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978-0-521-88148-7 - An Introduction to the Unitarian and Universalist Traditions

Andrea Greenwood and Mark W. Harris

Frontmatter

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE UNITARIAN AND UNIVERSALIST TRADITIONS

How is a free faith expressed, organized, and governed? How are diverse spiritualities and theologies made compatible? What might a religion based in reason and democracy offer today's world? This book will help the reader to understand the contemporary liberal religion of Unitarian Universalism in a historical and global context. Andrea Greenwood and Mark W. Harris challenge the view that the Unitarianism of New England is indigenous and the point from which the religion spread. Relationships between Polish radicals and the English Dissenters existed, and the English radicals profoundly influenced the Unitarianism of the nascent United States. Greenwood and Harris also explore the US identity as Unitarian Universalist since a 1961 merger, and its current relationship to international congregations, particularly in the context of twentieth-century expansion into Asia.

ANDREA GREENWOOD holds degrees from Hampshire College, Brown University, and Meadville Lombard, and is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, having served congregations in Atlanta, Georgia, and Watertown, Massachusetts. She has been active in disability advocacy work in the broader community, and brought her interest in special needs into subsequent work as a director of religious education.

MARK W. HARRIS is an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister, currently serving as Minister at the First Parish of Watertown, and has previously served as the Director of Information at the Unitarian Universalist Association. He is also adjunct professor at Andover Newton Theological School. He is the author of the *Historical Dictionary of Unitarian Universalism* (2004) and *Elite: Uncovering Classism in Unitarian Universalist History* (2010).

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521707718

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First published 2011

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Greenwood, Andrea, 1961–

An introduction to the Unitarian and Universalist traditions /

Andrea Greenwood, Mark W. Harris.

p. cm. – (Introduction to religion)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-88148-7 (hardback) – ISBN 978-0-521-70771-8 (pbk.)

I. Unitarian Universalist Association – Doctrines.

I. Harris, Mark W. II. Title.

BX984I.3.G74 2011

230'.9132 – dc23 2011017497

ISBN 978-0-521-88148-7 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-70771-8 Paperback

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*This book is dedicated to Sandy and Bruce Kirkman,
founding members of the Unitarian Universalists of
Transylvania County in Brevard, NC.*

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Acknowledgements

Without the support and flexibility of our congregation, the First Parish of Watertown, Massachusetts, this book could never have been written. We are grateful to them for their encouragement, and appreciate their role as home church to our sons Levi, Dana, and Asher. We love the history of our congregation, and admire the way members minister to one another. How lucky that we ended up among this group! We also wish to recognize the other congregations which have nurtured us along the way: The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Reading, Massachusetts, where Andrea grew up and was ordained; Third Unitarian in Chicago, where she worked as a student; Community Church of New York, her internship site; and Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Atlanta, her first settled ministry. Mark was ordained by and served St. Paul's Universalist Church in Palmer, Massachusetts; a congregation which supported him and his son, Joel, for some important years. He is also indebted to the First Parish of Milton, Massachusetts. Three British congregations have been wonderful homes to us, two of which remain open: Rosslyn Hill Chapel in London, and Underbank Chapel in Sheffield, where Mark had his first ministry after his student time at the Davis, California church. With an infant, a toddler and a four-year-old, we were able to return to Sheffield for a few months in 1999. It was a formative experience in ways we are still discovering! Lastly, we acknowledge the First Universalist Church of Rockland, Maine, where we are fortunate enough to spend some time each summer, and which was Andrea's grandmother's community.

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Certain figures in Unitarian history have become known through anglicized forms of their names. Texts produced in the twentieth-century United States virtually all use “Michael Servetus” and “Francis David” rather than the Spanish “Miguel” or Hungarian “Ferencz.” Moodelliar Vellazha is almost always referred to as “Robert Williams.” This book generally uses birth names, but does interchange those names with their English counterparts at times. The index uses birth names, and cross-references where necessary. Japanese names are indexed the way they are traditionally written, with family name first and no comma.