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## RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, JUSTIFICATION, AND HISTORY

Recently, many philosophers of religion have sought to defend the rationality of religious belief by shifting the burden of proof onto the critic of religious belief. Some have appealed to extraordinary religious experience in making their case. *Religious Experience, Justification, and History* restores neglected explanatory and historical considerations to the debate. Through a study of William James, it contests the accounts of religious experience offered in recent works. Through reflection on the history of philosophy, it also unravels the philosophical use of the term “justification.” Matthew Bagger argues that the commitment to supernatural explanations implicit in the religious experiences employed to justify religious belief contradicts the modern ideal of human flourishing. For contrast, and to demonstrate the indispensability of history, he includes a study of Teresa of Avila’s mystical theology. The controversial supernatural explanations implicit in extraordinary religious experience place the burden of proof on the believer.

MATTHEW C. BAGGER is Assistant Professor in the Religion Department at Columbia University, and he was awarded his Ph.D. from the same university. Matthew Bagger has published articles in *Religious Studies* and the *Journal of the History of Philosophy*.

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*To Amy*

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## *Abbreviations*

- IC* Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle*, E. Allison Peers, tr. and ed. (New York: Image Books, 1961).
- L* Teresa of Avila, *The Life of Teresa of Jesus*, E. Allison Peers, tr. and ed. (New York: Image Books, 1960).
- PG* William Alston, *Perceiving God* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).
- PP* William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, 2 vols. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1950).
- WP* Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*, E. Allison Peers, tr. and ed. (New York: Image Books, 1964).