

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Religion and Monotheism

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FREUD'S MONOTHEISM

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Freud's Monotheism

Elements in Religion and Monotheism

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Abstract: This Element consists of three interrelated sections. "What Freud Said" summarizes the salient details of Freud's psychology of religion: his views on the origins and development of Western religions, on contemporary Western monotheisms, on the "unpsychological" proceedings of the religio-cultural superego, his qualified endorsement of religious forms of psychotherapy and his cursory analysis of Eastern religions. "What Freud Got Wrong" surveys the history of the multidisciplinary critiques (anthropological, sociological and, later, psychoanalytic, theological/philosophical) leveled at Freud's interpretative strategies. "Toward a Revised Psychoanalytic Theory of Religion" suggests the best way forward is to employ a psychoanalytic theory of religion that, taking its cue from the history of its critique, houses reflective, inclusive and dialogical elements. It presents illustrations taken from a variety of contemporary religio-cultural phenomena (Marvel movies, issues concerning religion, sexuality and gender, the megachurch and QAnon) as portable lessons for such applications.

Keywords: Freud, psychoanalysis, religion, monotheism, method

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