

The Crisis of the Holy: Challenges and Transformations in World Religions (Interreligious Reflections)

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All religions are experiencing rapid changes due to a confluence of social and economic global forces. The modern world threatens the foundations of the world's religions and the cohesive assurances of their societies. Factors such as the pervasive intrusion of globalizing political and economic developments; polarized and morally equivalent presentations seen in the media; the sense of surety demanded in and promised by a culture dominated by science are but some of the factors that have placed extreme pressure on all religious traditions. This has stimulated unprecedented responses by religious groups, ranging from fundamentalism to the syncretistic search for meaning.

The totality of pressures and responses is pushing religious people into controversial forms. As religion takes on new forms, balances between individual and community are disrupted and reconfigured. Religions often lose the capacity to recall their ultimate purpose or to lead their adherents towards it. This is why we call this complex situation "the crisis of the holy." This crisis is a confluence of threats, challenges, and opportunities for all religions. The present volume explores the contours of pressures, changes, and transformations, and reflects on how all our religions are changing under the common pressures of recent decades. By identifying commonalities across religions as they respond to these pressures, it suggests how religious traditions might cope with these changes and how they might join forces in doing so.



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