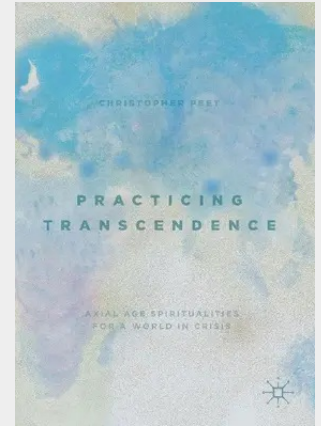


Practicing Transcendence

Axial Age Spiritualities for a World in Crisis

This book introduces readers to the concept of the Axial Age and its relevance for a world in crisis. Scholars have become increasingly interested in philosopher Karl Jaspers' thesis that a spiritual revolution in consciousness during the first millennium BCE decisively shaped world history. Axial ideas of transcendence develop into ideologies for world religions and civilizations, in turn coalescing into a Eurasian world-system that spreads globally to become the foundation of our contemporary world. Alongside ideas and ideologies, the Axial Age also taught spiritual practices critically resisting the new scale of civilizational power: in small counter-cultural communities on the margins of society, they turn our conscious focus inward to transform ourselves and overcome the destructive potentials within human nature. Axial spiritualities offer humanity a practical wisdom, a profound psychology, and deep hope: to transform despair into resilience, helping us face with courage the ecological and political challenges confronting us today.

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