



Fly-51/9-2016

# The Market as God

**Harvey Cox** Harvard Divinity School

The globalized economy dictates today not only the pace of people's lives, but affects also their daily liturgies and imaginaries. This is true to the point that one is driven to wonder whether we are not dealing with a veritable religion of the Market these days. With Harvey Cox's lecture, the Center for Religious Sciences of FBK continues its investigation into the current manifestations of religion and spirituality and their multiple interactions with the process of innovation in society, science and the economy.

**October 18, 2016**  
**17.00-19.00**

Fondazione Bruno Kessler | Aula Grande | Via Santa Croce 77 | 38122 Trento

The **Davide Zordan Lecture** is an annual event organized by the Centre for Religious Studies of FBK to honor the memory of Davide Zordan, a researcher of the Center who prematurely died on October 25th, 2015. The invited speakers are scholars committed to renovating theology so that it can live up to the challenges of the present.

## The question

With Harvey Cox's lecture, the Center for Religious Sciences of FBK continues its investigation into the current manifestations of religion and spirituality and their multiple interactions with the process of innovation in society, science and the economy.

In his lecture, Harvey Cox describes how our world has fallen in thrall to the business theology of accumulation and endless growth. According to its acolytes, the Market is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. It knows the value of everything, and determines the outcome of every transaction; it can raise nations and ruin households, and nothing escapes its reductionist commodification. The Market comes complete with its own doctrines, prophets, and evangelical zeal to convert the world to its way of life. Cox brings that theology out of the shadows, demonstrating that the way the world economy operates is neither natural nor inevitable but shaped by a global system of values and symbols that can be best understood as a religion.

For Cox, in short, the Market has deified itself and all of the world's problems – widening inequality, a rapidly warming planet, the injustices of global poverty – are consequently harder to solve. Only by tracing how the Market reached its "divine" status can we hope to restore it to its proper place as a servant of humanity.

## Harvey Cox

Harvey Gallagher Cox, Jr. (born May 19, 1929 in Malvern, Pennsylvania) is one of the preeminent theologians in the United States who served as Hollis Professor of Divinity at the Harvard Divinity School, until his retirement in October 2009. His research and teaching interests focus on the interaction of religion, culture, and politics. Among the issues he explores are urbanization, theological developments in world Christianity, Jewish-Christian relations, and current spiritual movements in the global setting (particularly Pentecostalism). *His books include: The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective* (1965); *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Re-shaping of Religion in the 21st Century* (1994); *The Future of Faith* (2009); *The Market as God* (2016).