



In this translation of the best-selling French book, *La Revanche de Dieu*, Gilles Kepel, one of Europe's leading authorities on Islamic societies, offers a compelling account of the resurgence of religious belief in the modern world. His focus is radical movements within Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Much has been written recently about the rise of fundamentalisms in contemporary religion. Kepel, however, finds the term fundamentalism, which derives from the American Protestant experience, to be inadequate for understanding revivalist movements throughout the rest of the world. Ranging from America to Europe and the Middle East, from Protestant televangelists to ultra-Orthodox Jews, from Islamic militants to the charismatic renewal, Kepel argues that each of these movements resists the spirit of modernity and secularism. Nevertheless, they cannot be dismissed simply as a reaction to modernity. In Kepel's words, They are true children of our time. Each group contains a militant membership of young, educated, and modern people. Rather than retreat into the past, they seek to recreate society according to a set of symbols and values in accordance with their holy scriptures. Each group pursues both a strategy from above, attempting to seize state power and use state legislation to promote its ends, and a strategy from below, evangelizing the masses and seeking to take control of their daily lives. According to Kepel, we have much to learn from today's religious movements. Like the workers' movements of yesteryear, they have a singular

capacity to reveal the ills of society. Whether or not we agree with their diagnoses, they offer an important and perceptive critique of our society at the end of the millennium.

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