

# A Reader In New Religious Movements Readings In The Study Of New Religious Movements Religious Studies And Philosophy

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## CALI SCHWARTZ

The Story of a New Religious Tradition Routledge

In the face of the increasingly variegated ideological landscape of contemporary America, cults have become the focus of public controversy. The growth of new religions has been matched by the development of an organized and vocal opposition, the anti-cult movement. This in turn has prompted an extensive investigation of new religious movements (NRMs) by sociologists and psychologists of religion, as well as historians and religious studies scholars. The readings collected here contribute to the debate about cults by sampling some of the best and most accessible publications from the academic study of NRMs. The contributors address the questions most commonly asked about cults, such as: What brought about the emergence of new religious movements? What is a cult or new religious movement? Who joins new religious movements and why? Are converts to new religious movements brainwashed? Why did the Jonestown and Waco tragedies happen? Are cults inclined to be violent? What does the emergence of so many new religious movements say about our society? What does it say about the future of religion? Cults in Context surveys the descriptive typologies, theories, and data accumulated by sociologists and psychologists

studying new religious movements over the last twenty years. It serves to defuse many popular fears and misconceptions about cults, allowing the reader to develop a more reasonable and tolerant understanding of the people who join new religious movements and the functions of these movements in contemporary society.

Cults and New Religions in American History Routledge

Mormonism is one of the fastest growing, most misunderstood, and most debated religions of recent times. Even the simple act of defining WHAT Mormonism is (or should be) has been filled with controversy. The author reconstructs the signal events of early Mormonism as perceived from INSIDE the faith.

A Practical Introduction Routledge

There are over 600 New Religious Movements (NRMs) in Great Britain alone, and more than 2000 in the United States. A Reader in New Religious Movements provides an introduction to the main teachings of a selection of these organizations, focusing on those that are well established in the West. The contemporary—and in some cases controversial—NRMs covered include the Unification Church, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, the Family, Osho, Soka Gakkai International and the Western Buddhist Order.

**Cults and New Religious Movements** NYU Press

New Religious Movements is a highly unique volume, bringing together primary documents conveying the words and ideas of a wide array of new religious movements (NRMs), and offering a

first-hand look into their belief systems. Arranged by the editors according to a new typology, the text allows readers to consider NRMS along five interrelated pathways—from those that offer new perceptions of existence or new personal identities, to those that center on relationships within family-like units, to those movements that highlight the need for recasting the social order or anticipate the dawn of a new age. The volume includes original documents from groups such as the Unification Church, Theosophy, Branch Davidians, Wicca, Jehovah's Witnesses, Santeria, and Seventh Day Adventists, as well as many others. Each section is prefaced by a contextual introduction and concludes with a list of sources for further reading. New Religious Movements offers a rare inside look into the worldviews of alternative religious traditions.

New Religious Movements, Sects and Alternative Spiritualities NYU Press

This is a source of reliable information on the most important new and alternative religions covering history, theology, impact on the culture, and current status. It includes a chapter on the Branch Davidians.

A Documentary Reader Routledge

Looks at cults and anti-cult scares in American history and reveals the true characteristics of religious fringe movements and why they inspire such fierce antagonism.

*New Religious Movements* Rowman & Littlefield

The Tokyo subway attack in March 1995 was just one of a series

of criminal activities including murder, kidnapping, extortion, and the illegal manufacture of arms and drugs carried out by the Japanese new religious movement Aum Shinrikyo, under the guidance of its leader Asahara Shoko. Reader looks at Aum's claims about itself and asks, why did a religious movement ostensibly focussed on yoga, meditation, asceticism and the pursuit of enlightenment become involved in violent activities? Reader discusses Aum's spiritual roots, placing it in the context of contemporary Japanese religious patterns. Asahara's teaching are examined from his earliest public pronouncements through to his sermons at the time of the attack, and statements he has made in court. In analysing how Aum not only manufactured nerve gases but constructed its own internal doctrinal justifications for using them Reader focuses on the formation of what made all this possible: Aum's internal thought-world, and on how this was developed. Reader argues that despite the horrors of this particular case, Aum should not be seen as unique, nor as solely a political or criminal terror group. Rather it can best be analysed within the context of religious violence, as an extreme example of a religious movement that has created friction with the wider world that escalated into violence.

Readings in the Study of New Religious Movements A&C Black  
New Age, Neopagan, and New Religious Movements is the most extensive study to date of modern American alternative spiritual currents. Hugh B. Urban covers a range of emerging religions from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, including the Nation of Islam, Mormonism, Scientology, ISKCON, Wicca, the Church of Satan, Peoples Temple, and the Branch Davidians. This essential text engages students by addressing major theoretical and methodological issues in the study of new religions and is organized to guide students in their learning. Each chapter focuses on one important issue involving a particular faith group, providing readers with examples that illustrate larger issues in the study of religion and American culture. Urban addresses such questions as, Why has there been such a tremendous proliferation of new spiritual forms in the past 150 years, even as our society has become increasingly rational, scientific, technological, and secular? Why has the United States become the heartland for the explosion of new religious movements? How do we deal with complex legal debates, such as the use of peyote by the Native American Church or the practice of plural marriage

by some Mormon communities? And how do we navigate issues of religious freedom and privacy in an age of religious violence, terrorism, and government surveillance?

*New Religious Movements, Sects and Alternative Spiritualities* NYU Press

This book gives readers a comprehensive map of 200 of the most significant new religions and alternative spiritualities to have emerged in the last 100 years. It is written by specialists but with the non-specialist in mind. The groups are categorised according to their religion of origin - those with roots in Judaism (e.g. Havurot Movement, Messianic Judaism), Christianity (e.g. Christian Science, Rastafarianism), Islam (e.g. Bah'ai), Hinduism (e.g. Sahaja Yoga), Buddhism (e.g. Santi Asoke), Sikhism, Japanese religion (e.g. Omoto, Reiki), Chinese religion and philosophy (e.g. Feng Shui), Zoroastrianism, primal or pagan religion (e.g. Shamanism) and western culture (e.g. Scientology, Psychedelic spirituality).

The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements Routledge

The study of ritual and how it relates to beliefs and ideas is of central importance in our understanding of the world. Rituals can become divorced from beliefs and religious believers regarded as simply "going through the motions". 'Ritual and Religious Belief: A Reader' presents the full range of scholarly thinking on ritual and ritualizing as they relate to belief. It questions the assumption that belief should take precedence over outward behaviour and engages with questions such as: how are rituals related to performance; are politics ritualized; and is there a difference between rituals and etiquette? This comprehensive volume brings together material by eminent scholars from across the centuries, ranging from Martin Luther's sacramental dialogues to the life and routine patterns of Zen Buddhist Temples and the relationship between magic, religion and science. It will be of interest to all those engaged in the study of the dynamics between ritual and belief.

**Understanding New Religious Movements** Cambridge University Press

A comprehensive and authoritative guide to over 200 new religions, sects and alternative spiritualities

**Readings in the Study of New Religious Movements** Wiley-Blackwell

A valuable resource for students and general audiences, this book

provides a unique global perspective on the history, beliefs, and practices of emergent faith communities, new religious traditions and movements worldwide, from the 19th century to the present. *New Religions: Emerging Faiths and Religious Cultures in the Modern World* provides insightful global perspectives on the emergent faith communities and new traditions and movements of the last two centuries. Readers will gain access to the information necessary to explore the significance, complexities, and challenges that modern religious traditions have faced throughout their history and that continue to impact society today. The work identifies the themes and issues that have often brought new religions into conflict with the larger societies of which they are a part. Coverage includes new religious groups that emerged in America, such as the Seventh-day Adventists, the Latter-day Saints, and the Jehovah's Witnesses; alternative communities around the globe that emerged from the major Western and Eastern traditions, such as Aum Shinrikyo and Al-Qaeda; and marginalized groups that came to a sudden end, such as the Peoples Temple, Heaven's Gate, and the Branch Davidians. The entries highlight thematic and broader issues that run across the individual religious traditions, and will also help students analyze and assess the common difficulties faced by emergent religious communities. Presents alphabetically arranged entries on new religions that provide readers with easy-to-access, historical information about how these religions emerged from their cultural contexts and evolved over time Provides numerous primary source documents—each introduced by a headnote—that convey firsthand accounts of the founding of new religions and supply students material for critical analysis Includes photographs that help students better visualize important places, people, and things related to new religions Helps meet world history content standards and enables a fuller understanding of religious beliefs and practices in the contemporary world as well as how religions have responded to challenges and uncertainties

*Religious Experience* Routledge

Now a National Bestseller "Religion, politics, and love collide in this slim but powerful novel reminiscent of Donna Tartt's *The Secret History*, with menace and mystery lurking in every corner." --People Magazine "The most buzzed-about debut of the summer, as it should be...unusual and enticing ... *The Incendiaries* arrives at precisely the right moment." --The Washington Post

"Radiant...A dark, absorbing story of how first love can be as intoxicating and dangerous as religious fundamentalism." --New York Times Book Review A powerful, darkly glittering novel of violence, love, faith, and loss, as a young woman at an elite American university is drawn into a cult's acts of terrorism. Phoebe Lin and Will Kendall meet in their first month at prestigious Edwards University. Phoebe is a glamorous girl who doesn't tell anyone she blames herself for her mother's recent death. Will is a misfit scholarship boy who transfers to Edwards from Bible college, waiting tables to get by. What he knows for sure is that he loves Phoebe. Grieving and guilt-ridden, Phoebe is drawn into a secretive cult founded by a charismatic former student with an enigmatic past. When the group commits a violent act in the name of faith, Will finds himself struggling to confront a new version of the fanaticism he's worked so hard to escape. Haunting and intense, *The Incendiaries* is a fractured love story that explores what can befall those who lose what they love most.

*A Guide to New Religious Movements* Greenwood Publishing Group

Long a fascinating but problematic category of religious studies, "syncretism" is an elastic term that describes a wide range of practices characterized by the mixing or overlap of traditions. *Syncretism in Religion* offers the student a broad selection of essays, both classical contributions to the study of syncretism and new essays commissioned especially for this volume. Some important selections appear here in English for the first time. Also included is a list of references for further reading.

*The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion* Springer

Why Understanding America's Religious Landscape Is the Most Important Challenge Facing Us Today The 1990s saw the U.S. Navy commission its first Muslim chaplain and open its first mosque. There are presently more than three hundred temples in Los Angeles, home to the greatest variety of Buddhists in the world. There are more American Muslims than there are American Episcopalians, Jews, or Presbyterians.

**Ritual and Religious Belief** ABC-CLIO

This book, first published in 1984, examines the whole range of new religious movements which appeared in the 1960s and 1970s

in the West. It develops a wide-ranging theory of these new religions which explains many of their major characteristics. Some of the movements are well-known, such as Scientology, Krishna Consciousness, and the Unification Church. Others such as the Process, Meher Baba, and 3-HO are much less known. While some became international, others remained local; in other ways, too, such as style, belief, organisation, they exhibit enormous diversity. The movements studied here are classified under three ideal types, world-rejecting, world-affirming and world-accommodating, and from here the author develops a theory of the origins, recruitment base, characteristics, and development patterns which they display. The book offers a critical exploration of the theories of the new religions and analyses the highly contentious issue of whether they reflect the process of secularisation, or whether they are a countervailing trend marking the resurgence of religion in the West.

Wiley-Blackwell

New Religious Movements (NRMs) can involve vast numbers of followers and in many cases are radically changing the way people understand and practice religion and spirituality. Moreover, many are having a profound impact on the form and content of mainstream religion. The *Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements* provides uniquely global coverage of the phenomenon, with entries on over three-hundred movement from almost every country in the world. Coverage includes movements that derive from the major religions of the world and to neo-traditional movements, movements often overlooked in the study of NRMs. In addition to the coverage of particular movements there are also entries on topics, themes, key thinkers and key ideas, for example the New Age Movement, Neo-Paganism, New Religion and gender, NRMs and cyberspace, NRMs and the law, the Anti-Cult Movement, Swedenborg, Jung, Teilhard de Chardin, Lovelock, Gurdjieff, al-Banna, Qutb. The marked global approach and comprehensiveness of the encyclopedia enable an appreciation of the innovative energy of NRMs, of their extraordinary diversity, and the often surprising ways in which they can propagate geographically. The most ambitious publication of its sort, the *Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements* is a major addition to the reference literature for students and researchers of the field in religious studies and the

social sciences. Entries are cross-referenced with short bibliographies for further reading. There is a full index.

**How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation** SUNY Press

This volume provides a complete guide to the global impact and cultural significance of new religious movements.

**New Religious Movements** AltaMira Press

New religions emerge as distinct entities in the religious landscape when innovations are introduced by a charismatic leader or a schismatic group leaves its parent organization. New religious movements (NRMs) often present novel doctrines and advocate unfamiliar modes of behavior, and have therefore often been perceived as controversial. NRMs have, however, in recent years come to be treated in the same way as established religions, that is, as complex cultural phenomena involving myths, rituals and canonical texts. This Companion discusses key features of NRMs from a systematic, comparative perspective, summarizing results of forty years of research. The volume addresses NRMs that have caught media attention, including movements such as Scientology, New Age, the Neopagans, the Sai Baba movement and Jihadist movements active in a post-9/11 context. An essential resource for students of religious studies, the history of religion, sociology, anthropology and the psychology of religion.

**The Bloomsbury Companion to New Religious Movements** Harvard University Press

What is a cult? Why do they emerge? Who joins them? And why do tragedies such as Waco and Jonestown occur? This reader brings together the voices of historians, sociologists, and psychologists of religion to address these key questions about new religious movements. Looks at theoretical explanations for cults, why people join and what happens when they do. Brings together the best work on cults by sociologists, historians, and psychologists of religion. A broad-ranging, balanced and clearly organized collection of readings. Includes coverage of topical issues, such as the 'brainwashing' controversy, and cults in cyberspace. Section introductions by the editor situate the nature, value, and relevance of the selected readings in context of current discussions.