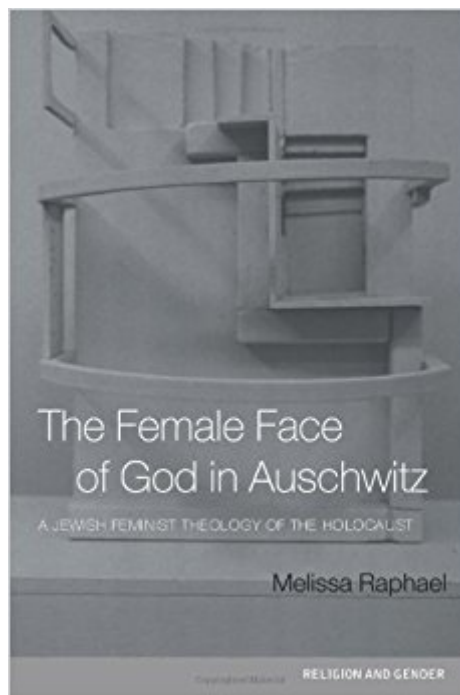


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# The Female Face Of God In Auschwitz: A Jewish Feminist Theology Of The Holocaust (Religion And Gender)



## Synopsis

The dominant theme of post-Holocaust Jewish theology has been that of the temporary hiddenness of God, interpreted either as a divine mystery or, more commonly, as God's deferral to human freedom. But traditional Judaic obligations of female presence, together with the traditional image of the Shekhinah as a figure of God's 'femaleness' accompanying Israel into exile, seem to contradict such theologies of absence. *The Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, the first full-length feminist theology of the Holocaust, argues that the patriarchal bias of post-Holocaust theology becomes fully apparent only when women's experiences and priorities are brought into historical light. Building upon the published testimonies of four women imprisoned at Auschwitz-Birkenau - Olga Lengyel, Lucie Adelsberger, Bertha Ferderber-Salz and Sara Nomberg-Przytyk - it considers women's distinct experiences of the holy in relation to God's perceived presence and absence in the camps. God's face, says Melissa Raphael, was not hidden in Auschwitz, but intimately revealed in the female face turned towards the other as a refractive image of God, especially in the moral protest made visible through material and spiritual care for the assaulted other.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Few books challenge the assumptions of whole fields of study. Even fewer do this while offering coherent and attractive alternative. Melissa Raphael has accomplished both of these tasks in *"The Female Face of God in Auschwitz."*-Carol P. Christ, Ariadne Institute for the Study of Myth and Ritual, *"Journal of the American Academy of Religion"*, 05/2005

Melissa Raphael is Principal Lecturer in Theology and Religious Studies at The University of Gloucestershire. She is the author of *Introducing Theology: Discourse on the Goddess* (1999), *Rudolf Otto and the Concept of Holiness* (1997) and *Theology and Embodiment* (1996).

I concur with the above reviewer: without question this is one of the most impactful books I've ever read. As a Catholic theologian, I am awed at the humility and grace with which Raphael unearths hidden narratives of the death camps and reflects on them in light of the broader tradition of post-Holocaust theology, demonstrating profound humane and theological sensitivity. I've woven her work into my teaching and writing, and cannot shake the picture of God that emerges here. An extraordinary labor of empathic scholarship.

the best and most poignant book I have ever read. Every Jew should own it, and everyone else too

I am a feminist who believes in equal rights and went to medical school in the 70's. She is a rabid FEMINIST, who expropriated the ultimate crime against humanity to advance her private agenda of radical FEMINISM. I read enough to make me sick, which wasn't much.

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