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Sommario/riassunto

Laughing Gods, Weeping Virgins analyses how laughter has been used as a symbol in myths, rituals and festivals of Western religions, and has thus been inscribed in religious discourse. The Mesopotamian Anu, the Israelite Jahweh, the Greek Dionysos, the Gnostic Christ and the late modern Jesus were all laughing gods. Through their laughter, gods prove both their superiority and their proximity to humans. In this comprehensive study, Professor Gilhus examines the relationship between corporeal human laughter and spiritual divine laughter from classical antiquity, to the Christian West

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