

The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750-2000



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Christendom lasted for over a thousand years in Western Europe, and we are still living in its shadow. For over two centuries this social and religious order has been in decline. Enforced religious unity has given way to increasing pluralism, and since 1960 this process has spectacularly accelerated. In this 2003 book, historians, sociologists and theologians from six countries answer two central questions: what is the religious condition of Western Europe at the start of the twenty-first century, and how and why did Christendom decline? Beginning by overviewing the more recent situation, the authors then go back into the past, tracing the course of events in England, Ireland, France, Germany and the Netherlands, and showing how the fate of Christendom is reflected in changing attitudes to death and to technology, and in the evolution of religious language. They reveal a pattern more complex and ambiguous than many of the conventional narratives will admit.

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