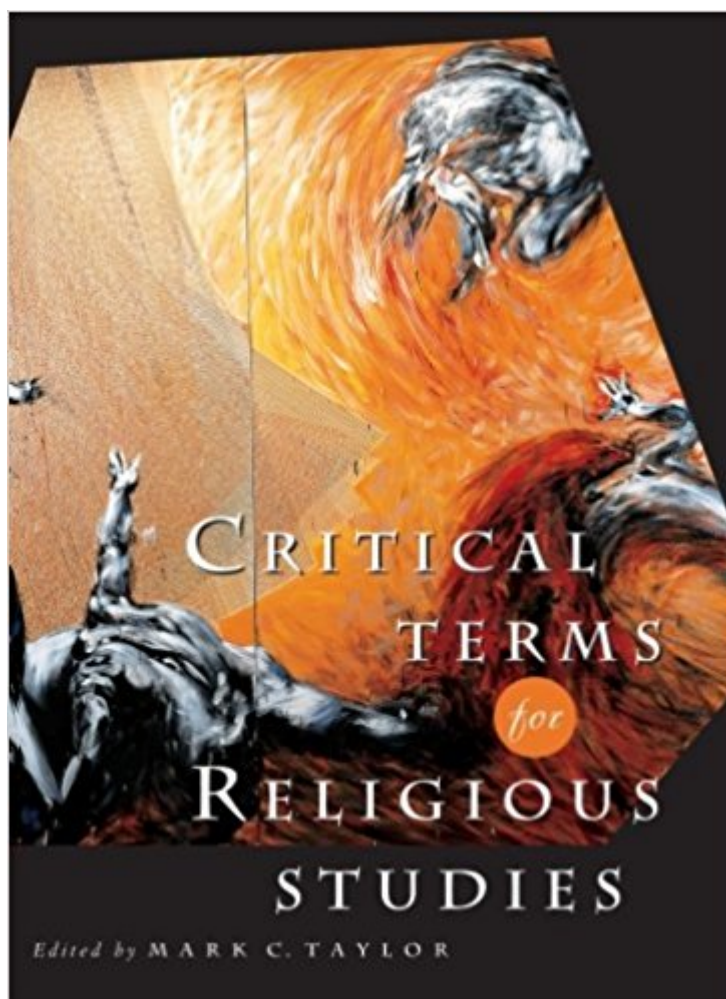


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# Critical Terms For Religious Studies



## Synopsis

A century that began with modernism sweeping across Europe is ending with a remarkable resurgence of religious beliefs and practices throughout the world. Wherever one looks today, from headlines about political turmoil in the Middle East to pop music and videos, one cannot escape the pivotal role of religious beliefs and practices in shaping selves, societies, and cultures. Following in the very successful tradition of *Critical Terms for Literary Studies* and *Critical Terms for Art History*, this book attempts to provide a revitalized, self-aware vocabulary with which this bewildering religious diversity can be accurately described and responsibly discussed. Leading scholars working in a variety of traditions demonstrate through their incisive discussions that even our most basic terms for understanding religion are not neutral but carry specific historical and conceptual freight. These essays adopt the approach that has won this book's predecessors such widespread acclaim: each provides a concise history of a critical term, explores the issues raised by the term, and puts the term to use in an analysis of a religious work, practice, or event. Moving across Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Native American and Mayan religions, contributors explore terms ranging from experience, territory, and image, to God, sacrifice, and transgression. The result is an essential reference that will reshape the field of religious studies and transform the way in which religion is understood by scholars from all disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, psychology, cultural studies, gender studies, and literary studies.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Taylor (humanities, Williams Coll.) has edited an intriguing resource for scholars of religious studies. While its title gives the false impression that this book is similar to a dictionary, it is actually a collection of 23 essays devoted to critical terms such as body, gender, God, and time. The contributor list reads like a who's who in religious, philosophical, and literary studies, and each term is explored in its widest theological and philosophical dimensions. Special emphasis is placed on each term's development and association with particular religious works, rituals, events, and worships. The attempt to be inclusive of all religions succeeds, although there is a predominance of Christian-based work. Of special interest are the essays on gender, body, time, and territory, areas of study presently in vogue. Though this book is intended for serious scholars, lay readers genuinely interested in religious studies will find it a rich source. Recommended for all libraries, especially theological ones. ?Glenn Masuchika, Chaminade Univ. Lib., Honolulu Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

An excellent resource book for any student of religious studies or any writer who needs a deeper understanding of the terms covered.

Very Good religious survey of important thoughts in history.

Thank You.

Critical Terms for Religious Studies is a wonderful introduction to religious studies. It uses interesting examples drawn from a wide range of religions to make its points clear. Topics are drawn from both obviously religious terminology, such as belief and God, to seemingly non-religious terms, such as culture and experience. The result is a deeply insightful book that gives the beginning student a lay of the religious studies landscape.

This book provides a theologian with a nice summary and dialogue of 22 concepts related to religious inquiry. The various authors draw on Tillich, Hegel, Heidegger, Kant and many other scholars to provide a format or review of the term being discussed. This is not a book meant for a lay person or beginning college student. A graduate theological student may find it appealing as an aid for her/his own research. As a college religion instructor, I had hoped this book would be a helpful tool for my students. It is too advanced.

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