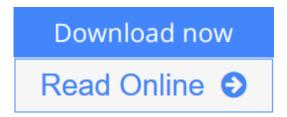


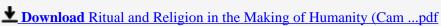
Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity (Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology)

By Roy A. Rappaport



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This book argues that religion can and must be reconciled with science. Combining adaptive and cognitive approaches, it is a comprehensive analysis of religion's evolutionary significance, and its inextricable interdependence with language. It is also a detailed study of religion's main component, ritual, which constructs the conceptions that we take to be religious and therefore central in the making of humanity's adaptation. The text amounts to a manual for effective ritual, illustrated by examples drawn from a range of disciplines.



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Review

"Roy Rappaport's book is an admirable blend of rich information and analytical power. It is a committed and challenging reflection on the importance of religion and the constructive power of rituals for a postmodern world, seen in the light of its pre-modern and modern history. A courageous work in a period of overspecialized scholarship, I have never read such a comprehensive and penetrating treatise on rituals." Hans Kung, Universitat Tubingen

"Once in a great while there appears a book that alters the dimensions of the intellectual field to which it speaks. This is such a book. In it, the author marshalls insights drawn from ethnography and ecology, the cybernetics of communication, comparative religion and semiotics to establish the centrality of ritual for what it means to be human. In clear and elegant prose, Roy Rappaport calls into question many of the ways we think about the world. The result is an intellectual adventure of the first magnitude." Eric Wolf

"This...is one of the most comprehensive anthropological studies of religion ever published. But what truly sets it apart from other studies is that it is not only 'about' religion but is also a profoundly religious book." Choice

"A profound and brilliant work that combines sustained deductive reasoning with a global, holistic vision. It explores the nature of language, truth, and experience, its consequences for moral and social order, and its significance for understanding the place of humanity in nature. As a fine grained, incisive, yet epistemologically complex and generous analysis, this is quite simply the most original and important social scientific investigation into the foundations of religion since Durkheim." Michael Lambek, University of Toronto

"Ritual and the Making of [Humanity] is truly a magisterial work, breathtaking in scope, breadth, depth, and theoretical power... Rappaport's is an urgent, committed work." Sarah Caldwell, Religious Studies Review

"...essential...in the developing conversation about how human beings can deeply know their involvement in the biosphere and in each other and how they can act together to preserve it." Whole Earth

"The text offers a cross-cultural manual of effective ritual, illustrated by examples drawn from anthropology, history, philosophy, and comparative religion." Journal of Psychology & Christianity

"...an exciting book emerging at the very end of the life of an eminent social scientist and anthropologist of religion. No review can do justice to the riches and erudition of this book." Edith Turner, Journal of Anthropological Research

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""Ritual and the Making of [Humanity], Roy Rappaport convincingly argues that religion and ritual have played a central role in the development of the human species...this book's greatest strength is its interdisciplinary breadth and ambitious design, which should give it wide appeal and influence among

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