

“An ideal, clear, and lively introduction to world religions for North American students that also briefly deals with their modern developments, e.g. in the field Buddhism.”

—**MICHAEL HAHN**, Professor of Indology and Tibetology, Philipps-University, Marburg, Germany

“A book that goes beyond mere description to engage real, and often controversial, issues. All university teachers grappling with these issues will find it of great use. Unlike most texts of this nature, it has an extensive section on African traditions that ought to interest scholars teaching African politics. It is a highly commendable piece of work.”

—**HENRY SREBRNIK**, Professor of Political Studies, University of Prince Edward Island

“Hexham offers an introduction to the study of religions based on his years of teaching the subject, an impressive multicultural knowledge of various religious traditions, and in a style that is readable and engaging. Not another boring catalogue of religious beliefs and practices looked at from a pseudo-sophisticated afar, Hexham’s book conveys something of the diversity and controversies involved in the academic study of religions.”

—**LARRY HURTADO**, Professor and Director of the Centre for the Study of Christian Origins, The University of Edinburgh

“Many Western presentations of Islam merely pass on selected remarks from unreliable tertiary sources. Irving Hexham’s chapters on Islam are unique in that they reach beyond library versions, Muslim polemic, and Western politically correct advocacy to the actual discourse of devoted Muslims around the world today. Hexham takes seriously the sourcebooks through which Muslims understand their faith and practice, and the perspectives of recent authors whose influence shapes modern Muslim views. He rightly relies on some of the strongest scholarly studies of Islam for his analysis and evaluation, which sheds light on a subject that remains confusing for many Westerners.”

—**GORDON NICKEL**, author of *Narratives of Tampering in the Earliest Commentaries on the Qur’an and Peaceable Witness Among Muslims*

“I enjoyed the chapters on Indian religions enormously. They are enlightening and fascinating for anyone who has brushed the surface of India and its religious traditions. The author has produced a work that is very readable and thought-provoking, but more importantly, one that brings the religions to life in a practical way.”

—**BILL WARDEN**, Canadian Ambassador to Pakistan (1981–1983) and High Commissioner to India (1983–1986)

Crisp, comprehensive, packed with unusual insights, and refreshing in style, Hexham's book is invaluable for anyone wishing to understand the recent religious resurgence that has caught so many educated people by surprise, and shown up their tone deafness about all that is happening.

—OS GUINNESS, author of *The Case for Civility*

As Pope Benedict constantly reminds us, Christians today face a new situation where other religious traditions once more challenge Christian belief just as they did in the days of the apostles. This book helps us understand our non-Christian neighbors and as such is a valuable tool for all Catholic educators.

—HENRY ROSENBAUM, SAC Former Director of Education
for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary

This is not the conventional or predictable textbook on world religions. As a good teacher, Irving Hexham is not afraid to offer the kind of opinion or insight that is bound to provoke discussion and debate. This book is the fruit of many years of trying to encourage university students to engage meaningfully with the study of religion and is borne out of great experience.

—GERALD J. PILLAY, Vice-Chancellor (President)
and Rector, Liverpool Hope University

This textbook-type tour of world religions, spiced with personal close-ups, fully merits a place on thoughtful Christians' bookshelves. Informal and informative, learned, wise, chatty, and sometimes provocative, it is a very impressive performance.

—J. I. PACKER, Professor of Theology, Regent College

My former colleague from Regent College days, and long-time friend, Irving Hexham has written an absolutely fascinating book on world religions which reflects a balance and level of scholarship rarely found in introductory works. Therefore, I enthusiastically endorse this book.

—BRUCE WALTKE, Professor of Old Testament,
Knox Theological Seminary

Irving Hexham writes that “bland approaches [to the study of religion] produce bland students.” Irving Hexham is not bland, and by combining authoritative knowledge of the world’s religions with a keen eye for current events, he has given us a textbook that will not produce bland students. Instead it will produce students who know about religion and who know how religious people the world over relate to the crucial issues of the day.

—TERRY C. MUCK, Dean and Professor of Mission and World Religion, E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism, Asbury Theological Seminary

Irving Hexham is well known to his many readers through his publications on religious studies, both as a general field of research, as well as represented in various movements, both local and worldwide. In *Understanding World Religions*, his provocative work, especially on African and also Indian religious views, is worth the price of the volume. We need to examine these often neglected areas of study.

—GARY R. HABERMAS, Distinguished Research Professor and Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Theology, Liberty University

Often it is just scholars who take real interest in world religions and new religious movements. The only time most of us lift our heads is when we hear of some tragic event that shows us other people believe differently than we do. But this is the world we live in and Irving Hexham’s book is a resource that brings clarity to this vast world of religious beliefs. This book needs to be read and kept available on the bookshelf of every Christian leader.

—CARSON PUE, President, Arrow Leadership