more inclusive focus for philosophy of religion in the twenty-first century would seem to be crucial to the future of the field in a world with ever-interesting diversity, including diverse practices of religion. Both the particularity of beliefs as embodied in religious practices and the generality of religious yearning must be addressed. In this essay I would like to offer a feminist rethinking of a core topic for a more inclusive philosophy of religion. I advocate a gender-sensitive approach to the topic of the infinite. To articulate this approach I would like to begin with a fundamentally corrupt aspiration and see how it has taken both masculinist and feminist forms. I will, then, consider a conception of the incorrupt form of 'craving infinitude'. This is conceived to be essentially expansive for men and women.³

Building critically upon the differently gendered accounts of the infinite in A. W. Moore and Grace M. Jantzen, I will argue that the masculinist philosopher runs the danger of aspiring to be infinite, while the feminist philosopher runs the danger of seeking to become all (there is) in nature.⁴ I will maintain that two forms of a fundamentally corrupt aspiration have followed the traditional dichotomies of gender in philosophy.⁵ My concern are two gendered forms, but I also maintain that this corrupt aspiration takes other forms depending upon its cultural manifestations in the lives of men and women of different ethnic, racial, religious, sexual and gendered perspectives. Essentially the corrupting tendency of our relations to the infinite rests in an aspiration to be or become all there is.

Feminist philosophers of religion insist that the traditional theistic conception of a personal God has appeared strange to women philosophers and to followers of non-theistic religions once they have stopped – and shifted their thinking.⁶ So, have western philosophers themselves aspired to be infinite in proposing the God's eye view as the achievement of men who possess all-knowledge, all-power, all-goodness, all truth? From various perspectives the conception of the infinite implicit in a God's eye view of reality seems an outmoded ideal to which western men have aspired. Following Moore's recent account of the infinite in *Points of View*, I would like to maintain a critical distinction between *the aspiration to be infinite* and a *craving for infinitude*.⁷ The latter has an affinity with what I have called (following bell hooks) yearning.⁸ My contention is that yearning can continue to motivate the search for truth, love, goodness and justice without the one who craves or yearns necessarily *aspiring to be* fully rational, perfectly good and completely just; that is, without aspiring to be, in traditional theistic terms, God.⁹ In focusing critically upon the gendered forms of our aspirations, I

urge a distinctive shift away from philosophy's privileged western point of view.

Jantzen rejects 'a drive to infinity: an insatiable desire for knowledge' as a masculinist obsession with necrophilia.¹⁰ She insists that this drive represents a male refusal to accept boundaries. Instead Jantzen argues for a feminist pantheism in which women seek to become divine.¹¹ However, a danger of aspiring to become 'pan-theist' remains implicit as the potential infinite in time. Moore contends that human beings are no more able to stop aspiring to be infinite than to eliminate evil.¹² Yet his contention could be read as male or, what Jantzen would call, masculinist. In contrast a feminist imperative seeks to *eliminate* evil, or at least the evil resulting from the *hubris* of a man's thinking that he alone exists.

Ultimately I intend to pursue the possibility of incorrupt forms of male and female relations to infinitude. A particular reading of Luce Irigaray supports this pursuit. My intention is to offer a point of contestation for masculinist and feminist philosophers of religion alike. This point lies right at the heart of how we do philosophy (of religion) and how we conceive the quest for knowledge of what cannot be said. Ineffable knowledge of how to be finite in our relations to infinitude also plays a role in the renewal of philosophy of religion for the twenty-first century. Epistemological, metaphysical, ethical and political domains meet in this more modest pursuit for the incorrupt at the point of contestation concerning infinitude.

2. Gendering philosophy of religion

For Plato in line with the Pythagorean philosophers 'the infinite' was a term of abuse. It was associated with chaos, matter and femaleness, while the finite was good and associated with order, form and maleness.¹³ An early twentieth-century feminism of difference – also supported by Irigaray – proposed a return to the ancient conception of the infinite as female, while reversing its value from bad to good. In contrast, Jantzen simply rejects the infinite, assuming its association with all-power, all-knowledge and maleness. Her claim that feminist pantheism replaces the infinite of a masculinist monotheism with the finite as female seems inconsistent.

In *Points of View* Moore references Irigaray's *Elemental Passions* and 'Divine Women' without any discussion.¹⁴ It is helpful to take up this discussion of crucial claims concerning gender and our relations to the infinite in 'Divine Women'. These are claims in Irigaray's mime, or disruptive imitation, of the philosophical argument of Ludwig Feuerbach. Her mime exposes the exclusion of woman from man's projection while acknowledging the role projection has played in man's defence of his maleness.

Man is able to exist because God helps him to define his gender (*genre*), helps him to orient his finiteness by reference to infinity. The revival of religious feeling can in fact be interpreted as the rampart man raises in defense of his very maleness.

... The goal that is most valuable is to go on *becoming* infinitely. ... To become means fulfilling the wholeness of what we are capable of being. ... If he has no existence in his gender, he lacks his relation to the infinite and, in fact, to finiteness.

... [Women] need, we need, an infinite if they are to share a *little*. Otherwise sharing means fusion-confusion, division and dislocation within themselves, among themselves. If I am unable to form a relationship with some horizon of accomplishment for my gender, I am unable to share while protecting my becoming.¹⁵

This mime captures the relations between gender and infinity. Men and women as embodied are described as finite, sexed beings. Our bodies can also be interpreted as gendered by reference to that which is not finite, i.e. 'infinite'. Irigaray assumes that God has served as man's projection of infinity. This projection of infinity both creates a religious feeling and supports an exclusive relation of gender as maleness. Yet women need an infinite in order to create a horizon (or ideal) for their gender. But does this mean women need a projection?

Irigaray's writings have provoked women philosophers to rethink the nature of the divine and the relations of sex to gender. I would like to suggest the implications of this rethinking for the gendering of philosophy of religion: (i) in terms of projection and (ii) in terms of sex/gender. First, to quote again from Irigaray's 'Divine Women':

God forces us to do nothing except *become*. The only task, the only obligation laid upon us is: to become divine men and women, to become perfectly, to refuse to allow parts of ourselves to shrivel and die that have the potential for growth and fulfilment.¹⁶

What is Irigaray *doing* in saying this? Feuerbach is her subtext. But does she express a duty or mime Feuerbach metaphorically and disruptively?¹⁷ Let us consider his argument and her mime more closely.

Feuerbach assumes that the basis for religion is a projection of the self onto the divine, but the recognition of the divine as a self-projection would result in the dissolution of religion. His empirical argument that religion is based upon man's projection of his ideal attributes onto a divine being is not complete without the premise that the projection is an illusion.¹⁸ Insofar as Irigaray mimes Feuerbach she must assume, as he did, that to understand how religion is created by way of projection is to know that there is

no divine being, or non-empirical object of projection, beyond the subject. For Feuerbach, 'man' is the only subject. The divine attributes are man's. If Irigaray's mime makes space in this account for a female subject, it does not necessarily follow that she calls women to create a projection for themselves. Feuerbach is not calling for men to create a projection; he is calling for a recognition of the illusion. It would seem to follow that insofar as Irigaray's mime disrupts his picture by bringing in sexual difference as the interval between two subjects, it opens up a space for women to recognise their own (hidden, not projected) attributes in order to become subjects. It seems unlikely to me (at least) that we can agree, or claim, to become divine through projection.¹⁹ Nevertheless, I contend that regulative ideals could (yet) serve to guide us toward incorrupt, gendered relations to the infinite.

Second, Irigaray has added significantly to the philosophical debate about sex and gender, including the gendered nature of traditional theism. A central issue for the gendering of philosophy of religion is whether sex and gender should be distinguished. I argue for a distinction of sex and gender which is not strictly empirical. To move beyond the limitations of the status quo in philosophy of religion, feminist philosophers need more than an empirical depiction of reality. In particular, we need to articulate the interplay of bodily, material and social differences using a revisable conception of the sex/gender distinction. To explain the importance of distinguishing between the empirical and the conceptual I will digress somewhat from my central argument.

To employ sex/gender as a conceptual, and not an empirical (i.e. biological/cultural), distinction is important on at least two counts. For one thing, it would help to distinguish a phenomenological level of description of the body as lived (i.e. as given prior to it being made empirically intelligible). This level assumes that the body is intuitively apprehended before it is understood or interpreted. Phenomenological description would, then, broaden the fields of both feminist philosophy and philosophy of religion by introducing an account of the lived body which is given as sexed. For another thing, a dual conception of the lived and interpreted body would enable greater understanding of the interrelated factors of sex/gender, including sexual, gender, racial, class, ethnic and religious perspectives. This would mean both a phenomenology of the sexed body and a socially situated epistemology (or a hermeneutics) of the gendered body. We could, then, use this distinction to interpret religious feelings and passion: first, to uncover their conditions of possibility and, second, to recognise the necessary and sufficient conditions of bodily knowledge. Without the conceptual distinction of the lived and interpreted body, empirical claims concerning the gendered body are only contingent rather than interpreted in the light of lived experience. So I assume

that it is both possible and necessary to articulate a level of intuition more fundamental than the facts or norms of gender.

To do more than describe the role of gender in philosophy of religion, it is necessary to see behind or beyond the empiricism of Anglo-American philosophers of religion. Otherwise gendering will not move men and women from the status quo. For example, a teenager who grows up in a religious community where heterosexuality is assumed to be a fact yet experiences desires which are not intelligible in terms of this fact would not be able to explain such phenomena without access to a prior, lived body. If the lived body as sexed is (intuitively) accessible this allows for a challenge to the empirical facts which render it unintelligible. Without this distinction there would be no possibility for feminists, lesbians or anyone else who does not fit an established norm (e.g. compulsory reproduction or heterosexuality) to advocate change on the basis of their desires or needs.

3. A deep, pervasive and corrupt aspiration

The question guiding this section is whether a deep, pervasive and corrupt aspiration to be infinite manifests itself as male in philosophy of religion. Moore distinguishes between the craving for infinitude and *the aspiration to be infinite*. The former is incorrupt, the latter is a corruption of the former. Both the corrupt and the incorrupt relations to the infinite seem to be inevitable for humans. Yet is there something male in this corrupt aspiration?

It is rational to want to be rational; or, more generally, to want rationality to be instantiated. But the aspiration to be infinite has a different focus. It includes the aspiration to be rational, but includes it as a residue within the distorted aspiration to be (so to speak) rationality itself.

When the craving [for infinitude] is distorted, [its] perspectival character is turned in on itself in such a way that the craving becomes an aspiration *that we alone exist*, – or, in its most distorted form, that the subject alone exists. It becomes the aspiration to be a complete self-sufficient unconditioned whole, to be that which the craving for infinitude is a craving for.²⁰

It is helpful to probe the philosophical anthropology implicit in Moore's account of finitude and infinitude. For this I turn to Paul Ricoeur's *Fallible Man*.²¹ Although written some thirty-seven years before Moore's *Points of View*, Ricoeur's account of 'man' as fallible due to a disproportion between his finite points of view and his desire to transgress this finitude resonates profoundly with Moore's claims.²² There seems to be a common Kantian framework. Consider Ricoeur's claim concerning finitude and points of view,

If finitude is primordially 'point of view', the acts and operations by which we become aware of point of view as point of view will reveal the most elementary connection between an *experience* of finitude and a *movement* transgressing this finitude.²³

The movement of transgression anticipates what Moore calls our aspiration to be infinite. Ricoeur himself goes on to locate infinitude in feelings which personalise. Or, in Kantian terms, feeling is what both individuates and connects embodiments of reason. An incorrupt desire would seek a harmonious connection of happiness and virtue in the symbolic sense of belonging to a kingdom of ends. This sense of belonging renders the infinitude of feeling as eschatological (i.e. having to do with immutable 'last things', not part of the mutable space-time order of being). Desire, however, plays a corrupting role when it takes the absolute as its object. In other words, when desire takes on epistemological and ontological, instead of symbolic and eschatological, proportions it becomes for Ricoeur the corrupting force of the infinitude of feeling. Desire claims too much for itself as follows:

... Only a being who wants the all and who schematizes it in the objects of human desire is able to make a mistake, that is, take his object for the *absolute*, *forget* the symbolic character of the bond between happiness and an object of desire: forgetting this makes the symbol an idol ... This forgetting, this birth of an idol ... falls within the domain of a hermeneutics of the passions ...²⁴

Ricoeur employs a hermeneutics to elucidate the corrupting nature of desire in the passions. Moore unwittingly (perhaps) presents the aspiration to be infinite as a fundamental passion which corrupts by rendering the infinite an idol rather than maintaining it as a symbol. There is a crucial difference between treating the infinite as epistemologically and ontologically constitutive (i.e. actualized in an idol) and schematising infinitude as regulative (i.e. instantiated in practical ideals). For Ricoeur at least, man can avoid the corrupt aspiration by restoring the symbol to its proper role. Arguably this idolatrous form of corruption is male insofar as it projects the dominant male view of subjectivity in western philosophy.

According to Irigaray, a projective or selfish awareness of the other rests at the heart of western philosophy as patriarchal. The male subject defines his gender by the exclusion of the female subject. This exclusion also eclipses the body from thinking. Man creates his gender in relation to his projection of a self-same subject. That is, he projects his own attributes infinitely and fails to see the other subject who gave birth to him, i.e. the female subject. If we consider Ricoeur's awareness of finitude as embodied in a place, the maleness of his anthropology becomes apparent. (However, this awareness

also suggests that his thinking is not ‘disembodied’ to the degree to which Irigaray’s male subject generally seems to be.²⁵)

... only the displacements of my body as a totality denote a change of place and, thereby, the function of the place as a point of view. To account for this unique privilege of global movements to constitute the notion of point of view, even when this point of view is particularized by sight, hearing or touch, we must add a further point to this analysis. ... I ascribe the diversity of the operations to the identity of a subject ... these diverse silhouettes appear *to me*, that is, to this unity and this identity ... the self as an identical pole of all acts is where the body, taken as a whole, is.²⁶

In addition to the above awareness of the particularities of place (including the particularized nature of bodily sensations), Ricoeur is aware to a certain degree of the significance of his birth:

... I was born somewhere: from the moment I am ‘brought into the world’ I perceive this world as a series of changes and re-establishments starting from this place which I did not chose and which I cannot find in my memory.²⁷

Irigaray’s mime works to uncover the difference in a male awareness of finitude. Sexual difference is not explicit in Ricoeur’s awareness of place and birth. As a difference between two subjects, sexual difference emerges in yearning for ‘a place of place’.²⁸ This is a place where an incorrupt desire (or craving) for infinitude finds expression within the finite. As Irigaray argues, ‘If we are to have a sense of the other that is not projective or selfish, we have to attain an “intuition of the infinite.”’²⁹ Arguably Irigaray seeks to subvert a corrupt conception of infinity which defends maleness as primary by excluding the female subject. She speaks playfully to a male subject – ‘you’ – in order to uncover the hidden and excluded ‘I’ who is female. For example, listen to her dialogue in *Elemental Passions*.

The whole is not the same for me as it is for you. For me, it can never be one. Can never be completed, always in-finite. When you talk about Infinity, it seems to me that you are speaking of a closed totality: a solid, empty membrane which would gather and contain all possibilities. The absolute of self-identity – in which you were, will be, could be.

For me? A fluid expansion, never enclosed once and for all. Not even by projects or projections ...³⁰

... Your order freezes the mobility of relations between. It produces discontinuity. Peaks, pikes, fissures. Energy no longer circulates. Is hoarded in forms that create closure. Is saved up in phantasies: captivating some, exhausting others. Whoever has stolen it cannot dispose of it at will.

It is taken, circumvented in a morphology whose outlines are overvalued. An appropriation that resists the possessor himself and in its struggle for liberation will necessarily bring about aggression, violence and rape.³¹

Reading Irigaray's words, as she struggles to free herself and 'you' from the grip of violence which is patriarchy, we glimpse her new language. To move beyond a male (corrupt) conception of infinity she struggles to embody a fluid language. Movement can be imagined in her words. As if in a dance, she mimes the divine, while still bearing the burden of the patriarchal order of language.²⁷ For Irigaray, the incorrupt (female) relation to the in-finite would never be static. Our exchanges would not end with, or return to, the certainty of belief in an authoritative, all-powerful, eternal word of God. This latter represents a deep, pervasive and corrupt aspiration which Irigaray identifies as male.

Irigaray's ideal of an incorrupt horizon (for sexual difference) is the infinite as an unending potential or a movement (of the senses, of touch, voice, smell, sound and sight) in time. As a property, infinitude would not be there all at once; it would never be wholly present; infinitude describes the process of dividing endlessly the space, in motion, between us. For Irigaray, desire which moves us infinitely (in time) can preserve sexual difference as an interval.³³ Does this movement constitute an incorrupt craving for infinitude? If so, is there a female form of a corrupt aspiration? Whatever answer are given, can the corruption be avoided? In the next section (4) I explore the relations of finitude and sexual difference. Sections 5 and 6 address the other questions by considering the incorrupt instantiation of the ideals for infinitude.

4. Knowing how to be finite and sexual difference

I propose that the female subject offers insight on knowing how to be finite in *showing* the relation of gender to the infinite. 'Showing' derives from Moore's accounts in *The Infinite* and *Points of View*.³⁴ The latter employs the formula, 'A is shown that *x*' as equivalent to *A* has ineffable knowledge, and when an *attempt* is made to put what *A* knows into words, the result is *x*. What ever words are put in place of *x* will be nonsense, or mere verbiage. Moore establishes that there is ineffable knowledge, for example, states of knowledge which do not answer to how things are (i.e. they are not representations); and, then, that there is such a thing as *attempting* to express some of this knowledge.³⁵ So when Moore claims that knowing how to be finite is a paradigm of ineffable knowledge, he implies that this knowledge can be shown. This is crucial for the process of coming to terms with the aspiration to be infinite:

Knowing how to be finite, the desired outcome of this process, is a paradigm of ineffable knowledge. It has nothing to answer to. It is knowledge of how to be finite *in accord with our craving for infinitude*. But there is no independent right or wrong about it.³⁶

Moore's account of finitude and infinitude (as above) owes a debt to Kant and post-Kantian philosophy in recognising a limit to what we (say we) know. As suggested in the previous section Ricoeur gives us an explicitly Kantian account of infinitude. He describes our desire to transgress finitude by seeking, in Kant's words, 'a view into a higher immutable order of things . . . in accordance with the highest vocation of reason'.³⁷ Like Kant before and Moore after him Ricoeur maintains that the rational finite being seeks the unconditioned, despite self-consciousness of its own finitude. *Fallible Man* articulates an account of finitude that virtually anticipates Moore's claims about finitude and representations of reality in *Points of View*.

Kant was not wrong in identifying finitude and receptivity: according to him the finite is a rational being that does not create the objects of its representation but receives them. . . . the world is primarily not the boundary of my existence but its correlate . . .³⁸

Finitude is a fundamental characteristic of man according to western philosophy in general. It is also argued that man's awareness of finitude presupposes an *a priori* idea of infinitude. Western philosophers have offered various arguments concerning man's awareness of finitude (in the light of an idea of infinitude). Charles Taylor presents a classic argument, turning to Augustine to distinguish two sorts of relation to the infinite.³⁹ On the one hand, Augustine has an awareness of himself as finite and (his 'heart') longs to be eternally at rest, in this sense to be infinite. On the other hand, Augustine's argument is that he would not have his awareness of finitude without the idea of the infinitude of a perfect being, i.e. God.⁴⁰ Taylor cites Augustine's *Confessions*,

O God, You are the Light of my heart, and the Bread of my inmost soul, and the Power that weds my mind and the thoughts of my heart.⁴¹

Furthermore, Taylor argues that Augustine's reflections represent an important shift in the history of western philosophical thinking about the infinite. In Augustine, 'the route to the higher passes within . . . [and] radical reflexivity takes on a new status, because it is the "space" in which we come to encounter God, in which we effect the turning from lower to higher'.⁴² He insists that Augustine is the originator in western philosophy of the strand of thought which has sought God as the infinite within man. Yet Moore suggests that a corrupt aspiration to be infinite leads the subject 'to try to situate the

infinite whole within itself'.⁴³ Feminist philosophy with the help of, in this case, Irigarayan mime can shed light on the gendered nature of the development of what I have referred to as a classic argument concerning man's finitude and the infinite.

The question in Irigaray's terms of sexual difference emerges in recognition of the corruption of man's relation to the infinite. Irigaray employs her feminist form of mime in order to disrupt the patriarchal accounts. Positively Irigaray exposes infinitude as the crucial characteristic of the divine.⁴⁴ Yet Irigaray's mime of a corrupt male version of the desire to be infinite is both provocative and subversive.⁴⁵ Consider her reading of the nostalgia for security, unity and infinity as a (male) desire to return to the place of the womb:

The womb, for its part, would figure rather as place. Though of course what unfolds in the womb unfolds in function of an interval, a cord, that is never done away with. Whence perhaps the infinite nostalgia for that first home? The interval cannot be done away with?

... The boundary of the 'containing body' can be understood of the womb. If it has no outside, desire can go on to infinity. Is this the way with the desire for God that does not know the outside of the universe?

But sexual desire that goes toward the womb and no longer returns to it also goes toward infinity since it never touches the body that contains it *hic et nunc*, it goes toward another container. Instead of moving across the actual container in the direction of the other through porosity, it remains nostalgic for another home.⁴⁶

In the above Irigaray provokes reflection on desire (for the maternal) which goes on infinitely and desire which constantly goes toward infinity never reaching the container (or God) beyond. Neither desire touches the bodies in space.⁴⁷ Irigaray imitates in order to disrupt these two (male) dimensions of, on the one hand, going to infinity endlessly in time and, on the other hand, moving toward infinity never traversing the actual container. Her implicit criticism is that this male longing for something beyond touch (i.e. beyond space – and time) misses the infinitude within the finite. Irigaray insinuates that this double, time-space relation to infinity has characterised the religious feeling of an European man.⁴⁸ In contrast, for her only in time in the interval between two subjects, for instance, in touch is infinitude found as a trace. This is perhaps a trace of an eschatological (or regulative) ideal.

Listen to Irigaray's provocative language on sexual difference:

Not in me but in our difference lies the abyss. We can never be sure of bridging our gap between us. But that is our adventure. Without this peril there is no us ...

... The outline engendered between my lips is never once and for all. Reserve, excess, source of movement – my lips could never be reduced to subject or object, instrument of use or function. Our exchanges? An engendering through rare and always infinite fortune.³⁹

The above passage exhibits how Irigaray conceives a role for the infinite within her account of sexual difference. In contrast, Jantzen's feminist philosophical theology misses the fact that the infinite exists within the finite: as in 'an engendering through rare and always infinite fortune'. In missing the possibility in this fact, a corrupt aspiration to become all-nature is a danger.⁵⁰ Jantzen's feminist conception of pantheism cannot avoid the dangers of the infinite as unlimited and corrupting; nor is it clear that her pantheism preserves difference. Yet a feminist philosopher of religion can still confront infinitude's corruption. I would like to confront this with the help of Moore's account of regulative ideals.

5. The instantiation of regulative ideals: Infinitude as incorrupt

Moore explains the incorrupt possibility in craving infinitude as follows.

... Infinitude ... includes ideals of representation, conation and agency. These are regulative ideals involving unconditionedness. To satisfy them would mean thinking what is true, wanting what is right and doing what is required. It would mean being perfectly rational. A craving for infinitude, in an incorrupt form, would be largely a craving for the instantiation of such ideals.

I maintain that for an ideal to be instantiated as regulative it would have to remain symbolic and eschatological, not epistemological and ontological. To aspire to instantiate these ideals epistemologically and ontologically would be to forget the real (incorrupt) significance in the perspectival nature of our knowledge. Both the relativist and the absolutist philosopher fail to grasp the necessarily regulative nature of the ideals of infinitude. Instead they would claim to possess their own knowledge of the true, the right and the good. The philosopher (whether relativist or absolutist) who aspires to be infinite treats the point of view from which he or she exists as the whole of reality. This distorts reality and can corrupt the knower. Remember in Moore's words,

Our craving for infinitude has a perspectival character corresponding to the point of view from which alone we exist ... When the craving is distorted, this perspectival character is turned in on itself in such a way that the craving becomes an aspiration *that we alone exist*.⁵¹

Consistent with what Moore would agree is the perspectival nature of knowledge Ricoeur draws the following distinctions between the infinite and the finite:

... the will [as practical reason], freedom and the infinite [are] on one side, and the understanding, truth and the finite on the other.⁵²

So truth and knowledge are finite; and for Ricoeur finitude implies being limited by perspective. Yet it should also be remembered that Ricoeur accounts for infinitude by giving an eschatological role to feeling. This is not explicit in either Kant or Moore. Yet Ricoeur proposes,

... The *infinitude of feeling* emerges clearly from the fact that no organized, historical community, no economy, no politic, no human culture can exhaust its demand for a totalization of persons, of a Kingdom⁵³ in which, nevertheless, we now are and 'in which, alone, we are capable of continuing our existence'.⁵⁴

... Feeling anticipates more than it gives, and so all 'spiritual' feelings are feeling of a transition toward ...⁵⁵

Ricoeur's reference to a kingdom in the above remains Kantian. Yet he is more explicit than Kant about the spiritual role of feelings. Nevertheless, Ricoeur offers the philosophical tools to avoid a corrupt aspiration: he maintains the regulative role for the ideals of infinitude and employs hermeneutics to interpret man's passions. This is as far as Ricoeur goes. He remains unaware of the maleness of his perspective on human disproportion. For this next step I have already turned to Irigaray. As seen in section 3, Irigaray's mime endeavours to elucidate and disrupt the male form of a corrupt aspiration.

At this point it is my turn to make a further proposal. Both the male and the female philosopher can and should seek to cease aspiring to situate the infinite whole within himself (or herself). This would seek to do more than Moore with his crucial distinction below:

Whereas the *incorrupt* craving for *infinitude* would be essentially *expansive*, leading the subject to try to situate itself within the infinite whole, the aspiration to be infinite is essentially inert, leading the subject to try to situate the infinite whole within itself. And, again by its own lights, it (the aspiration to be infinite) is bad. There is an irrationality in wanting to be that which makes anything rational. It is a revolt, and an offence, against that which truly makes anything rational: rationality itself.⁵⁶

Bearing in mind Moore's description of the incorrupt craving for infinitude as essentially expansive recall the words of Irigaray's female subject who describes the in-finite: 'A fluid expansion, never enclosed once and for all. Not even by projects or projections'. Violence – not justice – is a result of conceiving infinity as a closed totality: 'a solid, empty membrane which would gather and contain all possibilities'.⁵⁷ Irigaray's description represents male morphology – i.e. a male body or sexual organ alone – as violence itself. So the resistance to eliminate evil or to stop the aspiration to be infinite creates an unresolvable problem for the male philosopher who fails to see sexual difference in a relation to a differently gendered subject. Why do philosophers fail to seek the means to eliminate evil or to cease trying to be infinite? Irigaray suggests that an answer rests in a specifically male failure to recognise their gender as well as that of another, female subject.

However, to articulate the possibility of two incorrupt relations of gender to the infinite, I have built on Moore's conception of a craving for infinitude. What is craved, or yearned, for? A list of possible answers would include craving for the infinity of power, of knowledge, of beauty, of goodness, of truth, of meaning, of security, of justice. But Moore's Kantian claim that we crave the instantiation of certain regulative ideas in seeking to think what is true, to want what is right and to do what is required is incomplete. What about seeking to give each another what is due (to her)? Justice is the desire to live well – and we might add – with and for others in social institutions.⁵⁸ Justice has also been called 'the first virtue of social institutions'.⁵⁹

A common danger has appeared in masculinist, feminist and more radical attempts to (better) orientate our finiteness – including race, class, gender and sexual differences – by reference to infinitude. To confront this danger of aspiring to be/become all there is I do not advocate the status quo in philosophy of religion. Instead I propose an additional ideal – of justice – which would be regulative for the relations to infinitude of every man and woman. This means every person who acknowledges their differences according to the interrelated factors of gender, racial, class, religious, ethnic and sexual perspectives.

6. A fourth regulative ideal: Justice

Generally justice as a regulative ideal is absent from masculinist philosophy of religion. *Justice* would demand recognising *a necessary relation to infinitude for each differently gendered point of view*. If philosophers of religion could admit that all of our relations, whether spiritual, sexual, ethical or political, involve power, then they would also have to face issues of justice. An influential philosopher of discourse on sex/gender, Michel Foucault

proclaims that ‘power is everywhere’.⁶⁰ Power does not have one source; nor is it one structure of domination. Instead power ‘comes from everywhere’; and so every relation is recognised as having political significance. In Foucault’s terms, relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relations, including sexual and spiritual relationships; they are immanent and infinite! So they have a directly productive role to play in everything, including our religious thinking, feeling, acting and giving.⁶¹

In exposing the male specificity in human relations to the divine, Irigaray stops short of the further question of justice concerning sexual difference. What about the men and women who only know a male or female relation to infinity, or unity, second-hand as a sense of powerful security which belongs to someone superior to them? This is someone whose security is at their expense as the other. Not everyone can recall a secure image of the mother’s womb or imagine the infinitude of a loving, all-powerful and all-protective divine. Women and marginalized others, especially those others who have suffered the total denigration of self in slavery, are used as the pretext for a yearning which eclipses them as other. The flip side of the strong erect image of powerful, privileged European [white] men is violence. Violence is the result of excluding from this picture the one who contains⁶² *and* also the ones who are alienated from the domain in which Irigaray finds sexual difference preserved! Non-dominant people can be alienated from the white male sense of, on the one hand, the place of the maternal (womb) and, on the other hand, the place within a perfectly created universe. Recognition of this alienation can move us to a radical feminist conception of gender and infinitude. A radical feminist conception informs my own proposal to place *yearning* at the heart of feminist philosophy of religion. It attempts to capture what Ricoeur calls the infinitude of spiritual feelings (or what I have called the eschatological and symbolic order) beyond the idolatrous and exclusive desire for the absolute.

Yearning constitutes a place where differences can meet in the desire to live well for and with others. As the African-American feminist bell hooks explains,

under the heading *Yearning* . . . I looked for *common* passions, sentiments shared by folks across race, class, gender, and sexual practice, I was struck by the depths of longing in many of us. . . .

The shared space and feeling of ‘yearning’ opens up the possibility of common ground where all these differences might meet and engage one another.⁶³

Justice is the implicit goal of gaining greater knowledge from those others in the cultures that shape us. Again hooks explains this in terms of yearning,

... Much ... engagement with culture emerges from the yearning to do intellectual work that connects with habits of being, forms of artistic expression, and aesthetics that inform the daily life of writers and scholars well as a mass population. On the terrain of culture, one can participate in critical dialogue with the uneducated poor, the black underclass who are thinking about aesthetics. One can talk about what we are seeing, thinking, or listening to; a space is there for critical dialogue.⁶⁴

hooks's writings serve as a critical supplement to my conception of yearning which brings together a Kantian account of seeking the unconditioned and Irigaray's account of sexual difference. hooks's understanding of culture and the implicit search for justice can shape a gender-sensitive approach to the infinite for philosophy of religion.⁶⁵ Her understanding of race works to transform sexual difference.

Irigaray mimes a nostalgic longing for infinity which exists before birth and beyond the sexual act as equally corruptible. She describes the male form of this longing as characterized by its place(s) of fulfilment. The (white) male awareness lacks an interval between subjects. Irigaray's mime of patriarchy shows women do not have a specific place of their own (*genre*). In the male account, women are both the place (like a womb) for men and the pretext for their need of God (protective like the mother) conceived as powerful and transcendent. What about a divine for women? Irigaray finds it a diabolical thing that women do not have a god to secure a *genre* of their own.⁶⁶ Instead women constitute the unacknowledged condition of the male God. Yet what would a 'god' of women's own look like?

Ellen Armour tackles the danger in having Irigaray's 'Divine Women' project an essentialist account of the white woman subject. In her words,

Uncovering a differing and deferring subject at the base of the race/gender divide when explored from both sides confirms, chastens and supplements whitefeminism's move toward woman as multiple. ... It chastens whitefeminism's confidence that approaching multiplicity through sexual difference is sufficient to disrupt race's double erasure. It supplements whitefeminism's turn toward multiplicity in doubling sexual difference and deferral with racial difference and deferral. ... building on this (non)foundational foundation requires first going backward into history rather than forward into the future.⁶⁷

Exhausting white solipsism's invisibility theology moves [Armour] toward realizing feminism's (im)possible telos of providing a platform for resistance to the multiple oppressions women face.⁶⁸

The woman subject who constantly differs in relation to other women subjects (according to race, gender, etc) is also constantly deferred in time because she

is never completely (liberated as) herself. Armour establishes women's difference(s) and deferral in relation to African American women authors and so provides an important argument to support my turn to the writings of hooks. African American feminist writings confirm that the western woman, like man, is a site bounded by race. Armour demonstrates the role of black writing in contesting the white boundaries of race and the content of woman that they protect.⁶⁹ With Armour's subversions of the race/gender divide with the differing and deferring subject in mind I have rethought the role of aesthetic representations by African-American and other feminists in communicating ineffable knowledge.

The powerful synthetic representations of yearning in works of art (e.g. literature, music, sculpture, dance) attempt to grasp the political nature of our relations to the infinite. Yearning shapes and is shaped by the power for change which can be channelled into rational (including moral) and aesthetic forms.⁷⁰ Irigaray's image of the place where bodies embrace gives an appropriate expression of the divine in the sense of a divine coupling.⁷¹ This Irigarayan image also offers a point of contact with hooks's yearning to work with words. hooks's yearning moves her towards the infinite 'in a dance with the divine'.⁷² hooks's poetic expressions mediate the meaning of the divine as a radical political gesture of solidarity. If women and men are to achieve change, community and, according to hooks, 'the sacredness of words,' then the truth of what has been, according to Irigaray, 'the overbearing power' of God must be told.⁷³ hooks and Irigaray each seek a space for infinite movement; Irigaray seeks the divine as infinite potential between two subjects; and together their pair, black-white women, creates a crucial tension. We can imagine the seductive atmosphere of pleasure and danger which surrounds an African-American realisation of 'a writing life'. hooks plays with language in order to create 'a redemptive practice' in writing (her) life; she aims to redeem the past denigration of self at the heart of the history of slavery.⁷⁴ Ultimately she gives memory a future in redeeming our raced/gendered relations to infinitude.

Compatible with Irigaray, hooks arouses her readers to touch the pleasures of the body, mind and soul. Yet unlike Irigaray, hooks exposes the wounds of social oppression due to racism and white supremacy. She performs words in writing, in order to create a passionate place of personal, social and racial transformation. Her act of writing is a gesture of political solidarity in a standpoint that is always restless. hooks's claims, 'As a writer, I seek that moment of ecstasy when I am dancing with words, moving in a circle of love so complete that like the mystical dervish who dances to be one with the Divine, I move toward the infinite'.⁷⁵ The challenge is for this movement to

maintain the regulative ideals necessary for the gendered transformations of philosophy of religion.

Conclusion

It is important to keep in mind Moore's claim that knowing how to be finite is a paradigm of ineffable knowledge which is equivalent to (claiming that) we are shown how to be finite. Feminist philosophers such as Irigaray and hooks contribute examples of ineffable knowledge, as well as new practices for communicating knowledge in philosophy of religion. New strategies for exploiting words in the infinite play of language, in art or dance, reflect endeavours to express ineffable knowledge. Normally these are linguistic practices, but as Moore admits music and other aesthetic practices are different manners of showing.⁷⁶ Ineffable knowledge is shown in Irigarayan images of female subjectivity, of song and dance, in miming the texts of mystics and in other creatively subversive ways.

My concluding argument goes beyond Moore. If infinitude confronts us with ineffable knowledge then philosophers of religion can only try to communicate this knowledge. In Irigaray's terms we know that we are infinite. We are shown this in the infinite play of language about the divine. We are also shown a craving for infinitude. So our knowledge of regulative ideals of infinitude is ineffable; it answers to nothing. Yet we are shown that certain ideals motivate us and politicize the nature of our relationships. There are dangers for men and for women in these claims about infinitude. On the one hand, the danger is evident in the male aspiration to be infinite. On the other hand, there would seem to be a similar danger in the female aspiration to become divine. With an aspiration to be *all there is* a subject eclipses others. A critical embrace of bodies would reform this aspiration and our thinking. It should also challenge our physical, sensual and material relations with others.

hooks's conception of yearning is compatible with the political intent of contemporary feminist philosophy to develop social epistemology. The core concern in feminist social epistemology is to see reality from alternative points of view, i.e. to refuse to allow inertia to blind us from the reality of other lives and so a larger social world than one's own. Moore and Ricoeur each account for the inevitable finitude of a person's point of view. Moreover, the tradition going back to Augustine exhibits two sorts of responses to this finitude. Whether the concern is ethical, epistemological or metaphysical, the possible political responses run the fine line between corrupt or incorrupt relations to the infinite. Philosophers of religion can attempt to express an incorrupt form of craving infinitude, while resisting a corrupt aspiration to be infinite.

The novelty of this philosophical topic rests in the necessary tension between the enabling and corrupting power immanent in material, personal and social relations. Relations of power are infinite. The feminist philosopher who struggles for renewal of the field of philosophy of religion performs her writing again and again, in order to move beyond any nostalgia for a secure place. The goal is, then, to express the divine anew in a shared space and feeling of yearning that can transform all gendered forms of a corrupt aspiration into a mobile dance toward the infinite.

Notes

1. The criticism could be explored further in terms of a problem of the *imago dei* as man's own self-image. Here and generally in this essay 'man' refers to the male subject.
2. Later in this essay I criticize A. W. Moore for seeking merely 'to come to terms with a deep, pervasive and corrupt aspiration': like evil, he insists it cannot be eliminated. However, this stops short of seeking to eradicate a corrupt (male) aspiration which perpetuates injustice.
3. See Luce Irigaray, *Elemental Passions*, trans. Joanne Collie and Judith Still (London: The Athlone Press, 1992), p. 89. A. W. Moore, *Points of View* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 275.
4. Grace Jantzen, *Becoming Divine* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998). Jantzen argues that feminists should seek 'to become divine' as 'natals'. Yet she also claims that 'the obligation to become divine is not an obligation to become limitless' (*Ibid.*, p. 154). In one sense, Jantzen is closer to the ancient Greek table of opposites than she realizes: the Pythagoreans associated the infinite with the other as a form of suspicion, as chaotic and limitless (see endnote 50 below). However, a corrupt aspiration to become infinite would need to be reigned in by something more than Jantzen's reference to limit supplies (e.g. infinite time can exist along with finite space). The crucial difference between Jantzen's conception of the male drive to be infinite and the Pythagorean conception of male-female is the equation of female with the disorderly, bad infinite. Moreover, as seen in Irigaray, the infinite (as female) can exist (as good) within certain limits.
5. For a classic statement of these dichotomies, Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'Female' in Western Philosophy* (London: Methuen, 1984). Cf. Pamela Sue Anderson, *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion: The Rationality and Myths of Religious Belief* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 5–10.
6. Terri Elliot, 'Making Strange What Had Appeared Familiar', *The Monist: An International Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry* (General Topic – Feminist Epistemology: For and Against) 77/4 (October 1994): 424–433. Also see Pamela Sue Anderson, 'A Case for a Feminist Philosophy of Religion: Transforming Philosophy's Imagery and Myths', *Ars Disputandi: The Online Journal in Philosophy of Religion* (September 2000).
7. Moore, *Points of View*, pp. 274–279, also 105–106, 210–215, 250–251.
8. Pamela Sue Anderson, 'Yearning: A Spiritual Passion for Postmodern Times', St Mary's College 150th Anniversary Lecture (unpublished), Strawberry Hill, University of Surrey, 17 June 2000.
9. Moore, *Points of View*, p. 276.
10. Jantzen, *Becoming Divine*, pp. 154–155.

11. Ibid., pp. 265–268.
12. Moore, *Points of View*, p. 276.
13. Sabina Lovibond, 'An Ancient Theory of Gender: Plato and the Pythagorean Table', in Leonie J. Archer, Susain Fischer and Maria Wyke, eds., *Women in Ancient Societies* (London: Macmillan, 1994), pp. 88–101; and 'Feminism in Ancient Philosophy: The Feminist Stake in Greek Rationalism', in Miranda Fricker and Jennifer Hornsby, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Feminism in Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 10–28.
14. Moore, *Points of View*, p. 279; Irigaray, *Elemental Passions*, and 'Divine Women', in *Sexes and Genealogies*, trans. Gillian C. Gill (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 55–72.
15. Irigaray, 'Divine Women', pp. 61–2.
16. Ibid., pp. 68–9.
17. Without answering this, Jantzen appropriates Irigary's statement to argue against Feuerbach's reliance upon a binary opposition between theism/atheism in his account of projection; see Jantzen, *Becoming Divine*, pp. 88–92.
18. Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, trans. George Eliot (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1989), especially pp. 12–19 and 270–278.
19. Jantzen rejects Feuerbach's argument as masculine oppositional thinking (i.e. privileging belief and truth over desire and adequacy) in order to reconceive 'projection'. Yet she could give up this term completely for a regulative ideal which would be less problematic; a regulative ideal is not the same thing as a projection, despite her claim that it is (Jantzen, *Becoming Divine*, p. 92).
20. Moore, *Points of View*, pp. 275–276.
21. Paul Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, revised translation by Charles A. Kelbley, with an Introduction by Walter J. Lowe (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986).
22. Moore claims that there are three foundational principles: We are finite. We are conscious of ourselves as finite. We aspire to be infinite. See Moore, *Points of View*, pp. 253–263.
23. Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, pp. 25–26.
24. Ibid., p. 131.
25. For more on the 'disembodied' nature of philosophical thinking, see Anderson, *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 94n10, 98–9, 127–131.
26. Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, p. 22.
27. Ibid., p. 23.
28. Luce Irigary, 'Place, Interval: A Reading of Aristotle's *Physics IV*', *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, trans. Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (London: The Athlone Press, 1993), p. 35.
29. Irigaray, 'Love of Same, Love of Other', *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, p. 111.
30. Irigaray, *Elemental Passions*, p. 89.
31. Ibid., p. 90.
32. For an original reading of Irigaray and dancing, see Eluned Summers-Bremmer, 'Reading Irigaray, Dancing', *Hypatia* 15/1 (Winter 2000): 90–124.
33. I have interpreted this interval in terms of a trace, Pamela Sue Anderson, 'Tracing Sexual Difference: Beyond the *Aporia* of the Other', *Sophia: Journal of Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Religion and Ethics* 38/1 (March–April 1999): 54–73.
34. Moore, *The Infinite*, pp. 186–200; *Points of View*, pp. xii–xiii, 156–157, 195–213 and 277–278. I recall Moore's references to showing in the Conclusion below.
35. Moore, *Points of View*, pp. 156–157.
36. Ibid., p. 277.

37. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, edited by Mary Gregor. Introduction by Andrews Reath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 90.
38. Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, p. 20; Cf. Moore, *Points of View*, pp. 6–9, 256, 282.
39. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Prses, 1989), pp. 138–139.
40. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 139–141.
41. Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1961), p. 34.
42. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 139–140.
43. Moore, *Points of View*, p. 276.
44. Irigaray, 'Divine Women', pp. 61–63.
45. Irigaray, 'Place, Interval', pp. 34–55.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50.
47. Aristotle who is Irigaray's subtext here maintains that space is finite (e.g. body is bounded by a surface) and time is potentially infinite (i.e. never wholly present and infinite by addition).
48. Irigaray, 'Divine Women', p. 61.
49. Irigaray, *Elemental Passions*, pp. 28 and 29.
50. Jantzen's view of the infinite as masculine in the history of western philosophy is ironic. Some of the earliest western philosophers, the Pythagoreans and Plato conceived the infinite as the disorderly, chaotic female. Jantzen is inconsistent when she refers to the table of opposites attributed to Pythagoras which lists female on the same side as the unlimited without seeing that this aligns the female, not the male, with the infinite. Jantzen, *Becoming Divine*, pp. 154–155 and 266–268; cf. Moore, *The Infinite*, pp. 19–29, 202. Jantzen also skirts the critical role played by the infinite in the pantheism of earlier western philosophers such as Spinoza. The essence of Spinoza's God was to exist and to be all that exists. The (male) fear of the infinite in pantheism seems compatible with the ancient Greek male philosopher's suspicion of the infinite. Jantzen, *Becoming Divine*, pp. 267, 272–273.
51. Moore, *Points of View*, p. 276.
52. Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, p. 36.
53. This infinitude of feeling may be understood in relation to what Kant recognises as a demand for a higher order of things, in the regulative idea of the kingdom of ends (i.e. of persons), in the *Critique of Practical Reasons*, pp. 63–75. However, the only moral feeling described by Kant himself is respect for the law or for persons as ends in themselves.
54. Further on in the same text Ricoeur discusses an important passage from Kant's second *Critique*: 'We may remember that excellent text where Kant – the philosopher who began by rejecting happiness as a principle of morality – rediscovers, at the root of every dialectic and every transcendental illusion, 'a view [*Aussicht*] into a higher immutable order of things in which we already are, and in which we may, by definite precepts, continue our existence in accordance with the supreme decree of reason' [cf. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 90]. This text makes it very clear what the reciprocal genesis of reason and feeling can signify ... In Kantian terms, reason is my 'decree' and my 'destination' – my *Bestimmung* – the intention according to which I can 'continue my existnece'. In short, feeling reveals the identity of existence and reason: it personalizes reason' (Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, p. 102).
55. *Ibid.*, p. 104. Italics added.
56. Moore, *Points of View*, pp. 275–276.
57. Irigaray, *Elemental Passions*, p. 89.

58. Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 227–39.
59. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 3.
60. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1, An Introduction, trans. Robert Hurley (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 93.
61. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1, p. 94.
62. Irigaray describes this exclusion provocatively as escaping the touch of the female body or skin; this is also suggested by her contrast ‘instead of moving across the actual container . . . through porosity’, see Irigaray, ‘Place Interval’, pp. 49–50.
63. bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics* (Boston: South Bend Press, 1990), pp. 12–13. Note ‘bell hooks’ is a penname written in only lower case letters.
64. hooks, *Yearning*, p. 31.
65. Also see Patricia Hill Collins, *Fighting Words: Black Women and the Search for Justice* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).
66. Irigaray, ‘Divine Women’, p. 64.
67. Ellen, Armour, *Deconstruction, Feminist Theology and the Problem of Difference: Subverting the Race/Gender Divide* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 167.
68. Armour, *Deconstruction, Feminist Theology and the Problem of Difference*, p. 168.
69. *Ibid.*, pp. 168–9.
70. I have explored the aesthetically and rationally shaped transformation of the world, especially of suffering and loss of love evident in Kathe Kollwitz’s sculpture, ‘The lovers’; see Anderson ‘Yearning: A Spiritual Passion for Postmodern Times’. Kollwitz’s aesthetic representation evokes the dual, active and passive aspects of, what I have called, a rational passion. Reason actively shapes a passion into a form of yearning. Cf. Anderson, *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 22–23, 241 and 247.
71. For elucidation of this image, see Kathleen O’Grady, ‘Where Bodies Embrace: Pamela Sue Anderson’s *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion*’, Review Essay, *Feminist Theology*, issue 20 (1999): 99–100.
72. hooks, *Remembered Rapture: The Writer at Work* (London: The Women’s Press, 1999), p. 38.
73. Irigaray, *Elemental Passions*, p. 92.
74. hooks, *Remembered Rapture*, pp. 7, 11–12.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
76. On music as an example of expressing the inexpressible, see Moore, *Points of View*, pp. 201–203.

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