



Women and World Religions

By *Lucinda Joy Peach Ph.D.*

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This book features a number of different articles and essays that focus on women as active agents of their spiritual lives—a topic that is often overlooked in most other world religion books. It explores how women from many parts of the world have thought about, acted, and have been treated as members of a religious tradition. Investigates how women of a variety of religious traditions (e.g., Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, etc.) practice their religion, how their beliefs differ from men, and how they have carved out their own place within their religious tradition. For anyone interested in how women are shaped by and how they shape the various world religions.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

The title of this anthology, **Women and World Religions**, was chosen deliberately to emphasize that its primary focus is on *actual* women and their experiences as active agents of their spiritual lives—as opposed to women in religion as goddesses or other images and symbols of females that are found in religious myths, art, and scriptures. This book explores how women from many parts of the world have thought about, acted, and been treated as members of a religious tradition.

Introductory text for each of the major world religions lays the foundation for readings that were selected with an eye toward answering such questions as:

- How have women practiced religion?
- Have their beliefs and rituals differed from those of men?
- How have women within the major world religions negotiated their spiritual lives within traditions that are not only male dominated, but also sexist and patriarchal?
- Have they successfully carved out a "separate sphere" for their own spiritual activities, or are their religious lives in large part defined for them by male leaders?
- How has the status of women changed within religions, both historically and in terms of future prospects?

This fresh approach to the study of women's religious experiences offers important insights into the significance of religion in societies around the world.

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The primary focus of *Women and World Religions* is "actual" women in world religions, as opposed to goddesses or other images and symbols of females and the feminine found in religious myths, art and scriptures. Even when women's relationship to religion is considered in other world religions texts, the experience and status of real women's lives has often been ignored. *Women and World Religions* rectifies this.

The understanding of "world religions" used in this text—that is, those religions which are represented by people living in more than one limited region in the world—also differs from the more traditional understanding that the term only encompasses the "big five" traditions of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. In addition to chapters covering each of these traditions, *Women and World Religions* includes religions that have had an impact outside of their place of origins, including Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, African indigenous and tribal religions, and goddess-centered religions from different parts of the world.

The Introduction addresses the questions, *Why focus on women and religion?* and *What does a gender perspective contribute to the study of religion?* It also considers some important commonalities and differences in women's religious experience including: *How have women practiced religion?* *How have their religious beliefs and practices differed from those of men, if at all?* *How have women been treated differently than men in religious settings,* and *What effect, if any, has gender segregation and discrimination had on women's religious experiences?*

Succeeding chapters demonstrate how women from very different cultures and regions of the world have thought about, acted, and been treated as members of their religious tradition and culture. Introductory text for each chapter provides an overview of the religious tradition, describes some of the more important aspects of the relationship of female-gendered and feminine images and symbols to "real" women, and discusses women's relationship to the tradition and the changes in the religious status of women in that tradition. Following this material are essays that reflect real women's experiences in the religious tradition. The chapters end with questions for class discussion and references for further study and exploration of women in the 'religious tradition covered.

In addition to informing the reader about women's experience in the variety of world religious traditions, another goal of the text is to reveal a number of striking similarities and differences among women in different religious traditions and illuminate how the study of women's experience in religion can enrich the study of religion altogether.

Users Review

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Walter McBride:

What do you concentrate on book? It is just for students since they are still students or the item for all people in the world, the particular best subject for that? Simply you can be answered for that concern above. Every person has diverse personality and hobby for each and every other. Don't to be forced someone or something that they don't wish do that. You must know how great and also important the book Women and World Religions. All type of book are you able to see on many solutions. You can look for the internet methods or other social media.

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Katherine Sherrr:

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