



HARVEY G. COX AND DAISAKU IKEDA
*THE PERSISTENCE OF RELIGION: COMPARATIVE
PERSPECTIVES ON MODERN SPIRITUALITY*

LONDON AND NEW YORK: I.B.TAURIS, 2009. PAGES xvii
+ 142. HARDBOUND. ISBN 978-1-84885-194-8.
PAPERBACK. 978-1-8488195-5. PRICE: £ 12.99.

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This book presents a candid conversation or dialogue between two eminent scholars of religion, Harvey Cox (1929–), a former Professor of Divinity at Harvard University and a champion of civil rights movement, and Daisaku Ikeda (1928–), President of Soka University of America and Soka Gakkai International, a Buddhist, New Religious Movement.¹ Having vast academic and

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1. Soka Gakkai is a Japan-based new religious movement based on the Nichiren Buddhist teachings. Nichiren Buddhism is a branch of Mahayana Buddhism based on the teachings of the 13th century Japanese monk born as Zennichimaro but known as Nichiren (1222–1282) and belonged to the schools of so-called 'Kamakura Buddhism.' See, Jacqueline I. Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism: Studies in East Asian Buddhism* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press 2003), pp. 239. Combining spiritual activities with social programs, Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is an international Nichiren Buddhist network with over 80 registered constituent organizations in 192 countries. It is arguably the world's largest socially engaged lay Buddhist association. SGI's founder,