

THE LIQUIDATION OF THE CHURCH

Kees de Groot

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The Liquidation of the Church

Kees de Groot

Series: Routledge New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies

Is religion dying out in Western societies? Is personal spirituality taking its place? Both stories are inadequate. Institutional religion is not simply coming to an end in Western societies. Rather, its assets and properties are redistributed: large parts of the church have gone into liquidation. Religion is crossing the boundaries of the parish and appears in other social contexts. In the fields of leisure, health care and contemporary culture, religion has an unexpected currency.

The metaphor of liquidation provides an alternative to approaches that merely perceive the decline of religion or a spiritual revolution. Religion is becoming liquid. By examining a number of case studies in the Netherlands and beyond, including World Youth Day, television, spiritual centers, chaplaincy, mental healthcare, museums and theatre, this book develops a fresh way to look at religion in late modernity and produces new questions for theological and sociological debate. It is both an exercise in sociology and an exercise in practical theology conceived as the engaged study of religious praxis. As such, the aim is not only to get a better understanding of what is going on, but also to critique one-sided views and to provide alternative perspectives for those who are active in the religious field or its surroundings.

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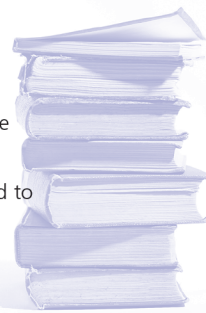
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