John Morreall & Tamara Sonn

RELIGION TOOLKIT

A Complete Guide to Religious Studies



WILEY-BLACKWELL

RELIGION TOOLKIT

John Morreall and Tamara Sonn

RELIGION TOOLKIT

A Complete Guide to Religious Studies



A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication

This edition first published 2012 © 2012 John Morreall and Tamara Sonn

Blackwell Publishing was acquired by John Wiley & Sons in February 2007. Blackwell's publishing program has been merged with Wiley's global Scientific, Technical, and Medical business to form Wiley-Blackwell.

Registered Office John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, United Kingdom

Editorial Offices
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK
The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

For details of our global editorial offices, for customer services, and for information about how to apply for permission to reuse the copyright material in this book please see our website at www.wiley.com/wiley-blackwell.

The right of John Morreall and Tamara Sonn to be identified as the authors of this work been asserted in accordance with the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Designations used by companies to distinguish their products are often claimed as trademarks. All brand names and product names used in this book are trade names, service marks, trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. The publisher is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book. This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold on the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering professional services. If professional advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Morreall, John.

The religion toolkit: a complete guide to religious studies / John Morreall, Tamara Sonn.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4051-8247-8 (hardback) – ISBN 978-1-4051-8246-1 (paperback)

Religion—Study and teaching.
 Religion—Research.
 Sonn, Tamara.
 Title. BL41.M625 2011

200-dc22

2011010576

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

This book is published in the following electronic formats: ePDFs 9781444343700; mobi 9781444343724; ePub 9781444343717

Set in 10/13pt Minion by SPi Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India

FOR JORDAN

Wherever we are, whatever the tune, we dance in the light of the very same moon.



BRIEF CONTENTS

List of Figures and Maps xiii
Timeline xvi
Acknowledgments xxii
Credits xxiii

1 Introduction: Prepare to Be Surprised 2

PART I THE TOOLS 15

- 2 An Overview of Religion: Making Sense of Life 16
- 3 The Early Development of Religious Studies 44
- 4 Religious Studies in the 20th Century 76

PART II USING THE TOOLS: SURVEYING WORLD RELIGIONS 103

- **5** Early Traditions 104
- 6 The Family of Western Monotheisms: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Traditions 124

UNIT I Judaism 126

UNIT II Christianity 151

UNIT III Islam 167

UNIT IV The Impact of Religious Studies on the Western Monotheisms 183

- 7 330 Million Gods or None: Two Traditions from India 206
- 8 Balancing and Blending: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism in China 246



- **9** Zoroastrianism, Shinto, Baha'i, Scientology, Wicca, and Seneca Traditions: What Makes a "World Religion"? 274
- **10** Closing Questions 308

Glossary 338

Index 344





CONTENTS

List of Figures and Maps xiii Timeline xvi Acknowledgments xxii Credits xxiii

1 Introduction: Prepare to Be Surprised 2

PART I THE TOOLS 15

2 An Overview of Religion: Making Sense of Life 16

Explaining Suffering and Evil 18

Explaining Death 22

Ghosts 23

Resurrection 24

Souls 25

Reincarnation 26

The Importance of Order 26

Order Out of Chaos 27

Order and Predictability:

Eschatology, Prophecy,

Divination 27

Social Order 30

Group Identity 31

Ethics/Morality and Law 34

Authority and Power 37

The Role of Ritual 39

Conclusion 41

3 The Early Development of Religious Studies 44

Philosophy, Theology, and Religious

Studies 47

The Relationship between Philosophy and Theology 48

Two Kinds of Christian Theology 50

Scriptural (Biblical) Studies and the

Impact of the Printing

Press 52

Baruch Spinoza (d. 1677): The Beginnings

of Source Criticism 53

William Robertson Smith (d. 1894):

Historical Criticism 54

The Rise of Modernity and New Academic

Disciplines: Oriental Studies,

Anthropology, Sociology,

and Psychology 55

Max Müller (d. 1900): Oriental Studies

and Religion 57

Edward Burnett Tylor (d. 1917):

Anthropology and Religion 58

James Frazer (d. 1941): Evolution

and Religion 61

Negative Views of Religion 65

Karl Marx (d. 1883): Religion as the Opiate

of the Masses 65

Sigmund Freud (d. 1939): Religion

as Neurosis 68

Sociology of Religion 71

Emile Durkheim (d. 1917):

Modernization Theory 71



Max Weber (d. 1920): The Protestant Ethic and the Secularization Thesis 72

Conclusion 74

4 Religious Studies in the 20th Century 76

Back to Philosophy 80
Analytic Philosophy: Antony Flew
(d. 2010) 81
Phenomenology and Religious
Studies 82
Rudolf Otto (d. 1937) 82
Mircea Eliade (d. 1986) 83

Philosophy of Religion 85 John Hick (b. 1922) 85 William Lane Craig (b. 1949) 87

Anthropology of Religion 89 Clifford Geertz (d. 2006) 89 Mary Douglas (d. 2007) 91

Sociology of Religion 94 Peter L. Berger (b. 1929) 94 Robert N. Bellah (b. 1927) 95

Psychology of Religion 96 William James (d. 1910) 96 Carl Jung (d. 1961) 98

Conclusion: Theories and Methods 99
Philosophical Theories 99
Genetic/Historical Theories 100
Functionalist Theories 100

PART II USING THE TOOLS: SURVEYING WORLD RELIGIONS 103

5 Early Traditions 104

Prehistoric Religions? 107
Animism and Anthropomorphism 108
Death Rituals 112

Fertility Goddesses 113 Hunting Rituals 114 Shamans 114 Ancient Traditions, Oral Traditions, and Religion 115

The Neolithic Revolution and the Rise of Historic Religions 118

Conclusion 121

6 The Family of Western Monotheisms: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Traditions 124

UNIT I Judaism 126

The Torah, the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament 127

The History and Teachings of Judaism 135
The First Five Centuries 135
The Middle Ages (500–1500 cE) 137
The Modern Period (1750 to the present) 141
The Enlightenment 141
The Development of Reform
Judaism 142
Conservative Judaism 148
Reconstructionist Judaism 148

The Rituals of Judaism 149 Judaism Today 150

UNIT II Christianity 151

The History and Teachings of
Christianity 151
Origins 151
The Development of Christian
Doctrine 154
The Institutionalization and Politicization
of Christianity 157
Eastern and Western Christians 159
The Western/Roman Church 160
The Eastern Orthodox Churches 163
The Protestant Reformation 164



Christian Rituals 166	The Aryans and the Vedas				
Christianity Today 166	(1500–600 BCE) 211				
	The Mystical Worldview of the				
UNIT III Islam 167	Upanishads 213				
The History and Teachings of Islam 167 Core Teachings 167 Early History: The Life of Muhammad and the Rashidun Caliphs 174 The Dynastic Caliphates 176	Classical Hinduism (3rd century BCE—7th century CE) 216 The Ramayana 216 The Mahabharata 217 The Puranas 221 The Laws of Manu 223				
The Modern Period: Reform	Hinduism Today 226				
and Recovery 179	Rituals 226				
Islamic Rituals 180	Buddhism 229				
Major Divisions Today 182	History and Teachings of Buddhism 230				
UNIT IV The Impact of Religious Studies on the Western	Understanding the Four Noble Truths 233				
Monotheisms 183	The Ethics of "Awakening" 235 The Core of All Buddhist Traditions 235				
Biblical Studies 184	The Development of the Three Main				
Rudolf Bultmann (d. 1976):	Traditions 237				
"Demythologizing" Scripture 185 John Dominic Crossan (b. 1934): The Historicity of Scripture 186	Theravada (Hinayana) 238 Mahayana 238 Vajrayana 240				
Theology 192 Liberation Theology 192	Buddhism Today 242 Rituals 243				
Gustavo Gutierrez (b. 1928) 192 Farid Esack (b. 1959) 194	Conclusion: Religious Studies and Indian Traditions 244				
Feminist Theology 196 Judith Plaskow (b. 1947) 198	O polo di con diplo di co				

7 330 Million Gods – or None: Two Traditions from India 206

Rosemary Radford Ruether

Amina Wadud (b. 1952) 201

(b. 1936) 199

Conclusion 203

Hinduism and Buddhism 208

Hinduism 209

History and Teachings of Hinduism 211

Indus Valley Civilization

(3000–1500 BCE) 211

8 Balancing and Blending: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism in China 246

Chan (Zen) Buddhism 262

The Tao, Yin and Yang 248

The History of Chinese Religious Thought 251
The Shang Period (18th–11th
centuries BCE) 251
The Zhou Period (11th–3rd centuries BCE) 253

Confucius (551–479 BCE) 255

Taoism 258

Buddhism in China 260
Pure Land Buddhism 262



Chinese Folk Traditions 265 Rituals in Chinese Traditions 266 Weddings 267 Funerals 267

Chinese Traditions Today 269

Conclusion: Religious Studies and the

Traditions of China 271

9 Zoroastrianism, Shinto, Baha'i, Scientology, Wicca, and Seneca Traditions: What Makes a "World Religion"? 274

What Makes a "World Religion"? 276

Zoroastrianism 278

History and Teachings of Zoroastrianism 278 **7oroastrian Rituals** 281

Shinto 283

History and Teachings of Shinto 283 Shinto Rituals 285

Baha'i 287

History and Teachings of Baha'i 287 Baha'i Rituals 289

Scientology 291

History and Teachings of Scientology 291 Scientology Practices 292 Scientology Rituals 293

Wicca 294

History and Teachings of Wicca 294 Wiccan Rituals 296

The Traditions of the Seneca 298 History and Teachings of the Seneca 298 Seneca Rituals 302 Conclusion: To Be or Not to Be a

10 Closing Questions 308

Religion? 304

Can We Define Religion? 310

Secularization? 311

Contemporary Atheist Views 311

Contemporary Opposition to Secularization

Theory 313

Resurgent Islam 313

Resurgent Religion in the U.S.? 315

Secularization in Europe 318

Religion Revisited 319

Other Issues 322

The Range of Research Areas in the American Academy of Religion 322

Medical Science and Religion 326

Religion and Physical Health 327

Religion and Mental Health 329

Does Prayer Work? 330

Brain Science and Mystical Experience:

Neurotheology 330

Conclusion: Another Surprise? 335

Glossary 338 Index 344





FIGURES AND MAPS

Figures

- **1.1** "That's what they all say, honey" 2
- **1.2** A temple of Ganesha 8
- **1.3** Ostara, Goddess of the Dawn 9
- **1.4** Slave 11
- **1.5** Pope John Paul II 13
- 2.1 "Actually, I preferred 'Heaven' too, but then the marketing guys got a hold of it" 16
- 2.2 Luca Signorelli (1450–1523), The Resurrection of the Dead 25
- 2.3 Victor Vasnetsov, Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (War, Famine, Pestilence and Death), 1887 28
- 2.4 Hammurabi before a god 38
- **2.5** Prayer for the auto industry 40
- 3.1 "Theologian? You guys are always fun" 44
- **3.2** Aristotle 49
- **3.3** Baruch Spinoza 53
- **3.4** Max Müller 57
- **3.5** Edward Burnett Tylor 59
- **3.6** Cargo cults 63
- **3.7** Karl Marx 66
- **3.8** Siamund Freud 68
- **4.1** "I had a nice chat with my trainer today about Allah" 76
- 4.2 Mircea Eliade 83
- 4.3 Rangda the Witch, mask, Bali 90
- 4.4 Rats at Karni Mata, "Rat Temple," in Rajasthan, India 92
- 4.5 William James 97
- 5.1 "Couldn't be a man. Must be a god!" 104
- **5.2** Caves in Lascaux, France 108
- **5.3** Face in rock Mars 109
- **5.4** Nun Bun, Tennessee 1996 110
- **5.5** The Makapansgat cobble/pebble 110
- **5.6** Rock person, Morocco 111
- **5.7** Venus of Willendorf 113
- 5.8 Image from a cave in Ariège, France, of a man/stag, painted and engraved about 13,000 BCE 115
- **5.9** Photo of shaman 116
- **5.10** Wall carving from the Temple of Horus at Edfu in Egypt 121
- **6.1** "I'm calling it 'Genesis.' It's part of a five-book contract" 124
- **6.2** Clay figure of Asherah 132

