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# Beyond the Threshold: Afterlife Beliefs and Experiences in World Religions

*Christopher M. Moreman*

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*Afterlife Beliefs and Experiences  
in World Religions*

CHRISTOPHER M. MOREMAN

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**Christopher M. Moreman : Beyond the Threshold: Afterlife Beliefs and Experiences in World Religions** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Beyond the Threshold: Afterlife Beliefs and Experiences in World Religions:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good overview of world religionsBy pastorkGood overview of world religions. Not too deep but not too shallow. Not enough for discussion based Masters level classes but good

basic text.4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Even to an amateur mythology buff like me these are red flags. I'm sorry, but this is such a poorly researched book I'm surprised it got past the editors, and that it was even released by a real publisher. First, it is filled with misunderstandings and false generalizations. This is really no surprise since it relies so much on totally outdated sources. Budge's translation of the Egyptian Book of the Dead is so widely known to be wrong to the point of uselessness that there was even a joke about it in the movie Stargate... but that's the translation used here. It also relies too much on other authors' summaries (like the very problematic Eliade). Even to an amateur mythology buff like me these are red flags! Basically, the author just does not know the material he's trying to work with, and didn't do a good job with his research, as shown by flat-out wrong statements, like that Egyptians revealed "very little about their afterlife beliefs," and that people in the ancient world lacked "detailed religious thought"! There are tons of in-depth, recent books about religions in the ancient world, and many volumes of translations of Egyptian afterlife books. With all the mistakes, I just didn't trust that Moreman was knowledgeable enough to write the book in the first place, and that got in the way of my enjoyment and appreciation of it. Seriously, the amount of misinformation in this book is mind-boggling, making it useless to students and general readers alike. The total lack of sophistication when it comes to theory and method, and the uncritical use of poor sources means it's also useless to scholars (the target audience isn't really clear). I know philosophy and religious studies is different from my own field (MA Political Science), but there are basic standards to any research work and this book doesn't meet them. The idea of this kind of comparison is an intriguing one, but in this book it's all just too broad and unfocused, so it's hard to see the point sometimes. I did find some of it thought-provoking, but the author doesn't follow the most interesting questions in any depth. I don't know anything about the paranormal stuff he discusses, but his conclusions are vague and don't seem to follow from the cases he summarizes. There are also a lot of contradictory statements and it all just seems pretty cursory and lazy. No matter how many times he claims he's doing "detailed" or "in-depth" analysis, he's just not. Maybe he thinks that if he tells us that enough we'll believe it's true. All in all a pretty slap-dash, unreliable affair, with a heavy-handed, pretentious, and sometimes muddled writing style. I'm glad I stumbled on this at my college's library and was able to read it for free rather than paying for such an amateurish piece of work.5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Awesome! By slapmaster This book is an amazing examination of how humans view death and the afterlife around the world. The comparative nature of the book makes it applicable to all social science disciplines and, additionally, an excellent read for non-academics. Dr. Moreman should be congratulated for such an interesting and timely work.

In every culture throughout history, people have asked the same fundamental question about what will happen to them when they die. From the underworld to the light at the end of the tunnel, beliefs and experiences of death abound. And even though we cannot know for sure what happens to us after death, our understanding of the afterlife can have a profound impact on how we live. *Beyond the Threshold* is the first book to seriously examine the afterlife through the lens of both world religions and metaphysical experiences. Christopher M. Moreman includes an introduction to the afterlife beliefs of ancient cultures, which are essential to understanding the roots of many modern ideas about death. He examines the folklore and doctrines of major world religions, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. He also discusses psychic phenomena across traditions, such as mediums, near-death and out-of-body experiences, and past-life memories. While ultimately the afterlife remains unknowable, Moreman's unique, in-depth exploration of both beliefs and experiences can help readers reach their own understanding of the afterlife and how to live. No other book in the field approaches the issue of the afterlife from so many angles, but Moreman weaves them skillfully together into an accessible and engaging book.

From Publishers Weekly California State University philosophy professor Moreman surveys ideas about the afterlife taught in world religions and manifest in psychic phenomena in this ambitious but pedestrian book. The breadth of his research is impressive, and the inclusion of the paranormal and inexplicable mediums, past-life memories, near-death experiences, apparitions affords a rational look at what many have taken seriously in a variety of cultures and epochs. The author is at his best in a concluding chapter that explains manifestations of the transcendent. Drawn from previous work, the final chapter shows more editorial polish than the rest of the book, which suffers from dull academic prose, frequently in the passive voice. On the whole, this could be a useful text for students, but less attractive for general readers. (Nov.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. The breadth of his research is impressive. . . . This could be a useful text for students. (Publishers Weekly) Christopher M. Moreman has written a useful, wide-ranging book on death and dying that should be a valuable resource in courses or for general readers. It is comprehensive, covering both perspectives in the world religions and investigations in contemporary research on experiences of the afterlife, and insightful in its comparative emphasis on beliefs and phenomena. This text makes an important contribution to the literature on religion, death, and dying. (Gary Laderman, chair and Goodrich C. White Professor of American Religious History and Cultures, Emory University) *Beyond the Threshold* presents valuable summaries of two distinct and important bodies of material: an overview of how major world religions view the afterlife, and modern empirical research on paranormal experiences that might be seen to

confirm or disprove the afterlife beliefs found in religion. Christopher M. Moreman analyzes this unique pairing of material in a balanced and respectful manner, opening up space for discussion about the intriguing interplay between traditional views of the afterlife and paranormal experiences. (Lucy Bregman, Temple University)A valuable book....As an introductory text it is excellent, and even for those well versed in the subject there is much to surprise and interest....This book is both timely and important. (Journal of the Society for Psychical Research)About the AuthorChristopher M. Moreman is assistant professor in the Department of Philosophy at California State University, East Bay, where he teaches courses in comparative religion.