



Religions of the World

By Lewis M. Hopfe, Mark R. Woodward

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For introductory courses in world religions. Conceived for students with little or no background in the academic study of religions, *Religions of the World* offers the most broad coverage of world religions supported by primary source documents, coverage of religions as they exist today, and integrated media resources. In preparing the tenth edition of *Religions of the World*, Mark Woodward drew on his experience in teaching an introductory course on the religions of the world to thousands of undergraduates over the last two decades, living and working in Buddhist and Muslim cultures for extended periods and on conversations with friends and colleagues in the Arizona Native American community. This book presumes no prior knowledge of any religious tradition. While it is impossible to cover all religions, it does cover those of the vast majority of people. In this edition, he has edited the text closely for clarity and readability and made other changes to keep it up to date and accurate including updating all sections on religion today for each tradition, bringing statistical data up to date, increasing coverage of religion and conflict of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and of the role of the Anabaptists in the Protestant Reformation.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Hopfe did an incredible job of making the material readable and flow in a logical fashion...Even with a recent flood of introductory-level texts dealing with the subject, it remains *the best* introductory text dealing with religions of the world.”

-Michael Krogman, Chattanooga State Technical College

From the Publisher

The sixth edition of Hopfe's popular *Religions of the World* has been updated to include a calendar of major holy days unique to each of the world's major religions, new sections on myths and rituals common to basic religions, as well as additional material devoted to Medieval Judaism. Written for the beginning student, this comprehensive text begins with an exploration of the almost universal concepts found within the Native American and African religions. Hopfe's remaining chapters cover a complete history of all living religions from their inception to the present, including those which originated in India, China, Japan, and the Middle East.

From the Inside Flap

PREFACE

to the Eighth Edition

In preparing the eighth edition of Lewis Hopfe's text, I have drawn on my experience teaching the introductory course on world religions to thousands of students over the past decade and living and working in Buddhist and Muslim societies for extended periods. I have updated the chapters on Asian religions, particularly Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, and also the one on African religions. I have attempted to leave the style of presentation and the comparative focus of the text intact. Living in Arizona for more than a decade, I have also had the good fortune to encounter a variety of Native American religious traditions and have drawn on this experience in revising Chapter 2.

Mark R. Woodward PREFACE

to the Sixth Edition

Wherever people are found, there too religion resides.

The study of world religions has become increasingly important in this last decade of the twentieth century. As a result of mass communications and ease of travel, individuals of varied backgrounds are coming into contact more than ever before. The Middle East is a cauldron of emotions involving Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Headlines are being made by devotees of Hinduism and Islam in India. Some of the conflicts in areas of the former Soviet Bloc nations have religious undertones. A knowledge of world religions is now essential to understanding people of various world cultures, their political systems, and the quest for world peace.

World religions is never a simple subject and can be incredibly complex and intricate for the beginning student. *Religions of the World* is written for the student who wants a concise introduction to the historical and philosophical foundations of the major living religions of the world. While this text makes no conscious effort to shortcut or simplify religions, neither does it go out of its way to delve too deeply into the technicalities. This new edition follows the same narrative style and approach that has met with such a

positive response in previous editions.

Readers are first introduced to the basic vocabulary of the field and to some of the theories of the origin of religion. The text then goes on to explore the major living religions: the historical and cultural factors that produced them, the lives of their founders, their basic teachings, and their historical development and current status in the world. Selected readings from source material are included to give the student a feel for the literature of the world religions, a glossary to define difficult and foreign terms, and a suggested reading list of available, current texts which can further instruct the student. Study questions are included at the end of each chapter in order to focus the attention of the reader on the central themes of the chapter.

Changes within this new edition include a partial revision of the Judaism chapter, with the addition of a section on medieval Judaism. A new section on myths and rituals has been added to the Basic Religions chapters. Each religion chapter, other than Basic Religions, includes a new section on the major holy days and festivals celebrated by adherents of that religion.

This edition is the result of the combined efforts of many people. Before the untimely death of Dr. Lewis M. Hopfe on September 2, 1992, he had completed all of the major changes and additions, leaving the editing and final completion of the Sixth Edition to his wife, Lavinia R. Hopfe, and his son, Lewis M. Hopfe, Jr. Many thanks to Maggie Barbieri, our editor at Macmillan, Sharon Lee and Connie Geldis, also at Macmillan, Laurie Thomas for copyediting, Catherine Howard, and others who made this text possible.

Lavinia R. Hopfe
Lewis M. Hopfe, Jr.
for Lewis M. Hopfe

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kathy Wilson:

The book Religions of the World can give more knowledge and also the precise product information about everything you want. Exactly why must we leave the best thing like a book Religions of the World? A number of you have a different opinion about book. But one aim this book can give many information for us. It is absolutely right. Right now, try to closer along with your book. Knowledge or information that you take for that, you may give for each other; you may share all of these. Book Religions of the World has simple shape however you know: it has great and large function for you. You can appearance the enormous world by start and read a publication. So it is very wonderful.

Laura Hargis:

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Penny Stout:

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Bradley Printz:

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