Religion and the Political Imagination

The theory of secularisation became a virtually unchallenged truth of twentieth-century social science. First sketched out by Enlightenment philosophers, then transformed into an irreversible global process by nineteenth-century thinkers, the theory was given substance by the precipitate drop in religious practice across Western Europe in the 1960s. However, the re-emergence of acute conflicts at the interface between religion and politics in the later twentieth century confounded such assumptions. It is clear that ideas about secularisation must be rethought. Yet, as this important collection of essays reveals, not everything contained in the idea of secularisation was false. Analyses of developments since 1500 reveal a wide spectrum of historical processes: partial secularisation in some spheres has been accompanied by sacralisation in others. Utilising new approaches derived from history, philosophy, politics and anthropology, Religion and the Political Imagination offers new ways of thinking about the urgency of religious issues in the contemporary world.

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Religion and the Political Imagination

Edited by

Ira Katznelson and Gareth Stedman Jones
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