

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910372746403321
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Titolo	Religious Individualisation : Historical Dimensions and Comparative Perspectives / / Martin Fuchs, Antje Linkenbach, Martin Mulsow, Bernd-Christian Otto, Rahul Bjørn Parson, Jörg Rüpke
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berlin/Boston, : Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020 Berlin ; ; Boston : , : De Gruyter, , [2019] ©2020
ISBN	3-11-058085-3 3-11-058093-4
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (1416)
Classificazione	BE 3350
Disciplina	204.4
Soggetti	Religion & beliefs Religion: general History of religion Sociology History
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Religious Individualisation -- Frontmatter -- Acknowledgements -- Contents -- Volume 1 -- General introduction -- Part 1: Transcending selves -- Introduction: Transcending Selves -- Section 1.1: Relationships between selfhood and transcendence -- 'Vase of light': from the exceptional individuality to the individualisation process as influenced by Greek-Arabic cosmology in Albert the Great's Super Iohannem -- Self-transcendence in Meister Eckhart -- The inward sublime: Kant's aesthetics and the Protestant tradition -- Transcendence and freedom: on the anthropological and cultural centrality of religion -- Taking Job as an example. Kierkegaard: traces of religious individualization -- Suifaction: typological reflections on the evolution of the self -- Afterword: relationships between selfhood and transcendence -- Section 1.2: The social lives of religious individualisation -- 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house!' (Gen. 12:1): Schelling's Boehmian redefinition of

idealism -- Dining with the gods and the others: the banqueting tickets from Palmyra as expressions of religious individualisation -- Self-affirmation, self-transcendence and the relationality of selves: the social embedment of individualisation in bhakti -- Sufis, Jogis, and the question of religious difference: individualisation in early modern Punjab -- Afterword: the social lives of religious individualisation -- Part 2: The dividual self -- Introduction: the dividual self -- Section 2.1: Dividual socialities -- The subject as totum potestativum in Albert the Great's OEuvre: cultural transfer and relational identity -- Monism and dividualism in Meister Eckhart -- The empathic subject and the question of dividuality -- Simmel and the forms of in-dividuality -- Afterword: dividual socialities -- Section 2.2: Parting the self -- Reading the self in Persian prose and poetry -- The good citizen and the heterodox self: turning to Protestantism and Anabaptism in 16th-century Venice -- Dividualisation and relational authorship: from the Huguenot République des lettres to practices of clandestine writing -- Disunited identity. Kierkegaard: traces towards dividuality -- Afterword: parting the self -- Section 2.3: Porosity, corporeality and the divine -- Paul's Letter to Philemon: a case study in individualisation, dividualisation, and partibility in Imperial spatial contexts -- Self as other: distanciation and reflexivity in ancient Greek divination -- The swirl of worlds: possession, porosity and embodiment -- 'Greater love ...': Methodist missionaries, self-sacrifice and relational personhood -- Challenging personhood: the subject and viewer of contemporary crucifixion iconography -- Afterword: porosity, corporeality and the divine -- Religious Individualisation Volume 2 -- Part 3: Conventions and contentions -- Introduction: conventions and contentions -- Section 3.1: Practices -- Religious individualisation in China: a two-modal approach -- Individuals in the Eleusinian Mysteries: choices and actions -- Institutionalisation of religious individualisation: asceticism in antiquity and late antiquity and the rejection of slavery and social injustice -- Lived religion and eucharistic piety on the Meuse and the Rhine in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries -- Migrant precarity and religious individualisation -- The Illuminates of Thanateros and the institutionalisation of religious individualisation -- Afterword: practices -- Section 3.2: Texts and narratives -- '... quod nolo, illud facio' (Romans 7:20): institutionalising the unstable self -- Individualisation, deindividualisation, and institutionalisation among the early Mahanubhavs -- Religious individualisation and collective bhakti: Sarala Dasa and Bhima Bhoi -- Individualisation and democratisation of knowledge in Banaras' Samayasra Naka -- Subjects of conversion in colonial central India -- Many biographies - multiple individualities: the identities of the Chinese Buddhist monk Xuanzang -- Jewish emancipation, religious individualisation, and metropolitan integration: a case study on Moses Mendelssohn and Moritz Lazarus -- Afterword: texts and narratives -- Part 4: Authorities in religious individualisation -- Introduction: authorities in religious individualisation -- Section 4.1: Between hegemony & heterogeneity -- Subordinated religious specialism and individuation in the Graeco-Roman world -- Religion and the limits of individualisation in ancient Athens: Andocides, Socrates, and the fair-breasted Phryne -- Traveling with the Picatrix: cultural liminalities of science and magic -- Singular individuals, conflicting authorities: Annie Besant and Mohandas Gandhi -- Being Hindu in India: culture, religion, and the Gita Press (1950) -- Individualised versus institutional religion: Is there a mediating position? -- Constructing a genuine religious character: the impact of the asylum court on the Ahmadiyya community in Germany -- Afterword: de- and neotraditionalisation -- Section 4.2: Pluralisation --

Religious plurality and individual authority in the Mahbhrata -- Ritual objects and religious communication in lived ancient religion: multiplying religion -- Institutionalisation of tradition and individualised lived Christian religion in Late Antiquity -- Early modern erudition and religious individualisation: the case of Johann Zechendorff (1580-1662) -- Islamic mystical responses to hegemonic orthodoxy: the subcontinental perspective -- Afterword: pluralisation -- Section 4.3: Walking the edges -- Understanding 'prophecy': charisma, religious enthusiasm, and religious individualisation in the 17th century. A cross-cultural approach -- Out of bounds, still in control: exclusion, religious individuation and individualisation during the later Middle Ages -- The lonely antipope - or why we have difficulties classifying Pedro de Luna [Benedict XIII] as a religious individual -- Varieties of spiritual individualisation in the theosophical movement: the United Lodge of theosophists India as climax of individualisation-processes within the theosophical movement -- Individualisation in conformity: Keshab Chandra Sen and canons of the self -- Afterword: walking the edges -- Contributors

Sommario/riassunto

This volume brings together key findings of the long-term research project 'Religious Individualisation in Historical Perspective' (Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, Erfurt University). Combining a wide range of disciplinary approaches, methods and theories, the volume assembles over 50 contributions that explore and compare processes of religious individualisation in different religious environments and historical periods, in particular in Asia, the Mediterranean, and Europe from antiquity to the recent past. Contrary to standard theories of modernisation, which tend to regard religious individualisation as a specifically modern or early modern as well as an essentially Western or Christian phenomenon, the chapters reveal processes of religious individualisation in a large variety of non-Western and pre-modern scenarios. Furthermore, the volume challenges prevalent views that regard religions primarily as collective phenomena and provides nuanced perspectives on the appropriation of religious agency, the pluralisation of religious options, dynamics of de-traditionalisation and privatisation, the development of elaborated notions of the self, the facilitation of religious deviance, and on the notion of dividuality.
