Unifying Hinduism Philosophy And Identity In Indian Intellectual History South Asia Across The Disciplines

A translation of the Īśvara Gītā, a parallel text to the Bhagavad Gītā that promotes religious inclusion. While the Bhagavad Gītā is an acknowledged treasure of world spiritual literature, few people know a parallel text, the Īśvara Gītā. This lesser-known work is also dedicated to a god, but in this case it is Śiva, rather than Kṛṣṇa, who is depicted as the omniscient creator of the world. Andrew J. Nicholson's Lord Śiva's Song makes this text available in English in an accessible new translation. A work of both poetry and philosophy, the Īśvara Gītā builds on the insights of Patañjali's Yoga Sūtra and foreshadows later developments in tantric yoga. It deals with the pluralistic religious environment of early medieval India through an exploration of the relationship between the gods Śiva and Viṣṇu. The work condemns sectarianism and violence and provides a strategy for accommodating conflicting religious claims in its own day and in our own. "This is an excellent introduction to, and a sound scholarly translation of, a foundational text. Andrew J. Nicholson is a first-rate scholar." — Andrew O. Fort, author of Jīvanmukti in Transformation: Embodied Liberation in Advaita and Neo-Vedanta

In ancient China, the preparation of food and the offering up of food as a religious sacrifice were intimately connected with models of sagehood and ideas of self-cultivation and morality. Drawing on received and newly excavated written sources, Roel Sterckx's book explores how this vibrant culture influenced the ways in which the early Chinese explained the workings of the human senses, and the role of sensory experience in communicating with the spirit world. The book, which begins with a survey of dietary culture from the Zhou to the Han, offers intriguing insights into the ritual preparation of food – some butchers and cooks were highly regarded and would rise to positions of influence as a result of their culinary skills – and the sacrificial ceremony itself. As a major contribution to the study of early China and to the development of philosophical thought, the book will be essential reading for students of the period, and for anyone interested in ritual and religion in the ancient world.

This book provides a fresh insight into the role of identity in international and national relations and policy. The book presents a discourse on national identity in India, the events from 1990-2003, and how these have influenced the engagement of India with others, especially with Pakistan and China. In this process, it reveals several surprising insights, along with the

challenges that confront the country.

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.

The True Believer

Terrains of Exchange

Self-Consciousness and Personal Identity from Descartes to Hume

The Basics

Making Sense of Tantric Buddhism

An Interpretation of the Great Mystics, East and West

A Liberal Theory of Majority Rights

Placing the contemporary discussion on personal laws in India in historical perspective, this important book views the debate as a critical component of Indian democracy. Balancing the imperatives of multiculturalism, national integration, and gender justice, it affirms that there is a complex continuity between the terms of the debate in the postcolonial Indian state and its colonial counterpart.

The Cultural Defense of Nations presents a timely, thought-provoking thesis on some of the most pressing issues of our time-global immigration, majority groups, and national identity. Never in human history has so much attention been paid to human movement. Global migration yields demographic shifts of historical significance, profoundly shaking up world politics-as has been seen in the refugee crisis, the Brexit referendum, and the 2016 U.S. election. The Cultural Defense of Nations addresses one of the greatest challenges facing liberalism today: is a liberal state justified in restricting immigration and access to citizenship in order to protect its majority culture? Liberal theorists and human rights advocates recognize the rights of minorities to maintain their unique cultural identity, but assume that majorities have neither a need for similar rights nor a moral

ground for defending them. The majority culture, so the argument goes, "can take care of itself." However, with more than 250 million immigrants worldwide, majority groups increasingly seek to protect what they consider to be their national identity. In recent years, liberal democracies have introduced proactive immigration and citizenship policies that are designed to defend the majority culture. This book shifts the focus from the prevailing discussion of cultural minority rights and, for the first time, addresses the cultural rights of majorities. It proposes a new approach by which liberal democracies can welcome immigrants without fundamentally changing their cultural heritage, forsaking their liberal traditions, or slipping into extreme nationalism. Disregarding the topic of cultural majority rights is not only theoretically wrong, but also politically unwise. With forms of "majority nationalism" rising and the growing popularity of extreme right-wing parties in the West, time has come to liberally address the new challenge.

"Its theme is political fanaticism, with which it deals severely and brilliantly." —New Yorker The famous bestseller with "concise insight into what drives the mind of the fanatic and the dynamics of a mass movement" (Wall St. Journal) by the legendary San Francisco longshoreman. A stevedore on the San Francisco docks in the 1940s, Eric Hoffer wrote philosophical treatises in his spare time while living in the railroad yards. The True Believer—the first and most famous of his books—was made into a bestseller when President Eisenhower cited it during one of the earliest television press conferences. Called a "brilliant and original inquiry" and "a genuine contribution to our social thought" by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., this landmark in the field of social psychology is completely relevant and essential for understanding the world today as it delivers a visionary, highly provocative look into the mind of the fanatic and a penetrating study of how an individual becomes one.

"Tracing the development of Indian philosophy as a single tradition of thought, these two volumes provide a classical exposition of Indian thought. The author showcases ancient philosophical texts and relates them to contemporary issues of philosophy and religion. He presents the essential meaning and significance of individual texts and philosophies and also draws parallels between Indian and western philosophical traditions. The first volume covers the Vedic and Epic periods, including expositions on the hymns of the Rig-Veda, the Upanishads, Jainism, Buddhism, and the theism of the Bhagvadgita. The second investigates the six Brahmanical philosophical systems, the theism of Ramanuja, Saiva ethics, metaphysicas and literature, and the theism of the later Vaishnavas." "This second edition, with a new Introduction by eminent philosopher, J.N. Mohanty,

underlines the continuing relevance of the two volumes and the philosophic tradition they represent. Lucidly written, these books will form essential reading for students, teachers, scholars of Indian philosophy as well as general reader interested in the development and growth of Indian thought."--Jacket.
Cut-Pieces
Gandhi After 9/11
People Trees
Unifying Hinduism
The Oxford Handbook of Indian Philosophy
Infinite Paths to Infinite Reality
Lord Siva's Song
PRACTICAL TEACHINGS FOR PEACE AND FULFILLMENT In this clear introduction to the Vedanta philosophy of India, you'll discover a new perspective that can bring inner peace, inner strength and improve your relationships for a happier life. This spiritual book written by Paul Hourihan, an American, introduces these ancient teachings in a way that Westerners, in particular, can easily relate to and understand. Why learn about the teachings of Vedanta? - According to Vedanta, ignorance of our real nature is the cause of our suffering and grief. The practical application of this philosophy is the means to Self-discovery, integration and inner peace for those of all faiths and those with no particular faith. - By stressing the universal truths common to all religions, they provide a unifying basis for mutual understanding and peace in a world increasingly fragmented by opposing beliefs. - They provide a foundation for understanding why a moral and ethical life are necessary. - This knowledge gives us the means for realizing our true identity as Children of Immortal Bliss. Using the teachings of the Upanishads, this study covers the main principles and core concepts of Vedanta and covers important subjects such as meditation, nonattachment. It also provides an overview of the mysticism of India and a summary of the Yoga system of thought, as well as the Bhagavad Gita, another key Vedantic scripture. The last section reveals the universality of these teachings through confirmations of great mystics from other traditions including

Plotinus, Lao Tzu, Meister Eckhart and the Sufis of Islam. Vedanta shows the way to inner peace, harmony among all peoples, and respect for all life.

Some postcolonial theorists argue that the idea of a single system of belief known as "Hinduism" is a creation of nineteenth-century British imperialists. Andrew J. Nicholson introduces another perspective: although a unified Hindu identity is not as ancient as some Hindus claim, it has its roots in innovations within South Asian philosophy from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries. During this time, thinkers treated the philosophies of Vedanta, Samkhya, and Yoga, along with the worshippers of Visnu, Siva, and Sakti, as belonging to a single system of belief and practice. Instead of seeing such groups as separate and contradictory, they re-envisioned them as separate rivers leading to the ocean of Brahman, the ultimate reality. Drawing on the writings of philosophers from late medieval and early modern traditions, including Vijnanabhiksu, Madhava, and Madhusudana Sarasvati, Nicholson shows how influential thinkers portrayed Vedanta philosophy as the ultimate unifier of diverse belief systems. This project paved the way for the work of later Hindu reformers, such as Vivekananda, Radhakrishnan, and Gandhi, whose teachings promoted the notion that all world religions belong to a single spiritual unity. In his study, Nicholson also critiques the way in which Eurocentric concepts—like monism and dualism, idealism and realism, theism and atheism, and orthodoxy and heterodoxy—have come to dominate modern discourses on Indian philosophy.

A free open access ebook is available upon publication. Learn more at www.luminosoa.org. During the height of Muslim power in Mughal South Asia, Hindu and Muslim scholars worked collaboratively to translate a large body of Hindu Sanskrit texts into the Persian language. Translating Wisdom reconstructs the intellectual processes and exchanges that underlay these translations. Using as a case study the 1597 Persian rendition of the Yoga-Vasistha—an influential Sanskrit philosophical tale whose popularity stretched across the subcontinent—Shankar Nair illustrates how these early modern Muslim and Hindu scholars drew upon their respective religious, philosophical, and literary traditions to forge a common vocabulary through which to understand one another. These scholars thus achieved, Nair argues, a nuanced cultural exchange and interreligious and cross-philosophical

dialogue significant not only to South Asia's past but also its present.
The Handbook of Hinduism in Europe portrays and analyses Hindu traditions in every country in Europe. It presents the main Hindu communities, religious groups, forms and teachings present in the continent and shows that Hinduism have become a major religion in Europe.
Hinduism
On the Transreligious Future of Religions
Worship of Trees in Northern India
The Early Modern Subject
Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam
The Perennial Philosophy
Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History

'The Ocean of God'conveys the proposition that the future of religions, if they will not want to contribute to the destruction of humanity, will become transreligious. Based on the assumption that the spiritual impulse of humanity cannot simply be eradicated, religiosity will persist in transreligious forms, as secularizations, naturalizations and transhumanist dreams only envision such transformations, but fall short in their ability to replace the force of spirituality to further civilized peace of human existence on Earth and its future in evolutionary, ecological and cosmological dimensions. In relating the contributions of religious pluralism to the concept of the unity of religions, which have arisen in this "new axial age" for overcoming the checkered history of religions in furthering peace, the program of a polyphilic pluralism with its transreligious discourse, based on the insight of the fundamental relativity of (religious) truth and the special contributions of process philosophy and theology as well as the Bahá'í universe of thought, analyses and projects a new religiosity or spirit enabling religions to overcome their deepest motives of strife and warfare.

Sri Ramakrishna is widely known as a nineteenth-century Indian mystic who affirmed the harmony of all religions on the basis of his richly varied spiritual experiences and eclectic religious practices, both Hindu and non-Hindu. In Infinite Paths to Infinite Reality, Ayon Maharaj argues that Sri Ramakrishna was also a sophisticated philosopher of great contemporary relevance. Through a careful study of Sri Ramakrishna's recorded oral teachings in the original Bengali, Maharaj reconstructs his philosophical positions and analyzes them from a cross-cultural perspective. Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual journey culminated in the exalted state of "vijñana," his term for the "intimate knowledge" of God as the Infinite Reality that is both personal and impersonal, with and without form, immanent in the universe and beyond it. This expansive spiritual standpoint of vijñana, Maharaj contends, opens up a new paradigm for addressing central issues in cross-cultural philosophy of religion, including divine infinitude, religious pluralism, mystical experience, and the problem of evil. Sri Ramakrishna's vijñana-based religious pluralism--when grasped in all its subtlety--proves to have major philosophical advantages over dominant Western models. Moreover, his mystical testimony and teachings not only cut across long-standing debates about the nature of mystical experience but also bolster recent defenses of its epistemic value. Maharaj further demonstrates that Sri Ramakrishna's unique response to the problem of evil

resonates strongly with Western "soul-making" theodicies and contemporary theories of skeptical theism. A pioneering interdisciplinary study of one of India's most important philosopher-mystics, Maharaj's book is essential reading for scholars and students in philosophy of religion, theology, religious studies, and Hindu studies.

In terms of public opinion, new religious movements are considered controversial for a variety of reasons ranging from how they speak, dress, and eat, to the way they think and their sense of community. Their social organization often runs counter to popular expectations by experimenting withcommunal living (or strict individualism), alternative leadership roles (or flat network structures), unusual economic dispositions, and new political and ethical values. As a result the general public views new religions with a mixture of curiosity, amusement, and anxiety, sustained by lavish mediaemphasis on oddness and tragedy rather than familiarity and lived experience. This updated and revised second edition of Controversial New Religions offers a scholarly, dispassionate look at those groups that have generated the most attention, including some very well-known classical groups like The Family, Unification Church, Scientology, and Jim Jones' People's Temple; somerelative newcomers such as the Kabbalah Centre, the Order of the Solar Temple, Branch Davidians, Heaven's Gate, and the Falun Gong; and some interesting cases like contemporary Satanism, the Raelians, Black nationalism, and various Pagan groups. Written by established scholars as well as youngerexperts in the field, each essay combines an overview of the history and beliefs of each organization or movement with original and insightful analysis. By presenting decades of scholarly work on new religious movements in an accessible form, this book will be an invaluable resource for all thosewho seek a view of new religions that is deeper than what can be found in sensationalistic media stories.

Some postcolonial theorists argue that the idea of a single system of belief known as "Hinduism" is a creation of nineteenth-century British imperialists. Andrew J. Nicholson introduces another perspective: although a unified Hindu identity is not as ancient as some Hindus claim, it has its roots in innovations within South Asian philosophy from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries. During this time, thinkers treated the philosophies of Vedanta, Samkhya, and Yoga, along with the worshippers of Visnu, Siva, and Sakti, as belonging to a single system of belief and practice. Instead of seeing such groups as separate and contradictory, they re-envisioned them as separate rivers leading to the ocean of Brahman, the ultimate reality. Drawing on the writings of philosophers from late medieval and early modern traditions, including Vijnanabhiksu, Madhava, and Madhusudana Sarasvati, Nicholson shows how influential thinkers portrayed Vedanta philosophy as the ultimate unifier of diverse belief systems. This project paved the way for the work of later Hindu reformers, such as Vivekananda, Radhakrishnan, and Gandhi, whose teachings promoted the notion that all world religions belong to a single spiritual unity. In his study, Nicholson also critiques the way in which Eurocentric concepts--like monism and dualism, idealism and realism, theism and atheism, and orthodoxy and heterodoxy--have come to dominate modern discourses on Indian philosophy.

The Ocean of God

Indian Identity Narratives and the Politics of Security

Being Different : An Different Challenge To Western Universalism

Religious Economies of Global Islam

Food, Sacrifice, and Sagehood in Early China

Hindu-Muslim Intellectual Interactions in Early Modern South Asia

Heathen, Hindoo, Hindu

Examining the constitutional and legal foundations of the place of religion in India, Articles of Faith studies the relationship between religion and state. It closely analyses the decisions of the Supreme Court from the 1950s on Articles 25–30 of the Indian Constitution, as well as other relevant laws and constitutional provisions. The book discusses the Supreme Court's interpretation of the constitutional right to freedom of religion and its influence on the discourse of secularism and nationalism. While examining the role of the Court in defining and demarcating religion as well as religious freedom, practices, and organizations, this volume also highlights important issues such as interpretative traditions and legal doctrines developed by the judiciary over the years. This new edition has an expanded and revised introduction, which looks at the new literature on secularism and religious jurisprudence, both in India and other secular democracies. It also includes an afterword, which examines recent landmark judgments on religion by the Supreme Court of India, such as the one on triple talaq.

India has a long, rich, and diverse tradition of philosophical thought, spanning some two and a half millennia and encompassing several major religious traditions. This Very Short Introduction emphasizes the diversity of Indian thought, and is structured around six schools which have achieved classic status. Sue Hamilton explores how the traditions have attempted to understand the nature of reality in terms of an inner or spiritual quest, and introduces distinctively Indian concepts such as karma and rebirth. She also shows how Indian thinkers have understood issues of reality and knowledge — issues which are also an important part of the Western philosophical tradition. 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.

An inspired gathering of religious writings that reveals the "divine reality" common to all faiths, collected by Aldous Huxley "The Perennial Philosophy," Aldous Huxley writes, "may be found among the traditional lore of peoples in every region of the world, and in its fully developed forms it has a place in every one of the higher religions." With great wit and stunning intellect—drawing on a diverse array of faiths, including Zen Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Christian mysticism, and Islam—Huxley examines the spiritual beliefs of various religious traditions and explains how they are united by a common human yearning to experience the divine. The Perennial Philosophy includes selections from Meister Eckhart, Rumi, and Lao Tzu, as well as the Bhagavad Gita, Tibetan Book of the Dead, Diamond Sutra, and Upanishads, among many others.

Heathen, 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." BeforeAmericans 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 ofclassifying 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 andesoteric 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 otheragainst 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.
Language Conflict and Language Rights
Mystical Encounters with the Natural World
Articles of Faith
Experiences and Explanations
Religion, Secularism, and the Indian Supreme Court
A Quest into the Hindu Identity
Children of Immortal Bliss
Eastern Philosophy: The Basics is an essential introduction to major Indian and Chinese philosophies, both past and present. Exploring familiar metaphysical and ethical questions from the perspectives of different Eastern philosophies, including Confucianism, Daoism, and strands of Buddhism and Hinduism, this book covers key figures, issues, methods and concepts. Questions discussed include: What is the 'self'? Is human nature inherently good or bad? How is the mind related to the world? How can you live an authentic life? What is the fundamental nature of reality? Throughout the book the relationships between Eastern Philosophy, Western Philosophy and the questions reflective people ask within the contemporary world are brought to the fore. With timelines highlighting key figures and their contributions, a list of useful websites and further reading suggestions for each topic, this engaging overview of fundamental ideas in Eastern Philosophy is valuable reading for all students of philosophy and religion, especially those seeking to understand Eastern perspectives.
This is a book about religious conceptions of trees within the cultural world of tree worship at the tree shrines of northern India. Sacred trees have been worshipped for millennia in India and today tree worship continues there among all segments of society. In the past, tree worship was regarded by many Western anthropologists and scholars of religion as a prime example of childish animism or decadent "popular religion." More recently this aspect of world religious cultures is almost completely ignored in the theoretical concerns of the day. David Haberman hopes to demonstrate that by seriously investigating the world of Indian tree worship, we can learn much about not only this prominent feature of the landscape of South Asian religion, but also something about the cultural construction of nature as well as religion overall. The title People Trees relates to the content of this book in at least six ways. First, although other sacred trees are examined, the pipal-arguably the most sacred tree in India-receives the greatest attention in this study. The Hindi word "pipal" is pronounced similarly to the English word "people."Second, the

"personhood" of trees is a commonly accepted notion in India. Haberman was often told: "This tree is a person just like you and me." Third, this is not a study of isolated trees in some remote wilderness area, but rather a study of trees in densely populated urban environments. This is a study of trees who live with people and people who live with trees. Fourth, the trees examined in this book have been planted and nurtured by people for many centuries. They seem to have benefited from human cultivation and flourished in environments managed by humans. Fifth, the book involves an examination of the human experience of trees, of the relationship between people and trees. Haberman is interested in people's sense of trees. And finally, the trees located in the neighborhood tree shrines of northern India are not controlled by a professional or elite class of priests. Common people have direct access to them and are free to worship them in their own way. They are part of the people's religion. Haberman hopes that this book will help readers expand their sense of the possible relationships that exist between humans and trees. By broadening our understanding of this relationship, he says, we may begin to think differently of the value of trees and the impact of deforestation and other human threats to trees.

This book provides novel analyses of religion, the Roman 'religio', the construction of 'religions' in India and the nature of cultural differences. It also shows how the dynamic of Christianity as a religion has brought forth the western culture.

Terrains of Exchange offers a bold new paradigm for understanding the expansion of Islam in the modern world. Through the model of religious economy, it traces the competition between Muslim, Christian and Hindu religious entrepreneurs that transformed Islam into a proselytising global brand. Drawing Indian, Arab, Iranian and Tatar Muslims together with Scottish missionaries and African-American converts, Nile Green brings to life the local sites of globalisation where Islam was repeatedly reinvented in modern times. Evoking terrains of exchange from Russia's imperial borderlands to the factories of Detroit and the ports of Japan, he casts a microhistorian's eye on the innovative new Islams that emerged from these sites of contact. Drawing on a multilingual range of materials, the book challenges the idea that globalisation has given rise to a unified "global Islam." Instead, it reveals the forces behind the fracturing of Islam in the hands of feuding and fissiparous "'religious firms". Terrains of Exchange not only presents global history as Islamic history. It also reveals the forces of that history at work in the world today.

Ethnolinguistic Perspectives on Human Conflict

Creative Nonviolence and Sustainability

American Representations of India, 1721-1893

Postcolonial Politics and Personal Laws

The Children of the Immortal

Handbook of Hinduism in Europe (2 vols)

Hinduism and Law

Making Sense of Tantric Buddhism fundamentally rethinks the nature of the transgressive theories and practices of the Buddhist Tantric traditions, challenging the notion that the Tantras were "marginal" or primitive and situating them instead—both ideologically and institutionally—within larger trends in mainstream Buddhist and Indian culture. Critically surveying prior scholarship, Wedemeyer exposes the fallacies of attributing Tantric transgression to either the passions of lusty monks, primitive tribal rites, or slavish imitation of Śaiva traditions. Through comparative analysis of modern

historical narratives—that depict Tantrism as a degenerate form of Buddhism, a primal religious undercurrent, or medieval ritualism—he likewise demonstrates these to be stock patterns in the European historical imagination. Through close analysis of primary sources, Wedemeyer reveals the lived world of Tantric Buddhism as largely continuous with the Indian religious mainstream and deploys contemporary methods of semiotic and structural analysis to make sense of its seemingly repellent and immoral injunctions. Innovative, semiological readings of the influential Guhyasamaja Tantra underscore the text's overriding concern with purity, pollution, and transcendent insight—issues shared by all Indic religions—and a large-scale, quantitative study of Tantric literature shows its radical antinomianism to be a highly managed ritual observance restricted to a sacerdotal elite. These insights into Tantric scripture and ritual clarify the continuities between South Asian Tantrism and broader currents in Indian religion, illustrating how thoroughly these "radical" communities were integrated into the intellectual, institutional, and social structures of South Asian Buddhism. "Who is a Hindu?" This question mystifies both Hindus and non-Hindus around the world. Many Hindus, having lived in cosmopolitan cities across the globe, have not been brought up in a traditional Hindu society and are often at a loss to comprehend and describe their own identity. Their claim to being Hindu rests solely on their birth in a Hindu household. Western society also finds that Hinduism, with its countless gods, rituals and beliefs, does not fit its concept of an organised religion. In popular view, Hinduism may just be 'a way of life' and consequently the Hindu identity is perceived to be vague and non-uniform. Which of their many ancient books do the Hindus follow? How do they choose which gods to worship? What does karma actually mean? These questions are natural. The Hindu identity is complex, and bears the social, philosophical and religious influences of a long past. However, it continues to be well-defined. This book explains how it is so, and shows how the Hindu identity remains relevant in contemporary times and the global context. The varied elements that have shaped the Hindu identity are explored in the book. It demystifies ancient Hindu scriptures such as the Vedas and the Manusmriti, and provides engaging summaries of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. It tracks the influence of philosophies such as Vedanta, Tantra and Yoga, as well as the effect of exposure to Western thought. It also discusses contemporary issues such as the status of women, religious pluralism and the caste system today. The anecdotal style of narration makes subtle and complex topics easily comprehensible to all ages. Anyone who seeks an explanation of the Hindu identity, regardless of belief or age, will enjoy reading this book and will benefit from its contents. 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. Devotional Sovereignty: Kingship and Religion in India investigates the shifting conceptualization of sovereignty in the South Indian kingdom of Mysore during the reigns of Tipu Sultan (r. 1782-1799) and Krishnaraja Wodeyar III (r. 1799-1868). Tipu Sultan was a Muslim king famous for resisting British dominance until his death; Krishnaraja III was a Hindu king who succumbed to British political and administrative control. Despite their differences, the courts of both kings dealt with the changing political landscape by turning to the religious and mythical past to construct a royal identity for their kings. Caleb Simmons explores the ways in which these two kings and their courts modified and adapted pre-modern Indian notions of sovereignty and kingship in reaction to British intervention. The religious past provided an idiom through which the Mysore courts could articulate their rulers' claims to kingship in the region, attributing their rule to divine election and employing religious vocabulary in a variety of courtly genres and media. Through critical inquiry into the transitional early colonial period, this study sheds new light on pre-modern and modern India, with implications for our understanding of contemporary politics. It offers a revisionist history of the accepted narrative in which Tipu Sultan is viewed as a radical Muslim reformer and Krishnaraja III as a powerless British puppet. Simmons paints a picture of both rulers in which they work within and from the same understanding of kingship, utilizing devotion to Hindu gods, goddesses, and gurus to perform the duties of the king.

Indra's Net

An Introduction

The Isvara Gita

Eastern Philosophy

The Cultural Defense of Nations

The Millennial Sovereign

Sri Ramakrishna and Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Religion

Udo Thiel presents a critical evaluation of the understanding of self-consciousness and personal identity in early modern philosophy. He explores over a century of European philosophical debate from Descartes to Hume, and argues that our interest in human subjectivity remains strongly influenced by the conceptual framework of early modern thought.

At the end of the sixteenth century and the turn of the first Islamic millennium, the powerful Mughal emperor Akbar declared himself the most sacred being on earth. The holiest of all saints and above the distinctions of religion, he styled himself as the messiah reborn. Yet the Mughal emperor was not alone in doing so. In this field-changing study, A. Azfar Moin explores why Muslim sovereigns in this period began to imitate the exalted nature of Sufi saints. Uncovering a startling yet widespread phenomenon, he shows how the charismatic pull of sainthood (wilayat)—rather than the draw of religious law (sharia) or holy war (jihad)—inspired a new style of sovereignty in

Islam. A work of history richly informed by the anthropology of religion and art, The Millennial Sovereign traces how royal dynastic cults and shrine-centered Sufism came together in the imperial cultures of Timurid Central Asia, Safavid Iran, and Mughal India. By juxtaposing imperial chronicles, paintings, and architecture with theories of sainthood, apocalyptic treatises, and manuals on astrology and magic, Moin uncovers a pattern of Islamic politics shaped by Sufi and millennial motifs. He shows how alchemical symbols and astrological rituals enveloped the body of the monarch, casting him as both spiritual guide and material lord. Ultimately, Moin offers a striking new perspective on the history of Islam and the religious and political developments linking South Asia and Iran in early-modern times.

Imagine watching an action film in a small-town cinema hall in Bangladesh, and in between the gun battles and fistfights a short pornographic clip appears. This is known as a cut-piece, a strip of locally made celluloid pornography surreptitiously spliced into the reels of action films in Bangladesh. Exploring the shadowy world of these clips and their place in South Asian film culture, Lotte Hoek builds a rare, detailed portrait of the production, consumption, and cinematic pleasures of stray celluloid. Hoek's innovative ethnography plots the making and reception of Mintu the Murderer (2005, pseud.), a popular, Bangladeshi B-quality action movie and fascinating embodiment of the cut-piece phenomenon. She begins with the early scriptwriting phase and concludes with multiple screenings in remote Bangladeshi cinema halls, following the cut-pieces as they appear and disappear from the film, destabilizing its form, generating controversy, and titillating audiences. Hoek's work shines an unusual light on Bangladesh's state-owned film industry and popular practices of the obscene. She also reframes conceptual approaches to South Asian cinema and film culture, drawing on media anthropology to decode the cultural contradictions of Bangladesh since the 1990s.

Some postcolonial theorists argue that the idea of a single system of belief known as "Hinduism" is a creation of nineteenth-century British imperialists. Andrew J. Nicholson introduces another perspective: although a unified Hindu identity is not as ancient as some Hindus claim, it has its roots in innovations within South Asian philosophy from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries. During this time, thinkers treated the philosophies of Vedanta, Samkhya, and Yoga, along with the worshippers of Visnu, Siva, and Sakti, as belonging to a single system of belief and practice. Instead of seeing such groups as separate and contradictory, they re-envisioned them as separate rivers leading to the ocean of Brahman, the ultimate reality. Drawing on the writings of philosophers from late medieval and early modern traditions, including Vijnanabhiksu, Madhava, and Madhusudana Sarasvati, Nicholson shows how influential thinkers portrayed Vedanta philosophy as the ultimate unifier of diverse belief systems. This project paved the way for the work of later Hindu reformers, such as Vivekananda, Radhakrishnan, and Gandhi, whose teachings promoted the notion that all world religions belong to a single spiritual unity. In his study,

Nicholson also critiques the way in which Eurocentric concepts like monism and dualism, idealism and realism, theism and atheism, and orthodoxy and heterodoxy have come to dominate modern discourses on Indian philosophy.

Asia, the West and the Dynamic of Religion

Transnational Commercial Surrogacy in India

Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements

A Very Short Introduction

Colonial Legal Legacies and the Indian State

Indian Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction

Kingship and Religion in India

Surrogacy is IndiaÕs new form of outsourcing, as couples from all over the world hire Indian women to bear their children for a fraction of the cost of surrogacy elsewhere with little to no government oversight or regulation. In the first detailed ethnography of IndiaÕs surrogacy industry, Amrita Pande visits clinics and hostels and speaks with surrogates and their families, clients, doctÕrs, brokers, and hostel matrons in order to shed light on this burgeoning business and the experiences of the laborers within it. From recruitment to training to delivery, PandeÕs research focuses on how reproduction meets production in surrogacy and how this reflects characteristics of IndiaÕs larger labor system. PandeÕs interviews prove surrogates are more than victims of disciplinary power, and she examines the strategies they deploy to retain control over their bodies and reproductive futures. While some women are coerced into the business by their families, others negotiate with clients and their clinics to gain access to technologies and networks otherwise closed to them. As surrogates, the women Pande meets get to know and make the most of advanced medical discoveries. They traverse borders and straddle relationships that test the boundaries of race, class, religion, and nationality. Those who focus on the inherent inequalities of IndiaÕs surrogacy industry believe the practice should be either banned or strictly regulated. Pande instead advocates for a better understanding of this complex labor market, envisioning an international model of fair-trade surrogacy founded on openness and transparency in all business, medical, and emotional exchanges.

The Oxford History of Hinduism: Modern Hinduism focuses on developments resulting from movements within the tradition as well as contact between India and the outside world through both colonialism and globalization. Divided into three parts, part one considers the historical background to modern conceptualizations of Hinduism. Moving away from the reforms of the 19th and early 20th century, part two includes five chapters each presenting key developments and changes in religious practice in modern Hinduism. Part three moves to issues of politics, ethics, and law. This section maps and explains the powerful legal and political contexts created by the modern state--first the colonial government and then the Indian Republic--which have shaped Hinduism in new ways. The last two chapters look at Hinduism outside India focusing on Hinduism in Nepal and the modern Hindu diaspora.

As the colonial hegemony of empire fades around the world, the role of language in ethnic conflict has become increasingly topical, as have issues concerning the right of speakers to choose and use their preferred language(s). Such rights are often asserted and defended in response to their being violated. The importance of understanding these events and issues, and their relationship to individual, ethnic, and national identity, is central to research and debate in a range of fields outside of, as well as within, linguistics. This book provides a clearly written introduction for linguists and non-specialists alike, presenting basic facts about the role of language in the formation of identity and the preservation of culture. It articulates and explores categories of conflict and language rights abuses through detailed presentation of illustrative case studies, and distills from these key cross-linguistic and cross-cultural generalizations.

'Rajiv Malhotra's insistence on preserving difference with mutual respect - not with mere "tolerance" - is even more pertinent today because the notion of a single universalism is being propounded. There can be no single universalism, even if it assimilates or, in the author's words, "digests", elements from other civilizations' - Kapila Vatsyayan In Being Different: An Indian Challenge to Western Universalism, thinker and philosopher Rajiv Malhotra addresses the challenge of a direct and honest engagement on differences, by reversing the gaze, repositioning India from being the observed to the observer and looking at the West from the dharmic point of view. In doing so, he challenges many hitherto unexamined beliefs that both sides hold about themselves and each other. He highlights that while unique historical revelations are the basis for Western religions, dharma emphasizes self-realization in the body here and now. He also points out the integral unity that underpins dharma's metaphysics and contrasts this with Western thought and history as a synthetic unity. Erudite and engaging, Being Different critiques fashionable reductive translations and analyses the West's anxiety over difference and fixation for order which contrast the creative role of chaos in dharma. It concludes with a rebuttal of Western claims of universalism, while recommending a multi-civilizational worldview.

Modern Hinduism

Translating Wisdom

Devotional Sovereignty

A New Perspective on Our True Identity Based on the Ancient Vedanta Philosophy of India

Celluloid Obscenity and Popular Cinema in Bangladesh

History, Semiology, and Transgression in the Indian Traditions

'The Heathen in his Blindness...'

Some experiences of the natural world bring a sense of unity, knowledge, self-transcendence, eternity, light, and love. This is the first detailed study of these intriguing phenomena. Paul Marshall explores the circumstances, characteristics, and after-effects of this important but relatively neglected type of mystical experience, and critiques explanations that range from the spiritual and metaphysical to the psychoanalytic, contextual, and neuropsychological. The theorists discussed include R. M. Bucke,

Edward Carpenter, W. R. Inge, Evelyn Underhill, Rudolf Otto, Sigmund Freud, Aldous Huxley, R. C. Zaehner, W. T. Stace, Steven Katz, and Robert Forman, as well as contemporary neuroscientists. The book makes a significant contribution to current debates about the nature of mystical experience. Douglas Allen argues that Gandhi offers to us the most profound and influential theory, philosophy, and engaged practices of ahimsa or nonviolence. Embracing Gandhi's insightful critiques of modernity, the book sees his approach as a creative and challenging catalyst to rethink our positions today. We live in a post-9/11 world that is defined by widespread physical, psychological, economic, political, cultural, religious, technological, and environmental violence and that is increasingly unsustainable. The author's central claim is Gandhi, when selectively appropriated and creatively reformulated and applied, is essential for formulating new positions that are more nonviolent and more sustainable. These provide resources and hope for dealing with our contemporary crises. The author analyzes what a Gandhi-informed, valuable but humanly limited swaraj technology looks like and what a Gandhi-informed, more egalitarian, interconnected, bottom-up, decentralized world of globalization looks like. The book focuses on key themes in Gandhi's thought, such as violence and nonviolence, Absolute Truth and relative truth, ethical and spiritual living. Challenging us to consider nonviolent, moral, and truthful transformative alternatives today, the author moves through essays on Gandhi in the age of technology; Gandhi after 9/11 and 26/11 terrorism; Gandhi's controversial views on the Bhagavad-Gita and Hind Swaraj; Gandhi and Vedanta; Gandhi on socialism; Gandhi and marginality, caste, class, race, and oppressed others.

Originating in the Atharva Veda, the concept of Indra's Net is a powerful metaphor for interconnectedness. It was transmitted via Buddhism's Avatamsaka Sutra into Western thought, where it now resides at the heart of post-modern discourse. According to this metaphor, nothing ultimately exists separately by itself and all boundaries can be deconstructed. This book invokes Indra's Net to articulate the open architecture, unity and continuity of Hinduism. Seen from this perspective, Hinduism defies pigeonholing into the traditional, modern and post-modern categories by which the West defines itself; rather, it becomes evident that Hinduism has always spanned all three categories simultaneously and without contradiction.It is fashionable among intellectuals to assert that dharma traditions lacked any semblance of unity before the British period, and that the contours of contemporary Hinduism were bequeathed to us by our colonial masters. Such arguments routinely target Swami Vivekananda, a key interlocutor who shattered many deeply rooted prejudices against Indian civilization. They accuse him of having camouflaged various alleged 'contradictions' within traditional Hinduism, and charge him with having appropriated the principles of Western religion to 'manufacture' a coherent and unified worldview and set of practices known today as Hinduism.Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity provides a foundation for theories that slander contemporary Hinduism as

illegitimate, ascribing sinister motives to its existence, and characterizing its fabric as oppressive. Rajiv Malhotra offers a detailed, systematic rejoinder to such views, and articulates the multidimensional, holographic understanding of reality that grounds Hindu dharma. He also argues that Vivekananda's creative interpretations of Hindu dharma informed and influenced many Western intellectual movements of the post-modern era. Indeed, as he cites with many insightful examples, appropriations from Hinduism have provided a foundation for cutting-edge discoveries in several fields, including cognitive science and neuroscience.

The Oxford Handbook of Indian Philosophy tells the story of philosophy in India through a series of exceptional individual acts of philosophical virtuosity. It brings together forty leading international scholars to record the diverse figures, movements, and approaches that constitute philosophy in the geographical region of the Indian subcontinent, a region sometimes nowadays designated South Asia. The volume aims to be ecumenical, drawing from different locales, languages, and literary cultures, inclusive of dissenters, heretics and sceptics, of philosophical ideas in thinkers not themselves primarily philosophers, and reflecting India's north-western borders with the Persianate and Arabic worlds, its north-eastern boundaries with Tibet, Nepal, Ladakh and China, as well as the southern and eastern shores that afford maritime links with the lands of Theravda Buddhism. Indian Philosophy has been written in many languages, including Pali, Prakrit, Sanskrit, Malayalam, Urdu, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali, Marathi, Persian, Kannada, Punjabi, Hindi, Tibetan, Arabic and Assamese. From the time of the British colonial occupation, it has also been written in English. It spans philosophy of law, logic, politics, environment and society, but is most strongly associated with wide-ranging discussions in the philosophy of mind and language, epistemology and metaphysics (how we know and what is there to be known), ethics, metaethics and aesthetics, and metaphilosophy. The reach of Indian ideas has been vast, both historically and geographically, and it has been and continues to be a major influence in world philosophy. In the breadth as well as the depth of its philosophical investigation, in the sheer bulk of surviving texts and in the diffusion of its ideas, the philosophical heritage of India easily stands comparison with that of China, Greece, the Latin west, or the Islamic world.

Controversial New Religions
Wombs in Labor
Indian Philosophy