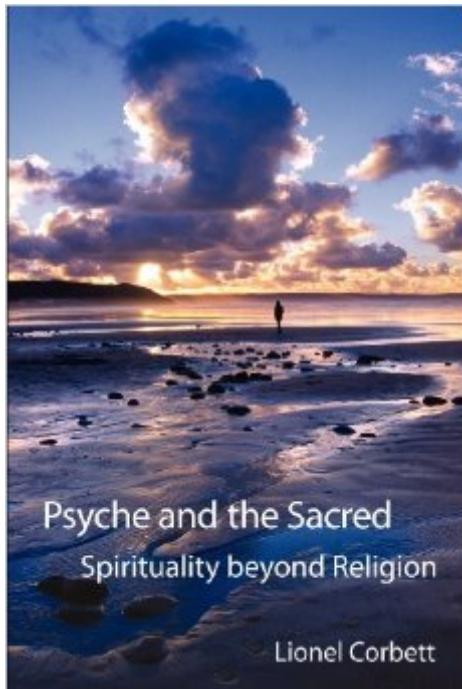


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Psyche And The Sacred: Spirituality Beyond Religion



Synopsis

Lionel Corbett describes an approach to spirituality based on personal experience of the sacred rather than on pre-existing religious dogmas. Using many examples from Corbett's psychotherapy practice and other personal accounts, the book describes various portals through which the sacred may appear: in dreams, visions, the natural world, through the body, in relationships, in our psychopathology, and in our creative work. Using the language and insights of depth psychology, he describes the intimate relationship between spiritual experience and the psychology of the individual, revealing the seamless continuity and intermingling of the personal and transpersonal dimensions of the psyche. Corbett also discusses the problems of evil and suffering from a psychological rather than theological perspective, and suggests some of the reasons that traditional religious institutions fail to address adequately these problems. Based largely on Jung's writing on religion, but also drawing from contemporary psychoanalytic theory, Corbett describes an approach to spirituality that is gradually emerging alongside the western monotheistic tradition. For those seeking alternative forms of spirituality beyond the Judeo-Christian tradition, this volume will be a useful guide on the journey.

Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Spring Journal, Inc (April 15, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1882670345

ISBN-13: 978-1882670345

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #293,716 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #117 in Books > Medical Books > Psychology > Movements > Jungian #194 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Psychology #2804 in Books > Medical Books > Psychology > General

Customer Reviews

Preface: This review is written by a theologian. I realize there are atheist and secular interpretations of this book. My goal is to point out some of Corbett's insights about the Spirit and the psyche which can be of much use to theologians - especially in terms of understanding what the Holy Spirit really is. A more secular interpretation of this book would likely emphasize the way in which religious ideas

can stem naturally from the human psyche - thus casting doubt on the supernatural origins of religious energy. Both interpretations are valid. But the theologian would likely emphasize the similarity between the Holy Spirit and Corbett's large "Self", the supposed source of this natural human religious energy. I cannot emphasize enough how valuable Corbett's insights are for the theologian, even if his intent was to describe what he viewed as a secular or natural psychological phenomenon. I choose to use Corbett's insights to shed light on the inner workings of the Holy Spirit, while bearing in mind that this is a subjective interpretation of this book which goes off-label in terms of the author's intent. This work is a worthy follow up to Lionel Corbett's classic, "The Religious Function of the Psyche." Like his previous work, this book deals with the autonomous psyche or the large Self. Some refer to this phenomenon as the collective unconscious, but Corbett claims that this term has fallen out of use in favor of the autonomous Self. This thing - this Self - is precisely what theologians call the Holy Spirit. We have been trying to figure out what the Spirit is this whole time, and ironically it is the depth psychologists who finally figured out what the Holy Spirit really is.

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