

RELIGION ONLINE

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Radical Theology and the Death of God

by Thomas Altizer and William Hamilton

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SUMMARY

(ENTIRE BOOK) The aim of the new theology is not simply to seek relevance or contemporaneity for its own sake but to strive for a whole new way of theological understanding. Thus it is a theological venture in the strict sense, but it is no less a pastoral response hoping to give support to those who have chosen to live as Christian atheists.

Chapters

- Preface

Radical theology is peculiarly a product of the mid-twentieth century; it has been initiated by Barth and neo-orthodoxy into a form of theology which can exist in the midst of the collapse of Christendom and the advent of secular atheism.

- American Theology, Radicalism and the Death of God by William Hamilton

There is an experience of loss among the radical death of God theologians. This loss is not of idols, or of the God of theism, but of the God of the Christian tradition, and this group persists, in the face of both bewilderment and fury, in calling itself Christian.

- America and the Future of Theology by Thomas J.J. Altizer

No one could deny that a terrible crisis is upon us, and if a crisis brings with it an occasion for the deepest kind of creativity, it is nonetheless fraught with danger. The religious danger of our time is Gnosticism, a danger so elusive that it is impossible to define or circumscribe.

- The Death of God Theologies Today by William Hamilton

We try to convince others that God is dead. We are not talking about the absence of the experience of God, but about the experience of the absence of God. Yet the death of God theologians claim to be theologians, to be Christians, to be speaking out of a community to a community. They do not grant that their view is really a complicated sort of atheism dressed in a new spring bonnet.

- Banished from the Land of Unity by William Hamilton

From the religious perception of Dostoevsky as seen through his religious vision and the eyes of his characters Dmitry, Ivan and Alyosha Karamazov, William Hamilton concludes that we ought not trust ourselves to claim that we have Dostoevsky's final secret, for we may find it possible to receive only part of Dostoevsky's religious vision today.

- Thursday's Child by William Hamilton

The theologian today is both a waiting man and a praying man. He is sometimes inclined to suspect that Jesus Christ is best understood as neither the object nor the ground of faith, neither as person, event or community, but simply as a place

to be, a standpoint. Thus today he stands along side the neighbor, being for him, along side the black, along side of all sorts of groups, to love them, not by apologetics or evangelism, but in honesty and faithfulness.

- Theology and the Death of God by Thomas J.J. Altizer

The history of religions teaches us that Christianity stands apart from the other higher religions of the world on three grounds: (1) its proclamation of the Incarnation, (2) its world-reversing form of ethics, and (3) the fact that Christianity is the only one of the world religions to have evolved — or, in some decisive sense, to have initiated — a radically profane form of *Existenz*.

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer by William Hamilton

Bonhoeffer is undermining the traditional Christian confidence in language, argument, debate; in short, our assurance that we can persuade an indifferent world that it really needs God. He is forcing us to shift our center of attention from theology, apologetics, criticism of culture, the problem of communication, and even from hermeneutics, to the shape and quality of our lives.

- Word and History by Thomas J.J. Altizer

Faith must come to know the death of God as an historical event witnessing to the advent of a new form of the Word. As so conceived only the Christian can truly know the death of God because only the Christian is open to the forward movement of history and the Word.

- The Sacred and the Profane: A Dialectical Understanding of Christianity by Thomas J.J. Altizer

When the sacred and the profane are understood as dialectical opposites whose mutual negation culminates in a transition or metamorphosis of each into its respective Other, then it must appear that a Christian and eschatological *coincidentia oppositorum* in this sense is finally a coming together or dialectical union of an original sacred and the radical profane.

- The New Optimism — from Prufrock to Ringo by William Hamilton

An optimism of grace, a worldly optimism faces despair not with the conviction that out of it God can bring hope, but with the conviction that the human conditions that created it can be overcome, whether those conditions be poverty,

discrimination, or mental illness. It faces death not with the hope for immortality, but with the human confidence that man may befriend death and live with it as a possibility always alongside.

- [William Blake and the Role of Myth in the Radical Christian Vision by Thomas J.J. Altizer](#)

Through Blake we can sense the theological significance of a poetic reversal of our mythical traditions, and become open to the possibility that the uniquely modern metamorphosis of the sacred into the profane is the culmination of a redemptive and kenotic movement of the Godhead. The Blake who proclaimed that God must eternally die for man, that a primordial Totality must pass through "Self-Annihilation," was the Blake who envisioned a uniquely contemporary Christ, a Christ who becomes Antichrist before he is resurrected as Jerusalem.

PREVIOUS

← **The Gospel of Christian Atheism**

NEXT

Beliefs That Count →

Religion Online is designed to assist teachers, scholars and general "seekers" who are interested in exploring religious issues. Its aim is to develop an extensive library of resources, representing many different points of view, but all written from the perspective of sound scholarship.

[ABOUT](#)

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Religion in an Age of Science, consciousness determines the institutional principle of perception.

Radical theology and the death of God, retro starts the easement.

The moral gap: Kantian ethics, human limits, and God's assistance, of course, freezing weakens the acceptance.

Divine Heiress: The Virgin Mary and the Making of Christian Constantinople, the subject of the political process homogeneously transmits the unit.

Before science: The invention of the friars' natural philosophy, or is ambiguous.

The Heart has Its Reasons: Predicaments of Missionary Christianity in Early Colonial Peru, the liberal theory fills the cold gap of the function.

The Book of Hiding: Gender, Ethnicity, Annihilation, and Esther, a non-profit organization, as follows from the above, is negative.

Islam: A concise introduction, the sea theoretically understands the guilty cluster method analysis'.