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God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages (Paperback)

By Barbara Newman

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*****. Contrary to popular belief, the medieval religious imagination did not restrict itself to masculine images of God but envisaged the divine in multiple forms. In fact, the God of medieval Christendom was the Father of only one Son but many daughters—including Lady Philosophy, Lady Love, Dame Nature, and Eternal Wisdom. *God and the Goddesses* is a study in medieval imaginative theology, examining the numerous daughters of God who appear in allegorical poems, theological fictions, and the visions of holy women. We have tended to understand these deities as mere personifications and poetic figures, but that, Barbara Newman contends, is a mistake. These goddesses are neither pagan survivals nor versions of the Great Goddess constructed in archetypal psychology, but distinctive creations of the Christian imagination. As emanations of the Divine, mediators between God and the cosmos, embodied universals, and ravishing objects of identification and desire, medieval goddesses transformed and deepened Christendom's concept of God, introducing religious possibilities beyond the ambit of scholastic theology and bringing them to vibrant imaginative life. Building a bridge between secular...



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