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Political Theologies

# Political Theologies

Public Religions in a Post-secular World

Abridged Edition

Edited by Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan



In a globalized world, how can one bridge the private lives of individuals and public cultures or ways of life? In what ways does religion, with regard to words, gestures, and things, exert a pressure on structures of governance? *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-secular World* opens an inquiry concerning the engagement of religion with politics.

Religion, in its local and global form, is perceived as a 'problem' to which intellectuals, policy-makers, cultural critics and economists direct their attention with either fascination or thinly veiled irritation. Yet, in the present 'information age', religion in its public manifestations reveals a dual possibility – for better and for worse. A potential source of inspiration and democratic openness, it simultaneously presents a danger of dogmatism and hence of closed societies. The 'post-secular' condition and its corresponding intellectual standing consist in this 'living-on' of religion. While it escapes pre-established contexts and concepts it takes on new forms. In order to track its movements, new methods are needed. A society is 'post-secular' if it reckons with the diminishing but enduring – and hence, perhaps, ever more resistant – existence of the religious.

The seventeen papers in this volume examine interrelationships between the political, economic and cultural characteristics of the 'age of globalization' on the one hand and the vision of society and structures of governance developed over millennia by religious traditions on the other. It examines if contemporary political theologies have practical relevance in aspects of policies and decision-making by individuals and governments. It explores the possibility that religion might give people a chance to lead better lives in the modern milieu.

The volume will be of great interest to students of religion, politics, sociology and philosophy, as well as the interested general reader.

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