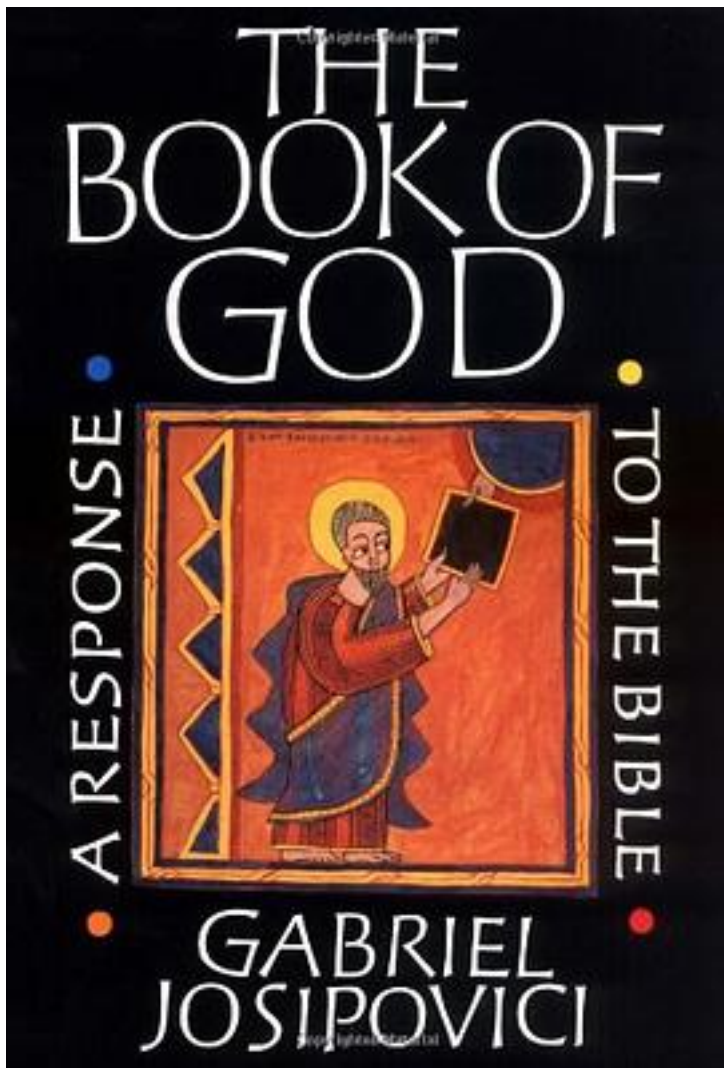


The Book of God



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The Book of God is a penetrating study of the argument from design as it emerged and circulated in the romantic era. This argument holds that the intricacy and complexity of the natural world points to a divine designer and that nature is to be read as God's book. A literary and philosophical study of this idea, The Book of God revisits the familiar equation of romanticism, modernity, and secularization. Colin Jager eschews classic formulations of the thesis that societies secularize as they modernize, arguing instead that secularization is complexly interwoven with modernity rather than simply opposed to it. This revised concept of secularization reveals how arguments about God's designing intentions structure a romantic modernity that is neither progressive nor entirely secular. Tracing this understanding through diverse texts, ranging from philosophy and theology to poetry and fiction, Jager argues that the idea of design functions as both source and interlocutor for many of romanticism's most famous topics. The book concludes with current controversies over intelligent design and evolution, arguing for a historically informed approach to modernity's attempts to divide the religious from the secular. The book's chronological and thematic range will make it of interest to students of religion and of intellectual and cultural history, as well as literary scholars.

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