

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

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De Soudy, Amanullah; Gonzalez, Michele. A. & Green, William. S. *Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: An Introduction to Monotheism*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2020, 256 p.

This is a lovely book. Based on team-teach course at the University of Miami, three leading scholars in Judaism, Christianity and Islam consider monotheism from their respective field of expertise. The book is simple, yet stimulating. It is an introductory volume to three of the great world religions – comparative, but distinctive – which offers and sympathetic approach to commonalities and differences.

The book is scholarly and accessible. It is direct and each chapter summarizes simply the approaches in each of the three religions to major canonical topics: Scripture, Creation, Covenant and Identity, Commandment: Ritual and Ethics, Peoplehood and Community, Gender, Sexuality, and Marriage, Redemption, Salvation, and Life After Death, Contemporary Monotheism. The book is rooted in the concept that monotheism is not monolithic. There is pluralism amongst religions (even monotheisms) and within religions. The book sensitively broaches this subject, nuancing widespread misconceptions about monotheism.

The value of this volume is that it is written for the Western academy by scholars from the peripheries. The perspectives from Israel, Latin America and Scottish-Pakistani scholars imbibe the volume with a timeliness, as research into each of the religions in the volume globalizes and localizes. The configurations of this double belonging are introduced adroitly in the course of the book, springing surprises and new perspectives for those familiar with the background literature.

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Although there are many introductory volumes on the market, this book stands out for its accessibility. Its simple structure, lack of references in the text, and explaining of academic jargon make it an eminently readable volume. The written text is also broken by interspersed images from accessible internet sources. It has a great bibliography for further study, and brings into play a number of websites to keep the attuned up to date with further sources. The questions for further study at the conclusion of each chapter make it a resource for use in the classroom, but also for use in the church, mosque, synagogue and community center.

The book is directed at undergraduate and post-graduate introductions to religions (particularly monotheism), as well as a wider readership interested in religion, monotheism or indeed any of the three religions addressed in the book. It could serve as a course textbook, or a text for a reading group.