



World Religions in Practice: A Comparative Introduction

By Paul Gwynne

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World Religions in Practice introduces five of the world's great religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – and explores how they are lived and expressed in custom, ritual, and symbol.

- A major new textbook exploring the world's great religions through their customs, rituals and everyday practices – by focusing on this 'lived experience' it goes beyond many traditional introductions to religious studies
- Adopts a directly comparative approach to develop a greater understanding of the nature of religion
- Each chapter engages with an individual theme, such as birth, death, food, pilgrimage and ethics, to illustrate how religious practices are expressed
- Broadens students' understanding by offering an impartial discussion of the similarities and differences between each religion
- Includes chapter-by-chapter opening themes and summaries, and will be accompanied by a website at **www.blackwellpublishing.com/gwynne** featuring additional resources and study questions.

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Editorial Review

Review

"An exciting and intriguing approach, taking central categories in religion and indicating how they show up in different religions pragmatically ... the table of contents inspired me to dive right in and read." *Dr Darren J. N. Middleton, Texas Christian University*

"This is an impressive accomplishment that presents a moving and engaging encounter with the religious traditions of the world." *Kim Paffenroth, Iona College, USA*

"A very efficient, dynamic and useful tool in an approach to the five major religions of the world." *Alexandria Egler, St Francis College, USA*

"In an age when religion is increasingly in the news, but often for all the wrong reasons, the need for a balanced, sympathetic and objective educational tool has never been greater. Paul Gwynne has provided an accessible introduction to religion. His approach is refreshingly obvious: it is through the understanding of what people are doing that we discover what they are thinking. Practices reveal belief; religions are as religions do." *Douglas Pratt, University of Waikato, New Zealand*

"A thoughtful and accessible approach to the religions from a phenomenological point of view. The book promotes the desirable end of understanding and sympathy between religious practitioners, and is an attractive choice as an introductory textbook." *George Sumner, University of Toronto*

"A carefully crafted and comparative approach to major religions, often serving to separate human populations, as templates of how humankind in so many varied places has had such similar needs, desires and hope. Gwynne's book represents a very creative turn in this field." *Dr Majorie M Snipes, University of West Georgia*

"This book treats the great traditions with a vividness and immediacy which have seldom if ever been equalled. Instead of placing the main emphasis on doctrines, beliefs and their claims to truth, Paul Gwynne selects those aspects of *life* where religions become *practical* and guides us an appreciation of each which is aesthetically pleasing as well as providing useful information. Surely one of the best ways to come to know a faith tradition different from one's own is to live among its adherents. Reading this book is the next best thing. It should prove invaluable for educators and students as well as interested laypeople in a variety of professions." *John D'Arcy May, Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College Dublin*

From the Back Cover

World Religions in Practice introduces the world's great religions through their customs, rituals and everyday practices. By focusing on this "lived experience" it goes beyond many traditional introductions to religious studies, providing an in-depth, comparative study and an appreciation of the broader context in which these religions should be understood.

- Explores the five major religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, adopting a directly comparative approach to develop a greater understanding of the nature of religion
- Each chapter engages with an individual theme, such as birth, death, food, pilgrimage and ethics, to illustrate how religious practices are expressed
- Broadens students' understanding by offering an impartial discussion of the similarities and differences

between the religions

- Includes chapter-by-chapter opening themes and summaries, and is accompanied by a website at www.blackwellpublishing.com/gwynne featuring additional resources and study questions.

About the Author

Paul Gwynne lectures in comparative religion in the General Education Program of the University of New South Wales. He completed his doctoral studies in Rome and has taught theology and religious studies in Indonesia and at the Melbourne College of Divinity.

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