



Fifty Years of Religious Studies in Canada: A Personal Retrospective (Editions SR)

Harold Coward

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In Canadian universities in the early 1960s, no courses were offered on Hinduism, Buddhism, or Islam. Only the study of Christianity was available, usually in a theology program in a church college or seminary. Today almost every university in North America has a religious studies department that offers courses on Western and Eastern religions as well as religion in general. Harold Coward addresses this change in this memoir of his forty-five-year career in the development of religious studies as a new academic field in Canada. He also addresses the shift from theology classes in seminaries to non-sectarian religious studies faculties of arts and humanities; the birth and growth of departments across Canada from the 1960s to the present; the contribution of McMaster University to religious studies in Canada and Coward's Ph.D. experience there; the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria; and the future of religious studies as a truly interdisciplinary enterprise.

Coward's retrospective, while not a history as such, documents information from his varied experience and wide network of colleagues that is essential for a future formal history of the discipline. His story is both personally engaging and richly informative about the development of the field.

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