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Relating God and the Self

Dynamic Interplay

Jan-Olav Henriksen, Norwegian School of Theology, Norway

'Henriksen's text is marked with an existential nerve. Drawing on relevant theories from philosophy of religion, systematic theology and psychology of religion he opens up a fascinating, creative space for discussions about the development of the Human Self in its relation to God. His way of analysis and argument is theoretically well informed, sharply critical and constructive. He broadens the interpretation of religion in significant ways by giving serious attention to the meaning and function of emotions and psychodynamic processes in religious experience. I find this especially fruitful. It enriches the discussion about how religion and religious symbols actually "work" in the process of developing a meaningful Self.'
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By discussing critically different ways the symbol of God functions in the formation of the self, this book develops a nuanced and original approach to the interplay between God and the self. It suggests that play is actually an important metaphor in order to develop a dynamic understanding of religion's way of relating God and the Self. This approach challenges understandings of religion focussing only its cognitive claims, as well as those who emphasize doctrinal orthodoxy as the most important element in religion.

Contents: Introduction: God and the self; From soul to self; On what psychology may say about 'God' and the self; The theologies of relational pathologies and their alternatives; Self, God and religion: the hermeneutical interplay; literature; Index.

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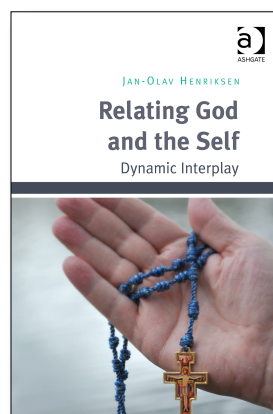
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