



# Faith, Theology, and Psychoanalysis: The Life and Thought of Harry S. Guntrip (Princeton Theological Monograph Series)

*Trevor M. Dobbs*

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Description: Harry S. Guntrip was best known for his affiliation with two famous psychoanalysts from what is known as the British Independent tradition of psychoanalysis in England: Ronald Fairbairn and Donald Winnicott. This book traces the various influences on the development of his clinical and theological thinking in context of the historical tension between religion and psychoanalysis. The central feature of his development will be demonstrated as a series of polarities, both theoretical and personal, conflicts with which he wrestled theologically, psychologically, and interpersonally on the professional level and in his own personal psychoanalyses. A critical evaluation of the outcome of Guntrip's own personal psychoanalyses with Fairbairn and Winnicott will demonstrate the autobiographical nature of his theoretical analysis of schizoid phenomena: a psychological state of self-preoccupation and way of being in the world. -

-from the Introduction Endorsements: ""Theological existence, wrote Karl Barth, is the personal existence of the 'little theologian' which, he went on to say, is to participate totally in the problematic aspects of the self in community with others. In this exquisite excursion into the formative religious and psychological influences on the life and practice of Harry Guntrip, Trevor Dobbs probes the self's regressive dependence upon the other as an implicit theological existence for which God is the only reality sufficient to sustain the self in its paradoxical quest for relation and autonomy. In reading this, I was reminded that all theology is autobiographical (and therefore psychological) if it is to be an authentic conversation that includes God, self and others. This is a book that will stimulate and extend that conversation."" --Ray S. Anderson Fuller Theological Seminary ""In the century-long dialogue between psychoanalysis and religion, analysts have been accustomed to reflecting on the role of psychoanalytic elements in religious thinking and practice. The opposite consideration--the degree to which religious orientations and concepts might have played a role in the development of psychoanalytic thinking and theorizing--has been largely ignored. Dobbs' careful study brings this latter perspective into dramatic focus. The pivotal figure is Harry Guntrip--himself a complex figure who was both Congregational minister and psychoanalyst. Guntrip himself was profoundly influenced by his religious upbringing and beliefs. Dobbs shows how these influences found their way into his psychoanalytic theorizing. But more interesting and perhaps more important was his involvement with two of the giants of psychoanalysis--Ronald Fairbairn and Donald Winnicott. Dobbs' detailed analysis reveals how the interactions among the members of this psychoanalytic troika were powerfully shaped and guided by their respective religious backgrounds and religious commitments. We learn about Guntrip's Wesleyan Congregationalism, Fairbairn's Calvinistic Presbyterianism, and Winnicott's revivalist Methodism, and their reverberations in their respective approaches to psychoanalysis as well as their impact on Guntrip himself who was analyzed by both men. The implications of these findings reach well beyond their immediate contexts and speak to the broader issues of how religion and religious persuasions can come to play a role in how we as analysts think about analysis. This realization opens a broad new territory for meaningful exploration and analytic understanding for those interested in the dialogue between psychoanalysis and religion, a dialogue that really is, it turns out, a two-way conversation. Professor Dobbs' detailed reconstruction is an important and valuable contribution--one that enriches our understanding of psychoanalysis itself and that interested readers would be well-advised to ponder."" --W. W. Meissner, SJ, MD Boston College

About the Contributor(s): Trevor M. Dobbs, PhD, is Core Faculty in t

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