

This book explores the characteristics of liturgical experience – concentration, single mindedness, intentionality, emotional catharsis and above all, the quality of encounter on which personal environment depends – an exploration which leads into the dramatic shape underlying both liturgy and theatre, that of the rite of passage itself. Examples are given of such rites, understood from the point of view of their theatrical nature and purpose. This involves looking at liturgical structure from a point of view which up to now has largely been neglected by scholars, although its relevance emerges with striking force, as the drama of the incursion of the divine into human lives. Many have spoken and written of the ‘drama of religious ritual’ and been content to leave it at that. Roger Grainger takes a cliché and examines the often misunderstood truth it expresses.