

An Introduction To Hinduism Introduction To Religion

Publisher Description

Introducing Hinduism, 2nd Edition is the ideal sourcebook for those seeking a comprehensive overview of the Hindu tradition. This second edition includes substantial treatments of Tantra, South India, and women, as well as expanded discussions of yoga, Vedanta and contemporary configurations of Hinduism in the West. Its lively presentation features: case studies, photographs, and scenarios that invite the reader into the lived world of Hinduism; introductory summaries, key points, discussion questions, and recommended reading lists at the end of each chapter; narrative summaries of the great epics and other renowned Hindu myths and lucid explanations of complex Indian philosophical teachings, including Sankhya and Kashmir Saivism; and a glossary, timeline, and pronunciation guide for an enhanced learning experience. This volume is an invaluable resource for students in need of an introduction to the key tenets and diverse practice of Hinduism, past and present.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a lone pilgrim reached Gujarat and joined a small ashram in Loj. In time, his followers not only accepted him as the leader of the ashram but also as the manifestation of deity and called him Swaminarayan. His followers increased rapidly and today Swaminarayan Hinduism is a transnational religious movement with major centers in India, East Africa, UK, USA, and Australasia. In a first multidisciplinary study of the movement, this volume provides new and vital information about its history, theology, as well as its transnational development, and brings forth current academic research from fields as diverse as the arts, architecture, sociology, and migration studies, among others. It analyses the philosophy, conduct, and principles that guide Swaminarayan Hindus and provides a case study of the historical and social processes of adapting religious traditions to shape new identities in response to evolving social, economic, and political changes.

Novel about a decaying Brahmin colony in a South Indian village.

The Power of the Dharma: An Introduction to Hinduism and Vedic Culture offers a concise and easy-to-understand overview of the essential principles and customs of the Hindu tradition. It also provides many insights into the depth and value of the timeless wisdom of Vedic spirituality and reveals why the Dharmic path has survived for thousands of years. Author Stephen Knapp reveals why the Dharma is presently enjoying a renaissance among an increasing number of people who want to explore its teachings and see what its many techniques of self-discovery have to offer. In The Power of the Dharma, you will find: quotes by noteworthy people on the unique qualities of Hinduism; essential principles of the Vedic spiritual path; particular traits, customs, and explanations of Hindu worship; descriptions of the main yoga systems; significance and legends of the colorful Hindu festivals; benefits of Ayurveda, Vastu, Vedic astrology, and gemology; important insights of Dharmic life and how to begin. The Dharmic path can provide you the means for attaining your own spiritual realizations and experiences. This is the power of Dharma's universal teachings which have something to offer everyone!

Introduces the texts and ideas of Hinduism, crystallized during the 4th to the 10th century BCE. This book explains their contemporary relevance and deals with the key concepts, the main gods and goddesses, and texts such as the Purusharthas. It also examines the different systems of yoga.

Heathens, Hindoo, Hindu is a groundbreaking analysis of American representations of religion in India before the turn of the twentieth century. In their representations of India, American writers from a variety of backgrounds described "heathens," "Hindoos," and, eventually "Hindus." Before Americans wrote about "Hinduism," they wrote about "heathenism," "the religion of the Hindoos," and "Brahmanism." Various groups interpreted the religions of India for their own purposes. Cotton Mather, Hannah Adams, and Joseph Priestley engaged the larger European Enlightenment project of classifying and comparing religion in India. Evangelical missionaries used images of "Hindoo heathenism" to raise support at home. Unitarian Protestants found a kindred spirit in the writings of Bengali reformer Rammohun Roy.

Transcendentalists and Theosophists imagined the contemplative and esoteric religion of India as an alternative to materialist American Protestantism, while popular magazines and common school books used the image of dark, heathen, despotic India to buttress Protestant, white, democratic American identity. Americans used the heathen, Hindoo, and Hindu as an other against which they represented themselves. The questions of American identity, classification, representation and the definition of "religion" that animated descriptions of heathens, Hindoos, and Hindus in the past still animate American debates today.

If by monotheism we mean the idea of a single transcendent God who creates the universe out of nothing (creatio ex nihilo), as in the Abrahamic religions, then that is not found in the history of Hinduism. But if we mean a supreme, transcendent deity who impels the universe, sustains it and ultimately destroys it before causing it to emerge once again, who is the ultimate source of all other gods who are her or his emanations, then this idea does develop within that history. It is a Hindu monotheism and its nature that is the topic of this Element.

This brief introduction to Hinduism is designed to help readers understand this important religious tradition. With both nuance and balance, this text provides broad coverage of various forms of Hinduism with an arresting layout with rich colors. It offers both historical overviews and modern perspectives on Hindu beliefs and practices. The user-friendly content is enhanced by charts of religious festivals, historic timelines, updated maps, and a useful glossary. It is ideal for courses on Hinduism and South Asian religions and will be a useful, concise reference for all readers eager to know more about this important religious tradition and its place in our contemporary world.

The esoteric Hindu traditions of Tantrism have profoundly influenced the development of Indian thought and civilization. Emerging from elements of yoga and wisdom traditions, shamanism, alchemy, eroticism, and folklore, Tantrism began to affect brahmanical Hinduism in the ninth century. Nevertheless, Tantrism and its key historical figures have been ignored by scholars. This accessible work introduces the concepts and practices of Hindu Sakta Tantrism to all those interested in Hinduism and the comparative study of religion.

Your hands-on guide to one of the world's major religions The dominant religion of India, "Hinduism" refers to a wide variety of religious traditions and philosophies that have developed over thousands of years. Today, the United States is home to approximately one million Hindus. If you've heard of this ancient religion and are looking for a reference that explains the intricacies of the customs, practices, and teachings of this ancient spiritual system, Hinduism For Dummies is for you! Provides a thorough introduction to this earliest and popular world belief system Information on the rites, rituals, deities, and teachings associated with the practice of Hinduism Explores the history and teachings of the Vedas, Brahmins, and Upanishads Offers insight into the modern daily practice of Hinduism around the world Continuing the Dummies tradition of making the world's religions engaging and accessible to everyone, Hinduism For Dummies is your hands-on, friendly guide to this fascinating religion.

The Hindu Way: An Introduction to Hinduism, the new book by bestselling author Shashi Tharoor, whose last three books have sold over a quarter of a million copies in hardback, is the perfect introduction to one of the world's oldest, largest and most complex religions. Although there are hundreds of books on Hinduism, there are only a few which provide a lucid, accessible, yet deeply layered account of the religion's numerous belief systems, schools of thought, sects, tenets, scriptures, deities, rituals, customs, festivals and philosophies. This book is one of them.

Most overviews of Hindu belief and practice follow a history from the ancient Vedas to today. Such approaches privilege Brahmanical traditions and create a sense of Hinduism as a homogenous system and culture, and one which is largely unchanging and based solely on sacred texts. In reality, modern Hindu faith and culture present an extraordinary range of dynamic beliefs and practices. 'Contemporary Hinduism' aims to capture the full breadth of the Hindu worldview as practised today, both in the sub-continent and the diaspora. Global and regional faith, ritualised and everyday practice, Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical belief, and ascetic and devotional traditions are all discussed. Throughout, the discussion is illustrated with detailed case material and images, whilst key terms are highlighted and explained in a glossary. 'Contemporary Hinduism' presents students with a lively and engaging survey of Hinduism, offering an introduction to the oldest and one of the most complex of world religions.

India is a highly diverse country, home to a wide array of languages, religions, and cultural traditions. Analyzing the dynamic religious traditions of this democratic nation sheds light on the complex evolution from India's past to today's modern culture. Written by leading experts in the field, Religions of India provides students with an introduction to India's vibrant religious faiths. To understand its heritage and core values, the beginning chapters introduce the indigenous Dharmic traditions of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, while the later chapters examine the outside influences of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These chapters are designed for cross-religious comparison, with the history, practices, values, and worldviews of each belief system explained. The final chapter helps students relate what they have learnt to religious theory, preparing the way for future study. This thoroughly revised second edition combines solid scholarship with clear and lively writing to provide students with an accessible and comprehensive introduction to religion in India. This is the ideal textbook for students approaching religion in Asia, South Asia, or India for the first time. Features to aid study include: discussion questions at the end of each chapter, images, a glossary, suggestions for further reading, and an Companion Website with additional links for students to further their study.

"I have read Arthur Herman's Introduction to Hinduism with considerable interest and pleasure. It is bold and innovative, clearly written, well organized, and quite provocative." —Eliot Deutsch
University of Hawaii at Manoa "

Renowned lecturer from The Teaching Company, Mark W. Muesse brings readers into an encounter with the world's oldest living religious tradition, known as Hinduism. Muesse's brief survey, challenges the perception of Hinduism as one religious tradition, showing how wonderfully rich and diverse this 5,000-year old story truly is. He traces the vast history and practices of classic and diverse traditions, moving from the origins in the Indus Valley up through classic and contemporary periods. Muesse exhibits a keen sense of the myriad spiritualities associated with Hinduism, demonstrating how the religious tradition is both monotheistic and polytheistic.

Hinduism is practised by nearly eighty per cent of India's population, and by some seventy million people outside India. In this Very Short Introduction, Kim Knott offers a succinct and authoritative overview of this major religion, and analyses the challenges facing it in the twenty-first century. She discusses key preoccupations of Hinduism such as the centrality of the Veda as religious texts, the role of Brahmins, gurus, and storytellers in the transmission of divine truths, and the cultural and moral importance of epics such as the Ramayana. In this second edition Knott considers the impact of changes in technology and the flourishing of social media on Hinduism, and looks at the presence of Hinduism in popular culture, considering pieces such as Sita Sings the Blues. She also analyses recent developments in India, and the impact issues such as Hindu nationalism and the politicization of Hinduism have on Hindus worldwide. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

A fresh introduction to an ancient religion Explaining the origins, beliefs, scriptures and philosophies of this ancient religion, Klaus K. Klostermaier succeeds in capturing the rich diversity of rituals and gods that comprise Hinduism, while keeping the tone both engaging and informative. Covering contemporary issues such as the relationship between Hinduism and modern Western ideas, and imminent challenges the religion faces, this sweeping exploration of a fascinating and long-lasting belief system is essential reading for students, followers, and interested readers alike.

Since its inception over two hundred years ago, Swaminarayan Hinduism has flourished into a transnational movement described as one of the fastest growing Hindu groups in the world. Despite being one of the largest and most visible Hindu traditions both in India and the West, surprisingly little is known about what the Swaminarayan fellowship believes. An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hindu Theology provides a comprehensive doctrinal account of the Swaminarayan tradition's belief system, drawing on its rich corpus of theological literature, including the teachings of Swaminarayan himself and classical commentaries on canonical Ved?ntic texts. Part I delineates the sources and tools of Swaminarayan Hindu theology, while Part II systematically expounds upon its distinctive five eternal entities - Parabrahman, Ak?arabrahman, m?y?, ??vara and j?va - and mukti (spiritual liberation). In presenting these key themes theologically and lucidly, Swami Paramtattvadas makes the Swaminarayan Hindu belief system intelligible to scholars, students and serious readers.

Kandiah Sivaloganathan's A Brief Introduction to Hinduism, is a handy tool for all those who yearn to understand the philosophy behind one of the world's oldest religions - Hinduism. Also known as Sanatana Dharma (or the eternal law), Hinduism took birth in the Indian subcontinent thousands of years ago and is still followed by more than a billion followers worldwide. However, in today's busy world, it's nearly impossible to gain an in-depth understanding of one's faith and pass it on to the next generation. That's exactly the issue Sivaloganathan tries to address in his book, with regards to Hinduism. It's a go-to book for all your queries regarding the Hindu faith. The author tries to bring together the various aspects of Hinduism - from its myriad deities, saints, sages, rituals, prayers, scriptures, to modern science and its association with the principles of this ancient religion. This Book attempts to provide answers to: What is Hinduism? Why do Hindus pray to different deities What is the power of prayer and mantras? What does Hindus mean by karma, creation and reincarnation? How is Hinduism connected to nature and science? In today's world, when everyone is too busy to read and understand their religion, this book provides a basis, a simple reference, to understand Hinduism. It is written in simple, readable language.

Copiously Illustrated, Hinduism, An Introduction, Covers The Various Aspects Of Hinduism, Its Main Scriptures, Tenets And Beliefs, And Its Social And Cultural Ethos. Condition Good.

Hinduism is the oldest living religion of the world and the most complex in terms of its philosophy and practices. This volume looks at the antiquity, definition, and significance of Hinduism, providing a thorough and scholarly understanding of the basic and essential aspects of the eternal tradition useful to both lay practitioners and students.

A much-needed, comprehensive and up-to-date thematic and historical survey of Hinduism.

An Introduction to Hinduism Cambridge University Press

Covering the earliest Sanskrit rulebooks through to the codification of 'Hindu law' in modern times, this interdisciplinary volume examines the interactions between Hinduism and the law. The authors present the major transformations to India's legal system in both the colonial and post colonial periods and their relation to recent changes in Hinduism. Thematic studies show how law and Hinduism relate and interact in areas such as ritual, logic, politics, and literature, offering a broad coverage of South Asia's contributions to religion and law at the intersection of society, politics and culture. In doing so, the authors build on previous treatments of Hindu law as a purely text-based tradition, and in the process, provide a fascinating account of an often neglected social and political history.

Study of various Hindu schools of thought, with emphasis on the notion of tradition and esoterism.

The vastness of Hinduism and some aspects of Indian culture have been systematically put together in this compact book. It talks about the revered gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon; it tells us why Krishna is blue; why the cow is sacred; why have Hindu gods been depicted with several arms, and soon.

'Defining Hinduism' focuses on what Hinduism is, what it has been, and what some have argued it should be. The oldest of the world religions, Hinduism presents a complex pantheon and system of beliefs. Far from being unchanging, Hinduism has, like any faith of duration, evolved in response to changing cultural, political and ideological demands. The book brings together some of the leading scholars working on South Asian religions today.

On Hinduism is a penetrating analysis of many of the most crucial and contested issues in Hinduism, from the Vedas to the present day. In a series of 63 connected essays, it discusses Hindu concepts of polytheism, death, gender, art, contemporary puritanism, non-violence, and much more.

"Informs readers about the spiritual, cultural and social heritage of Hinduism. Part I features a brief history and core beliefs of Hinduism, its sacred texts, various denominations, mandirs, holy men and women, sacred places, rivers, festivals, rituals, and sacred symbols and objects. Part II features sadhana, great devotees of God, rishi-scientists of India, Hindu perceptions, Hindu way of life, Hindu reformers, concept of creation, and frequently asked questions on Hinduism."--Page 4 of cover.

Hinduism: A Reader offers a comprehensive guide to this major world religion through a combination of passages from scriptures and excerpts from the work of leading scholars in the field. Introduces students to the main textual, regional, intellectual, philosophical, historical, and contemporary traditions of the Hindu faith Includes excerpts from both canonical ancient texts and thought-provoking contemporary texts to offer a balanced overview of the religion Features selections that are concise without sacrificing essential material Provides clearly written introductions to each section that help situate the readings within the wider context of Hindu scholarship.

The author presents an introduction to this ancient and often baffling religion, presenting its many contradictions while offering coverage of its many traditions, theologies, and deities. Original.

An engrossing and definitive narrative account of history and myth that offers a new way of understanding one of the world's oldest major religions, The Hindus elucidates the relationship between recorded history and imaginary worlds. Hinduism does not lend itself easily to a strictly chronological account: many of its central texts cannot be reliably dated even within a century; its central tenets karma, dharma, to name just two arise at particular moments in Indian history and differ in each era, between genders, and caste to caste; and what is shared among Hindus is overwhelmingly outnumbered by the things that are unique to one group or another. Yet the greatness of Hinduism - its vitality, its earthiness, its vividness - lies precisely in many of those idiosyncratic qualities that continue to inspire debate today. Wendy Doniger is one of the foremost scholars of Hinduism in the world. With her inimitable insight and expertise Doniger illuminates those moments within the tradition that resist forces that would standardize or establish a canon. Without reversing or misrepresenting the historical hierarchies, she reveals how Sanskrit and vernacular sources are rich in knowledge of and compassion toward women and lower castes; how they debate tensions surrounding religion, violence, and tolerance; and how animals are the key to important shifts in attitudes toward different social classes. The Hindus brings a fascinating multiplicity of actors and stories to the stage to show how brilliant and creative thinkers - many of them far removed from Brahmin authors of Sanskrit texts - have kept Hinduism alive in ways that other scholars have not fully explored. In this unique and authoritative account, debates about Hindu traditions become platforms from which to consider the ironies, and overlooked epiphanies, of history.

"Jeffery D. Long traces the history of the Jain community from founding sage Mah?v?ra to the present day. He explores asceticism, worship, the life of the Jain layperson, relations between Jainism and other Indic traditions, the Jain philosophy of relativity, and the implications of Jain ideals for the contemporary world." --book cover.

An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hinduism, third edition, offers a comprehensive study of a contemporary form of Hinduism. Begun as a revival and reform movement in India 200 years ago, it has now become one of the fastest growing and most prominent forms of Hinduism. The Swaminarayan Hindu transnational network of temples and institutions is expanding in India, East Africa, the UK, USA, Australasia, and in other African and Asian cities. The devotion, rituals, and discipline taught by its founder, Sahajanand Swami (1781-1830) and elaborated by current leaders in major festivals, diverse media, and over the Internet, help preserve ethnic and religious identity in many modern cultural and political contexts. Swaminarayan Hinduism, here described through its history, divisions, leaders, theology and practices, provides valuable case studies of contemporary Hinduism, religion, migrants, and transnationalism. This new edition includes up-to-date information about growth, geographic expansion, leadership transitions, and impact of Swaminarayan institutions in India and abroad.

Why do Hindus revere the cow? Must Hindus be vegetarian? Hinduism is the world's oldest religion, yet the word 'Hindu' was never used before the 18th century by Hindus to describe themselves. It is defined as polytheistic, but Gandhi declared that a Hindu needn't believe in any god. It is a religion as much of myth as of history - it has no founder, no single authoritative book, even few central doctrines. Introducing Hinduism offers a guide to the key philosophical, literary, mythological and cultural traditions of the extraordinarily diverse faith. It untangles the complexities of Hinduism's gods and goddesses, its caste system and its views on sex, everyday life and asceticism. Vinay Lal and Borin Van Loon's hugely enjoyable tour through Hinduism also explores its links with and differences from Buddhism, Jainism and other religions, the resurgence of Hindu extremism, the phenomenon of Bollywood and the overseas Hindu diaspora.

Your essential guide to the Vedas When were the Vedas written, and why? Who were the people who composed them? Where did they come from, how did they live? Questions, conjectures and debates go hand in hand with the Vedas, the sacred keystone texts of Hinduism. Now, noted historian Roshen Dalal sifts through centuries of information and research to present, in a straightforward and succinct manner, an account of the Vedas that is authoritative yet accessible, thus appealing to both scholars and lay readers. In this book, key insights into the Vedas are complemented by a celebration of the poetry that lies within the texts. Using socio-economic data and archaeological and linguistic research, the author introduces us to the Vedic era, enabling us to understand the culture and philosophy that produced

these ancient and sublime texts. • Based on original research and numerous authoritative sources, including auxiliary texts and early commentaries • Appendices featuring selected hymns from all four Vedas, and listing all the hymns that make up the Rig Veda • Conveniently cross-referenced with a wealth of information

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