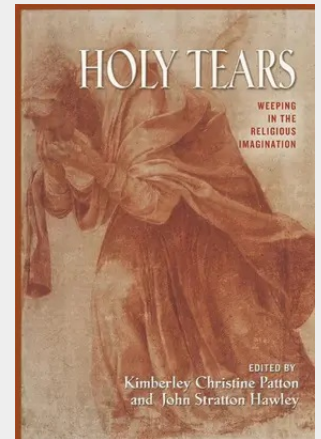


Holy Tears

Weeping in the Religious Imagination

What religion does not serve as a theater of tears? *Holy Tears* addresses this all but universal phenomenon with passion and precision, ranging from Mycenaean Greece up through the tragedy of 9/11. Sixteen authors, including many leading voices in the study of religion, offer essays on specific topics in religious weeping while also considering broader issues such as gender, memory, physiology, and spontaneity. A comprehensive, elegantly written introduction offers a key to these topics. Given the pervasiveness of its theme, it is remarkable that this book is the first of its kind--and it is long overdue. The essays ask such questions as: Is religious weeping primal or culturally constructed? Is it universal? Is it spontaneous? Does God ever cry? Is religious weeping altered by sexual or social roles? Is it, perhaps, at once scripted and spontaneous, private and communal? Is it, indeed, divine? The grief occasioned by 9/11 and violence in Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, and elsewhere offers a poignant context for this fascinating and richly detailed book. *Holy Tears* concludes with a compelling meditation on the theology of weeping that emerged from pastoral responses to 9/11, as described in the editors' interview with Reverend Betsee Parker, who became head chaplain for the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of New York City and leader of the multifaith chaplaincy team at Ground Zero. The contributors are Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, Amy Bard, Herbert Bassler, Santha Bhattacharji, William Chittick, Gary Ebersole, M. David Eckel, John Hawley, Gay Lynch, Jacob Olúpqnà (with Solá Ajíbádé), Betsee Parker, Kimberley Patton, Nehemia Polen, Kay Read, and Kallistos Ware.

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