

## Hinduism Introducing Religions

The Historical Dictionary of Hinduism relates the history of Hinduism through a chronology, an introductory essay, photos, an extensive bibliography, and over 1,000 cross referenced dictionary entries on Hindu terminology, names of major historical figures and movements, gods and goddesses, prominent temples, terms for items used in Hindu practice, major texts, philosophical concepts, and more. This book is an excellent access point for students, researchers, and anyone wanting to know more about Hinduism.

"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.

This title was first published in 2003. Can a text be used either to validate or to invalidate contemporary understandings? Texts may be deemed 'sacred', but sacred to whom? Do conflicting understandings matter? Is it appropriate to try to offer a resolution? For Hindus and non-Hindus, in India and beyond, Valmiki is the poet-saint who composed the epic Rā mĀ yaōa. Yet for a vocal community of dalits (once called

'untouchables'), within and outside India, Valmiki is God. How then does one explain the popular story that he started out as an ignorant and violent bandit, attacking and killing travellers for material gain? And what happens when these two accounts, Valmiki as God and Valmiki as villain, are held simultaneously by two different religious groups, both contemporary, and both vocal? This situation came to a head with controversial demonstrations by the Valmiki community in Britain in 2000, giving rise to some searching questions which Julia Leslie now seeks to address.

Understanding Hinduism today requires an understanding of how it is practised in the contemporary world. Stephen Jacob's new introduction tackles these central issues, beginning with case studies of the grassroots practice of Hinduism in India and in diaspora communities. He covers issues of singular importance in the modern study of Hinduism, including the importance and role of mass media to this essentially orally transmitted religion. Other major areas covered include the concept of Hindu dharma, particularly in relation to caste, gender and Hindu nationalism, key and often controversial concepts in Hinduism.

This masterful survey of world religions presents a clear and concise portrait of the history, beliefs, and practices of Eastern and Western religions. The new edition contains added material and has been revised throughout. The authors, both respected scholars of world religions, have over fifty years of combined teaching experience. Their book is accessibly written for introductory classes, can be easily adapted for one- or

two-semester courses, and presents a neutral approach for broad classroom use. Pedagogical aids include further reading suggestions, photographs, sidebars, and pronunciation guides. An 800-question bank of multiple-choice test questions is available to professors through Baker Academic's Textbook eSources.

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.

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World Religions in Practice introduces five of the world's great religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – and explores how they are lived and expressed in custom, ritual, and symbol. A major new textbook exploring the world's great religions through their customs, rituals and everyday practices – by focusing on this 'lived experience' it goes beyond many traditional introductions to religious studies. Adopts a directly comparative approach to develop a greater understanding of the nature of religion. Each chapter engages with an individual theme, such as birth, death, food, pilgrimage and ethics, to illustrate how religious practices are expressed. Broadens students' understanding by offering an impartial discussion of the similarities and differences between each religion. Includes chapter-by-chapter opening themes and summaries, and will be accompanied by a website at [www.blackwellpublishing.com/gwynne](http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/gwynne) featuring additional resources and study questions.

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

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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.

This magisterial Norton Anthology, edited by world-renowned scholars, offers a portable library of more than 1,000 primary texts from the world's major religions. To help readers encounter strikingly unfamiliar texts with pleasure; accessible introductions, headnotes, annotations, pronouncing glossaries, maps, illustrations and chronologies are provided. For readers of any religion or none, *The Norton Anthology of World Religions* opens new worlds that, as Miles writes, invite us "to see others with a measure of openness, empathy, and good will..."

Unprecedented in scope and approach, *The Norton Anthology of World Religions: Christianity* brings together over 150 texts from the Apostolic Era to the New Millennium. The volume features Jack Miles's illuminating General Introduction—"How the West Learned to Compare Religions"—as well as

Lawrence S. Cunningham's "The Words and the Word Made Flesh," a lively primer on the history and core tenets of Christianity.

Hinduism in Practice offers a unique understanding of the living tradition. Drawing on eye witness reports of Hinduism on the ground, the book provides a reflective context within which practices can be understood and appreciated.

Hinduism is currently followed by one-fifth of humankind. Far from a monolithic theistic tradition, the religion comprises thousands of gods, a complex caste system, and hundreds of languages and dialects. Such internal plurality inspires vastly ranging rites and practices amongst Hinduism's hundreds of millions of adherents. It is therefore not surprising that scholars have been hesitant to define universal Hindu beliefs and practices. In this book, Axel Michaels breaks this trend. He examines the traditions, beliefs, and rituals Hindus hold in common through the lens of what he deems its "identificatory habitus," a cohesive force that binds Hindu religions together and fortifies them against foreign influences. Thus, in his analysis, Michaels not only locates Hinduism's profoundly differentiating qualities, but also provides the framework for an analysis of its social and religious coherence. Michaels blends his insightful arguments and probing questions with introductions to major historical epochs, ample textual

sources as well as detailed analyses of major life-cycle rituals, the caste system, forms of spiritualism, devotionalism, ritualism, and heroism. Along the way he points out that Hinduism has endured and repeatedly resisted the missionary zeal and universalist claims of Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists. He also contrasts traditional Hinduism with the religions of the West, "where the self is preferred to the not-self, and where freedom in the world is more important than liberation from the world." Engaging and accessible, this book will appeal to laypersons and scholars alike as the most comprehensive introduction to Hinduism yet published. Not only is Hinduism refreshingly new in its methodological approach, but it also presents a broad range of meticulous scholarship in a clear, readable style, integrating Indology, religious studies, philosophy, anthropological theory and fieldwork, and sweeping analyses of Hindu texts.

While historical tradition is explored from as far back as pre-Aryan times in the fascinating ancient civilization that existed in India a few thousand years BCE, later expressions of religion and philosophy that informed early Hindu tradition are gleaned from its sacred texts. The author examines how present beliefs and practices have been informed by past traditions, and the resulting accommodation in Hinduism today. The book serves as an introduction to the two

strands of theism and philosophical thought that emerged from early scriptures as they are expressed independently in Hinduism as well as in those traditions where they are woven together to create new religious movements.

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.

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. Why do people study religion? How have they studied it in the past? How do we study religion today? Is the academic study of religion the same as religious education? These and many other questions are addressed in this engaging introduction to the discipline of religious studies, written by two experienced university teachers. The authors have crafted this book to familiarize novice students with key concepts and terminology in the study of religion. More advanced students will find a varied array of theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches to the field. Topics include: definitions of religion perspectives in the study and teaching of religion how religion began to be

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studied: traditional perspectives – philosophical and theological how people experience religion: perspectives in the study of religious consciousness and perception – phenomenological and psychological studying religion within communities: Social and cultural perspectives – anthropological, sociological, political and economic judging religion: critical perspectives –feminist approaches, the interaction of popular literature and religion contextual perspectives – historical and comparative. The book encourages students to think critically about the theories and methods presented. Students will find arguments for the strengths and limitations of these approaches, understand connections among religious studies and other intellectual movements, and develop their own ideas of how they might want to go about the study of religion. Summary boxes, a timeline, a glossary and other pedagogic aids help students grasp key concepts, along with a companion website at [www.sastor.com](http://www.sastor.com). 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 selection of Gandhiji s articles drawn mainly from his contributions to young india, the Harijan

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and the Navjivan on Hinduism. Written on different occasions, these articles present a picture of hindu dharma in all its richness, comprehensiveness and sensitivity to the existential delimitations of human existence.

The "Core Teachings of the Dalai Lama" series begins with this small book of teachings by His Holiness, the perfect introduction to traditional Tibetan Buddhist thought and practice. There is no one more suited to introduce beginners—and remind seasoned practitioners—of the fundamentals of Tibetan Buddhism than His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Speaking to an audience of Western students, the Dalai Lama shows us how to apply basic Buddhist principles to our day-to-day lives. Starting with the very foundation of Buddhism, the Four Noble Truths, he provides the framework for understanding the Buddha's first teachings on suffering, happiness, and peace. He follows with commentary on two of Buddhism's most profound texts: The Eight Verses on Training the Mind and Atisha's Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment, often referring to the former as one of his main sources of inspiration for the practice of compassion. With clear, accessible language and the familiar sense of humor that infuses nearly all of his work, the Dalai Lama invites us all to develop innermost awareness, a proper understanding of the nature of reality, and heartfelt compassion for all beings. This book was previously published under the title *Lighting the Way*.

The first volume of Eliot's engaging and comprehensive introduction to the Eastern faiths of Hinduism and Buddhism is presented here. Sir Charles Eliot sets out to explain and demystify the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, beliefs and cultures for a Western audience. His explanations - which are clear, readable and accessible - are derived from decades spent living in Asia and the Far East as a diplomat and administrator. Independently researching the

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religions of these localities was both his past time and an attempt at understanding the deep seated traditions held for thousands of years by the local peoples. We begin the first volume with a lengthy introduction, whereby Eliot lays out his intentions for his ambitious work. Following this, Eliot examines the earliest manifestations of faith in ancient India and Eastern Asia. The Vedic belief system in particular holds interest, while the traditions of meditation and asceticism are also examined. The book is logically divided into topical chapters, each of which concern specific subjects or figures significant to the Hindu or Buddhist religion, or both. Different types of faith lead Eliot to draw distinctions; the specific between Pali Buddhism for example occupy a great portion of this first volume. Although the title alludes only to Hinduism and Buddhism, Eliot also makes extensive allusion to Jainism and Islam. He is keen to note the fact that the spread and contest over influence of peoples to a large extent intertwine the histories of all the religions of the East. Hinduism and Buddhism, An Historical Sketch manages to explain and introduce two of the world's major religions in a digestible, intriguing manner. Charles Eliot's writing style rarely strays to dryness, and each chapter remains close to its stated subject. There are few examples of religious studies as embracing and well-researched as Sir Charles Eliot's, immersed as he was in the cultures of the East. Novel about a decaying Brahmin colony in a South Indian village.

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

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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.

The six major orthodox schools of philosophical thought in Hinduism, known as the orthodox darsanas, are concerned with the nature of reality and it is this theme which unites them. The text begins by analyzing the concept of knowledge, and what constitutes real knowledge. Four topics - the self, causality, the concept of God, and liberation - are then examined.

This leading textbook for world religion is designed to help students in their study and research of the world's religious traditions. Known and valued for its balanced approach and its respected board of consulting editors, this text addresses ways to study religion, provides broad coverage of diverse religions, and offers an arresting layout with rich illustrations.

Introductory sections on understanding religion and the religions of antiquity lay the foundation for the study of the numerous religious traditions highlighted in the volume, including indigenous religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, and Chinese, Korean, and Japanese religions. The user-friendly content is enhanced by charts of religious festivals, historic timelines, updated maps of the world's religions, and a useful glossary. Both historical overviews and modern perspectives for each religion are included.

This third edition has several updates, including a new design, a new section on women and religion, and a newly revised section on religions in today's world.

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The study of religion encompasses ordinary human social practice and is not limited to the extraordinary or divine. 'Introducing Religion' brings together leading international scholars in the field of religious studies to examine religion as integral to everyday social practice. The book establishes a theoretical framework for the study of religion to analyse prayer, ritual, science, morality and politics in relation to the world's major religions. It will be of interest to students of theory and method in religious studies seeking a clear introduction to the multifaceted nature of religion.

The Focus Of This Book Is On The Essential Beliefs Of The Hindu Religion; It Introduces The Reader To The Vedas Including Sanskrit To English Translation Of Mantras. The Book Also Focuses On Spiritual Aspects Of The Raj Yoga, Definitions Of Certain Words Like Mantra, Karma, Etc.

Conventional approaches to Hinduism typically stress its classical religious tradition with an emphasis on the Brahmin texts and practices. Frequently neglected are the practices of lower caste Indians, the role of women in the culture, the religious life of village folk, devotion to the deity Rama, and the Sant tradition of North India. *The Many Colors of Hinduism* is the first introductory text to provide a balanced view of this rich religious tradition, acknowledging the full range of its many competing and even contradictory aspects. Utilizing a thematic-historical approach, Carl Olson draws on a wide array of textual evidence, the fieldwork of anthropologists in close contact with insiders, and voices of thinkers ranging from Indologist Alf Hiltebeitel to Cambridge scholar Julius Lipner. The result is a narrative approach that offers a view of Hinduism that emulates the storytelling nature of the religion itself. Covering ancient times to the present and explaining important cultural metaphors, symbols, and narratives not

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generally found in other introductory textbooks, Olson offers students a new perspective of a religion that is more varied than most Westerners realize. *The Many Colors of Hinduism* will be essential reading for undergraduate courses in world or Asian religions.

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

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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.

An illustrated introduction to five of the great religious traditions of the world examines the principles, practices, tenets, and history of Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Shinto, in a detailed study designed to help those in the West who wish to move closer to the spirit of the East. Original.

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.

Introducing Religion, 4/e explores the different ways of looking at religion in the twenty-first century. A broad overview to religious studies as a discipline introduces students to the various subjects of religion. Introducing Religion teaches readers how to think in academic religious



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studies and its main areas, including: sociology of religion, psychology of religion, history of religion, religion and art, ethics, and more. The fourth edition has been expanded with new chapters exploring topics of contemporary interest: myth, spiritual paths, religion and popular culture, religion in the computer age, religion and war. Contemporary topics engage today's students, relating the topics to the changing world around them.

This volume addresses issues of tremendous topical relevance: the transmission of Hinduism to the United States, Gandhi's religious politics and secularism, analysis of 'Vande Mataram' and its immensely rich history, popular patriotism in Hindi cinema, and much more.

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.

"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 "

Introducing Hinduism Routledge

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.

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