During the Second Year

JOHN JT (Buddhism): I am fortunate to have all three of my dissertation advisors in this group and so I am enjoying learning with my professors all at once. It is also informative to watch professors write and rewrite.

Joe (Judaism): Graduate students are not much trained or encouraged to enjoy themselves, but I am having fun and learning a lot at the same time. Being involved makes my thinking more fluid and malleable, and helps my writing and my teaching.

The experience of the graduate students is not the most prominent topic within these appendices, but reporting on it in closing this appendix is most apt. After all, the project from the beginning was designed to train these young scholars in collaborative modes of research and its success is to be measured in part through its impact on a new generation of comparativists, beginning with these six.

Appendix B

Suggestions for Further Reading

The Comparative Religious Ideas Project was designed to involve students both as participants in the seminar meetings and in background tasks. One of the most adventurous student projects has been the development of a set of twelve annotated bibliographies on a number of topics relevant to the project. These bibliographies are suggestions for further reading in each topic covered. I am grateful to the students involved in the annotation project: Marylin Bunten, John Darling, Greg Farr, Andrew Irvine, He Xiang, Mark Mann, Matt McLaughlin, David McPherson, Glen Messer, James Miller, and Kirk Weil. I am also grateful for the suggestions of books to annotate that we received from Profs. Jennifer Andersen, John Berthrong, Frank Clooney, Jonathan Klawans, and Frank Korom. The first bibliography in this volume contains suggestions for further reading on the topic of the volume, ultimate realities. Subsequently there are tradition-specific bibliographies on Chinese Religion, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Each contains annotations on reference works, primary texts in English translation, and secondary sources that discuss various aspects of the tradition. The final bibliography contains annotated suggestions for further reading in the areas of comparative method, which is intended to help those wanting to evaluate the method used in this project against other approaches to the comparison of religious ideas.

—Wesley J. Wildman
Annotated Bibliography: Ultimate Realities


Abe has been a leader in Buddhist-Christian dialogue since the 1960s. This book reprints Abe's major theological statement, "Kenotic God and Dynamic Sunyata," which has previously appeared in *The Emptying God*, edited by Cobb and Ives (cf. *Human Condition* bibliography). The respondents in the present volume press Abe on a number of metaphysical and dialogical issues, especially whether similarities in metaphysical expression constitute genuine agreement, and whether disagreements effect real transformation of the participants' positions.


The polarity invoked in the sub-title refers all experience of religious ultimacy either to a reality external to the self or to a reality resident in the depth of (self-)consciousness. It was proposed as a heuristic device for a 1978–80 seminar, "Monotheism and the World Religions." Part I considers the polarity in monotheistic traditions; Part II, Hinduism and Buddhism. The polarity in question is critically addressed as the participants think through the implications of global religious encounter for, especially, Western monotheistic assumptions.


Brück’s project is Christian theology in dialogue with Advaita ("non-dualist") Vedānta. Working with mainly twentieth-century "neo-Advaita" thought in Part I, and the German mystical tradition of Trinitarian thought in Part II, Brück proposes a Christian-Advaitic theology of the Trinity. God's unity and the unity of all reality are realized in non-dual experience; an experience which liberates the experiencer for the world. The author acknowledges substantial differences in Advaitin and Christian metaphysical and epistemological assessments of unity and duality. Nevertheless, he makes abundant evidence for the creative possibilities in dialogue between the two tradition.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Nineteen essays drawn from a series of conferences (1986–1988) focus on convergences and divergences between Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish and Christian conceptions of ultimacy. The sources for reflection range from Jewish Kabbalah to Kierkegaard, Advaita Vedānta to Nishitani. The writers reconsider religious traditions from within and from comparative perspectives as they elucidate their understanding of God, nothingness, and the individual’s relationship to either one or both of them.


This much lauded book parallels Father Copleston’s Gifford Lectures of 1979 and 1980. The first half of this work carefully surveys the subject of ‘the One’, the alleged ultimate and transcendent reality grounding the world, as it is dealt with in Taoist, Buddhist, Vedāntin, Islamic, Judaic, and Christian sources. The second half of this text discusses particular aspects of the structures and logics of the many metaphysical theories surveyed: for example, the role of ‘mystical experience’, and the conclusion to monism or theism. The final chapter discusses the hypothetical nature of such theories, criteria for assessing their truth, and historical development. Copleston argues that, within such limits, Christian theism seems to be a more adequate theory.


The author is a pioneer in cross-cultural religious and philosophical studies, as this book shows. Deutsch defines metaphysics as “the articulation of a path to spiritual experience and a disciplined reflection upon that experience.” Starting from the discovery of the absolute in the self, Deutsch develops an analysis of the absolute as Being, which in turn leads to a theory of humanity as “diverted being” for whom, then, the absolute stands as divine ground and pattern. This book forges a distinctive metaphysics drawing widely and deeply on the philosophies of the Christian West and India.


The editor claims that “spiritual discipline is any activity in which one conscientiously engages for the sake of ultimate reality.” The many contributors to this volume, working from a great many religious traditions, take up four topics: the nature of spiritual discipline, efficacy of spiritual discipline, spiritual discipline in a secular world, and spiritual disciplines in pursuit of ultimate reality. In view of these topics, each contributor
attempts to define (or resists defining) ultimate reality from his or her own situation at the outset.


It is difficult to underestimate the richness of the sense of vision, and the word, “vision,” in Indian religious thought and practice. Eckel takes the sixth century Madhyamaka philosopher, Bhāvaviveka, as his focus in creating his own vision of Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy and devotion as symbiotic activities set within a lush and living culture. The logic of seeing the Buddha (who, having achieved Nirvana, is not visible in any conventional way) is explored through Eckel’s translation of a portion of Bhāvaviveka’s Verses on the Essence of the Middle Way and its autocommentary. Through this logic the meaning of emptiness, the lack of self-existence that is ultimately real, can be realized.


Eno examines the meaning and role of T'ien as a clue to the core interests of early Confucianism. He approaches early Confucianism as a movement of men concerned more with ritual cultivation than with either doctrinal expression or political leadership. Eno proceeds on two fronts: a careful study of the character, T'ien, in early texts, and a more speculative reconstruction of the Confucian project. He argues that Confucianism is a philosophy, but that its roots are not in logical analysis as it centrally is the case in Western philosophy. Furthermore, Eno argues that no distinction between theory and practice is fundamentally entertained in Confucian thought. Li, or ritual, is the ultimate concern for which T'ien is a highly mutable legitimating motif.


Tsung-mi was a Buddhist master in ninth-century China. His Inquiry is a systematic overview and classification of major teachings within early Chinese Buddhism and, as such, offers insight into contemporary Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist dialogue. Tsung-mi’s process of classification leads to a narrative concerning the origin of the world as the consequence of a fall from primordial unity of Buddha-nature into a bifur-
cated consciousness. Such consciousness is said to account for attachment and bondage to the cycle of karma. Gregory provides a valuable introduction and running commentary as well as a glossary and a guide to supplemental readings.


The bulk of this book is a study of the doctrine of the Buddha's three bodies, as developed in a number of third- to ninth-century scholastic texts produced in Medieval India. The approach is described as a "doctrinal study of doctrine," primarily concerned with "transhistorical systematic" issues. Griffiths focuses especially on metaphysical problems inherent in the attempt to reconcile the changeless, self-sufficient dharma body with the relational and experiential situations of the transformation ("earthy") and enjoyment ("celestial") bodies, relating them to similar problems in Christian theology. Griffiths concludes that doctrine concerning the Buddha is beset with intractable metaphysical problems, which force Buddhists back upon a sheerly soteriological interpretation of reality.


The author gives a detailed exposition of 'Buddha-nature' according to the mid-sixth-century Chinese *Fo Xing Lun* ("Buddha Nature Treatise") and interprets it in light of Western thinking about the being and existence of persons and the development of Buddhist tradition in the West. Chapter One provides a thorough introduction to the history and traditional importance of the motif of Buddha-nature and of the *Fo Xing Lun*. Succeeding chapters present the Chinese text's theory of Buddha-nature, with respect to soteriology, selfhood, ontology, spiritual cultivation, and implications for Western religious thought. The ultimate identity and universality of Buddha-nature is explicated in terms of its being a metaphor for religious cultivation of enlightenment, a "skilful means."


Lott provides a comparative and detailed description of three major schools of Vedanta represented by Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva. A brief orientation to Vedanta and common features among the schools is followed by studies of distinctions in their treatment of Brahman's transcendence, the appropriateness of personal categories to describe Brahman, Brahman as supreme cause, cognitive, soteriological, and other relations between the individual self and Brahman, and means of approach
to the transcendent end. Lott effectively argues for understanding the schools of Vedānta as theological disciplines akin to Western theology.


In the esteem of co-translator, Kenneth Cragg, ‘Abdūh (1849–1905) was the most decisive single factor in the twentieth-century development of Arab Muslim thought and renewal. ‘Abdūh describes the theology of unity (*tauhid*) as “the science that studies the being and attributes of God, the essential and the possible affirmations about Him, as well as the negations that are necessary to make relating to Him. It deals also with the apostles and the authenticity of their message.” In addition, ‘Abdūh discusses Islam as the culmination of religion.


A somewhat controversial book, in which Netton advances the thesis that Islamic philosophy and theology develop in ever more trenchant estrangement from the Qur’ānic paradigm of Allah’s absolute transcendence of the world. Netton applies semiotics and structural analysis, first to develop a model of the “Qur’ānic Creator Paradigm,” and then to study an array of important classical and sectarian Muslim thinkers in support of his thesis. The book offers detailed, if sometimes tendentious, introductions to Islamic metaphysical speculation.


Five scholars approach five traditions as cultural systems to address such questions as: How do Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, and Muslims understand God, or gods?; Do these gods all fit a common category, or fill a similar role?; How do religious participants interact with the divine?; and, How does religious practice relate to ideas expressed in the literature of each tradition? A useful introductory-level text.


Neusner’s claim in this massive book (670 pages from prologue to epilogue), which surveys the whole of rabbinic literature, is to have established four principles that define Rabbinic Judaism. First, God created the world according to a plan revealed in Torah. Second, the perfection
Suggestions for Further Reading — 281

of creation, realized in the rule of exact justice, is signified by the conformity of human affairs to but a few, changeless paradigms. Third, perfection is marred by the sole power capable of standing on its own against God, namely, human will; Israel’s fortunes are the benchmark for assessing this situation. Fourth, God will restore the perfection of Torah.


In this volume, Neville again takes up his argument for God the Creator but in the context of the search for “vague categories” that would provide the metaphysical backdrop for comparison between world religions. His aim is to provide not only a methodology of comparison that focuses on truth, but also to show how this methodology works when applied. First, Neville deploys his metaphysics developed in his earlier work, *God the Creator*, arguing that while such thought originates in a Christian context, it has the potential to be a metaphysical foundation of comparison. Second, he explores how his conception of creation *ex nihilo* (including the tripartite distinction between the created, the source of the created, and the act of creation) can not only be found in certain forms of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, but also how the expressed form of this conception in these religions can help to further clarify the Christian notion of creation *ex nihilo* so as to provide a more adequate and truthful understanding of this notion overall.


Here, Neville makes the argument that most cosmologies are insufficient to account for the world because they amount to a unified set of principles concerning determinate things without accounting for the existence of those determinate principles themselves. He contends that the determination of such first principles depends on an indeterminate source (which he takes to be being-itself or God) for any determinate source would again demand an account of its determinateness. He thus proposes the theory of God being the Creator of all determinate things. This theory maintains that God (being-itself) is wholly indeterminate apart from the act of creation, which gives determination not only to all beings created, including the principles of determination, but also to God, now with the determinate attribution of Creator. Ultimate reality is thus finally construed as indeterminate and a mystery, but also as metaphysically intelligible and gaining determinate second-order attributes via the effects and character of its act of determinate creation.

Nishitani is among the leading representatives of the Kyoto School of Japanese philosophers of religion. The original Japanese title of this book is *What is Religion?* Nishitani’s command of Western philosophy and theology infuses a rich discussion of the meaning of religion in light of the Zen ultimate—Emptiness. Nishitani advances a mutual reinterpretation and reevaluation of Zen and Christian metaphysical thinking and religious imagination. Especially important to this work is its emphasis on distinguishing Emptiness from relative nothingness.


These essays are compressed treatments of big themes, carried out with strong cross-cultural interests. Contributors include J. N. Findlay, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Huston Smith, and Robert Thurman. Part I, “Reflections on method in comparative studies,” raises questions such as: Is transcendence a genuine philosophical topic? Is transcendence a quality of an object, or a process? In either case, can transcendence be made an object for study? Part II contains four scholarly studies of Vedānta, the philosophy of Nāgārjuna and Mahāyāna Buddhism, Japanese Kamakura Buddhism, and Nag Hammadi Gnosticism. Four essays in Part III, “Modes of transcending,” focus on human ways of engaging and/or being engaged by transcendence.


This reader in Western, predominantly Christian philosophical theology is useful in two main ways. First, it provides brief selections from important figures, beginning with Augustine and ending with a diverse range of twentieth-century thinkers. The selections are arranged not chronologically but topically; examples of topics include the ontological argument, cosmological argument, and theodicy. Second, it displays major options taken in modern philosophy of religion: critical explanation, phenomenology, constructive atheism, and reconstructive theism.


Schuon revives the theory of degrees of being in support of his thesis that religions are to be discriminated according to an esoteric/exoteric
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distinction. “Exoterically,” religions differ, presenting ultimate reality in various forms, as is necessary in the human world of space and time. “Esoterically,” they converge upon the Absolute Unity that is the source of everything. However, esoteric knowledge can be had only by a minority of religious adepts who suprarationally intuit their unity with the absolute. A classic post-Kantian theory of religions.


Twenty-two essays are collected here. They were presented at the first of a series of ecumenical conferences sponsored by the Unification Church, and this perhaps accounts for the heterogeneous character of the collection. The first essay, by Heinrich Ott, investigates “Mystery” as an alternative name for God and therefore as a basis for interreligious dialogue. Other essays present a traditional view of God from the perspectives of Eastern Orthodoxy, the Unification Church, and the Anlo people of West Africa. Christian philosophical theology is an approach of many of the papers, but approaches from Jewish, Buddhist, and Indian thought are also included.


Summerell introduces the fifteen essays in this volume as falling into three groups. The first set of essays addresses a single figure in Western philosophical theological tradition and tends to approach the title-phrase as referring to the divine nature as wholly other. The second group, more broadly influenced by deconstruction and continental philosophy, attempts to conceive the otherness per se as somehow definitive of religious experience. The third group applies the title to what is other than God, addressing the being of profanity/secularity in the theological perspective.


A strong point of this book is the inclusion of numerous responses to, and replies from, the authors of the major papers. This allows significant differences to emerge more clearly. Stephen T. Davis argues for, “Why God must be unlimited” (presenting his “classical Christian theism”). John Cobb defends his theology against Davis in “A process concept of God.” June O’Connor discusses “Feminism and the Christ.” Sushanta Sen recommends “The Vedic-Upaniṣadic concept of Brahma.” Christopher Ives considers “Emptiness: Soteriology and ethics in Mahāyāna
Buddhism.” And John Hick maintains and defends his philosophical position in “The Real and its personae and impersonae.”


This short book defends the relevance of philosophical, especially ontological, thought for a proper understanding of biblical religion. By this latter, Tillich means the human reception of divine revelation documented in the language and diverse symbols of the Bible, and handed on in church tradition. The root of anti-philosophical stances in Christian theology is the personal character of the experience of the holy. This character is experienced wherever the holy is encountered, but personhood emerges as the key to relationship with the divine in biblical religion. Nonetheless, the religious life lived in response to revelation—that is, faith (defined as “the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern”)—is concern for, not mere certainty about, that which is really ultimate. Thus, biblical faith precedes but also implies questions about ultimate reality. In this way, ontological questioning and personal faith are not contradictory attitudes.


Taking an interpretive rather than exegetical approach to Zhong yong (commonly known as the Doctrine of the Mean), Tu Weiming endeavors to show how there is an inner logic running through the seemingly unconnected statements in this classic Confucian text. After an initial chapter on the text itself, Tu Weiming spends the next three chapters analyzing the three key notions of junzi (the profound person), zheng (politics), and cheng (sincerity), endeavoring to demonstrate that through the interrelated issues of the profound person, the fiduciary community, and moral metaphysics, one can discern a holistic, humanist vision in Zhong yong.


Zizioulas explicates his notion of being as communion, which he sees as Christianity’s fundamental contribution to metaphysics. With the concept of the Trinity, Christianity asserts that to be at all is to be in relation, for even God can be said to become Father, Son, and Spirit only in the being of the Son and the procession of the Spirit. All creation thus finds its true nature in relation, but it is fallen by virtue of its assertion of autonomous existence. Christ is the perfect savior because as a wholly personal savior (that is, wholly relational, receiving his nature only in relation to the Father and the Spirit) he reveals the ultimately relational character of reality. By union with and in Christ, humankind and the cosmos thus receive not only true relationality, but also true life by virtue of this relationality.

Annotated Bibliography: Chinese Religion

Reference Works

Bibliographies


These two bibliographic volumes document publications in English, French and German.


This is a comprehensive volume of annotations of selected Chinese-Western-language works published between 1945 and 1990. It begins with an overview of religion in modern China as viewed by both Chinese and Western scholars. The volume is then divided into two main parts, the first covering works by Chinese scholars, the second by Western scholars.

Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, and Overviews

Suggestions for Further Reading


This invaluable reference work for scholars of Daoism surveys texts from the vast corpus of the Daoist canon (Daozang). The texts are described in considerable detail and classified thematically. A useful epilogue describes helpful reference and bibliographic material in Asian and western languages.


This is a clear and comprehensive introduction to Chinese religions. Having alerted the reader to the problematical concept of "Chinese religions," the book divides into three roughly chronological sections. Part 1 deals with origins and the indigenous traditions of Confucianism and Daoism. Part 2 considers the influence of foreign religions (Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam) and the response of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy. Part 3 concludes with the issues of syncretism, popular religion, and the contemporary influence of Marxism and Christianity.


This book presents a general picture of Chinese religions from a cultural perspective, outlining the basic features of their theories, practices, and social organizations. It focuses on the interactive relationship between religion and other aspects of Chinese culture, such as arts, literature, politics, and philosophy. A glossary of Chinese terms is also provided.


Differing from the traditional encyclopedia format, the work consists of twenty-eight comprehensive essays on the major traditions and themes of Daoism from ancient times to the present day, and also essays on Daoism in Japan and Korea and Daoist music. The essays generally follow a standard format consisting of an introductory description, history, texts, and worldview.


This popular introduction to Chinese religions takes a broadly anthropological approach and emphasizes popular festivals and rituals. After a survey of the history of Chinese religion and an exploration of its general worldview, the author presents a series of short studies describing actual practice of particular festivals and cults.


This encyclopedia promises to be a vital reference work as it has enlisted the services of scholars from around the world. In a traditional encyclopedia format, the work contains short articles on the major texts, traditions, divinities, and personages of Daoist history.


Primary Sources


Six substantial early Daoist texts are translated here, beginning with the Xiang'er commentary on the Dao de jing, and including texts from the three major Daoist movements, the Celestial Masters, Shangqing (Highest Clarity) and Lingbao (Majestic Treasure). Each translation is preceded by a detailed introduction, and the book also contains a general introduction to the worldview of Daoist religion.


This is a translation of the Ch'un-i hsii, a collection of Wang Yang-ming's conversations and letters in three parts compiled by his disciples. Containing all of Wang's fundamental doctrines, it represents the major work of what Chan refers to as the "idealist" wing of Neo-Confucianism. Also included, among other short supplementary works, is Wang's Inquiry on the Great Learning, a fairly systematic embodiment of the essential ideas of the Instructions for Practical Living.


This is a translation of the Bei-shi tui, a work explaining Neo-Confucian philosophical terms written by Chen Ch'un (1350-1323), one of Zhu Xi's students. There are altogether 26 categories in two chapters, starting with "míng" (mandate, destiny) and ending with treatments of Buddhism and Daoism. Chan's translation also includes three supplements, one being Chen Ch'un's well-known lectures at Yangling, and fourteen appendices.

Chan, Wing-tsung, ed. Reflections on Things at Hand: The Neo-Confucian Anthology Compiled by Chu Hsi and Liü Ts'ioen. Records of Civil-
Suggestions for Further Reading

Graham, A. C., ed. *Chuang-Tzu: The Seven Inner Chapters and Other Writings from the Book Chuang-Tzu*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1981. Selected translations from *Non-Ich Chuang*. Graham's critique of the previous translators of the *Zhuangzi* is that they for the most part follow the traditional commentators without coming to grips with the textual, linguistic, and philosophical problems.


This translation is based on the two texts of the *Dao de jing* found in the *Ma-wang-tui* excavations in 1973. These ancient texts reverse the traditional order of the *Dao de jing*, beginning with Chapters 58–81 (the *Ji jing*) and continuing with Chapters 1–77 (the *Pien jing*). Part 2 of Heinrichs's book offers a straightforward translation. Part 1 repeats the translation but adds a textual commentary and reproduces the two Chinese texts on which the translation is based.


Comparing Xunzi's (c. 286–238 BCE) domain of knowledge to Aristotle's, John Knoblock aims to produce a literate English translation that conveys the full meaning of Xunzi's philosophical arguments. *Volume I* contains a general introduction and the first six books of Xunzi's works, which discuss self-cultivation, learning, and education. Published as books 7–16, discussing political theory, ethics, the ideal person, and the lessons to be drawn from history. *Volume III* has two parts. Books 17–24 discuss problems of knowledge, language and logic, nature of the world and human beings, and the significance of music and ritual. Books 25–31 are Xunzi's poetry, short passages, and historical precedents.


Kohn's anthology of translations encompasses a wide range of Daoist texts, with an emphasis on the major religious movements of the traditional period. Each translation is briefly introduced by the author, who has arranged the texts thematically under the four major headings of "The Tao," "Long Life," "Eternal Vision," and "Immortality." The book contains a useful bibliography and index.

LaFargue, a scholar of hermeneutics, takes care to explain each element of his translation, and offers a useful commentary. The text does not follow the usual arrangement, but is arranged thematically, and an index dispels potential confusion. His psychological interpretation shows that the Dao of the *Daode jing* is best understood as an ideal mode of existence rather than as a cosmological or metaphysical entity.


The text of the translation is preceded by an introduction in which Lau offers a detailed analysis of Confucius's philosophy. In the three appendices, Lau provides more information concerning the events in the life of Confucius, the disciples as they appear in the Analects, and the history of the *Lun Yu*.


The book of Meng Ke (Mencius, c. fourth century BCE) is a profound but accessible work of Confucian moral philosophy. This classic translation contains an introduction and five appendices illuminating the text, its author, and his historical background.


This anthology of translations by a variety of China scholars avoids undue emphasis on philosophical texts and instead attempts to represent the diversity of Chinese religious history, covering texts from Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, popular religion, minority religions, and state cults from ancient times to the present day. The book is arranged thematically, though there is a chronological index, and an index by tradition. Each text is introduced by the translator.


The *Guanzi*, an "amorphous and vast repository of ancient literature," is one of the largest politico-philosophical documents of the pre-Han or early Han period. Rickett's work—a project of three volumes—is the first full translation and study of the *Guanzi* in a Western language.

The present two volumes are devoted to the full translation of the text with notes and bibliography, and the third will be devoted to separate studies by various scholars.


This book opens with an introduction in two parts, offering the historical and textual as well as the philosophical and linguistic backgrounds of the *Analects of Confucius* (Lunyu). The purpose of the philosophical introduction is to enable the reader to take the Confucian way on its own terms without overwriting it with cultural interests and importances that are not its own. The English translation is juxtaposed with the original Chinese text, and the book ends with a discussion on the recently discovered *Dingzhou Analects* and some further remarks on language, translation, and interpretation.


This English translation of Wilhelm's classic German translation of the *Yijing* (Book of Changes) remains popular not least because it contains a substantial foreword by Carl Jung on the subject of divination, causality, and chance.

Secondary Sources

Texts, Figures, and Traditions


The *Zhu shu* (*Art of Rulership*) is Book 9 of the *Huainanzi*. Before offering a translation of the text, Ames first presents a study of the philosophy of history in ancient China and then traces the evolution of five key concepts, namely, *wuwei* (nonassertive action), *shi* (strategic advantage), *li* (penal law), *yongzhong* (utilizing the people), and *limin* (benefiting the people), in early Chinese political philosophy up to the time of the *Art of Rulership*, showing that the *Art of Rulership* contains a systematic political theory with precepts of Daoist and Confucian origin.


Berling, a scholar of Chinese religions, and Dean of the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley, presents a personal exploration of the
themes of religious diversity and cross-cultural dialogue. Her aim is to relate contemporary questions of religious diversity to the way the Chinese religious scene has traditionally encompassed an extraordinary breadth of religious cultures.


In this historical survey of the Confucian tradition throughout East Asia, Berthrong covers each of Confucianism’s major transformations and also the less talked about periods of the Han, T’ang, and the modern era. The spread of Confucianism to Korea and Japan is taken into consideration as well, and Berthrong ends the book with a report of its recent spread to the West.


Julia Ching offers a survey of Chinese religious culture using the paradigm of the sage-king. Her argument is basically twofold: that the institutions of kingship were bound up with communication with the spirits, and that this concept of the sage-king was appropriated as a private religious ideal. The sage-king thus lies at the heart of the political and spiritual worlds.


This is an intellectual history of what De Bary terms “Neo-Confucian orthodoxy,” i.e., the “Cheng-Zhu” lineage of teaching that, in its various forms, claims descent from Zhu Xi and his “learning of the mind-and-heart.” The book has three parts: Part I deals with the rise of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy in Yuan China, Part II with the Neo-Confucian learning of the mind-and-heart, and Part III with Neo-Confucian orthodoxies and the learning of the mind-and-heart in early Tokugawa Japan.


On the subject of the history of Chinese philosophy, Feng’s distinctive work remains one of the most complete and learned. Volume I, “The Period of the Philosophers,” covers the history from the beginnings to about 1000 B.C. when Confucianism became the state ideology. Volume II, “The Period of Classical Learning,” continues the story from the second century B.C. to the end of Qing dynasty.


Fingarette, a noted philosopher, attempts to discover the true teaching of Confucius through an investigation of the first fifteen books of the Analects. Emphasizing the ritual performance of moral codes, Fingarette starts with the thesis of human community as holy rite and ends with a Confucian metaphor, namely, the noble person is a holy vessel. This was one of the first modern Western studies to suggest that the Confucian way can make great contributions to our contemporary understanding of the world and society.


This book offers a general picture of Chinese philosophy in the classical age (500–200 BCE) with the focus on debate between rival schools, hence its title. Graham organizes the discussion of Confucius, Mencius, Mozi, Zhuangzi, Laozi, Xunzi, and other thinkers, following a dramatic line: from the breakdown of the world order decreed by heaven to the social and metaphysical crises when heaven parts from humankind; and from this separation to the reunification of the empire, heaven, and humankind. Graham adds two appendixes, one on the classification of Chinese moral philosophies in terms of the quasi-syllogism, one on the relation of Chinese thought to Chinese language.


In this sequel to Thinking through Confucius, the two authors clarify and develop many ideas they have been discussing in the previous book. To illuminate the contrasting assumptions shaping classical Western and Chinese cultures, Hall and Ames provide two parallel accounts of cultural development, one culminating with the work of Augustine and the other represented by the thinking of the Han dynasty. In doing this, they aim to offer a better way of understanding Chinese culture with less bias and distortion.


This volume completes Hall and Ames’s trilogy on comparative studies of Chinese and Western culture. Here they choose to focus their comparative discussions on the subjects of self, truth, and transcendence, as they believe that these subjects lie at the heart of human issues causing mutual misunderstanding between the two cultures.

Using a method termed by the authors themselves as "cross-cultural anachronism," Hall and Ames seek to understand Confucius's ideas as expressed in the Analects by recourse to contemporary Western philosophical and cultural issues. They believe that in comparative philosophy difference is more important than similarity, and that the recognition of this difference can provide mutual enrichment by suggesting alternative responses to problems that resist resolution within a single culture.


Attributing a theory of language and mind to ancient Chinese thinkers that differs fundamentally from the popular Western view, Hansen identifies and examines four progressive stages in Classical doctrines about language and mind: the positive dao period, the antilanguage period, the analytic period, and the authoritarian period.


This work is a history of Chinese cosmology. Chapters 1 and 2 examine corelate thought and geometrical cosmography in Early China, with the next two chapters devoted to medieval criticisms and extensions of corelate cosmology and its status in the Neo-Confucian tradition. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the intellectual transition in Early Qing, and Chapters 5 and 6 discuss criticisms of corelate cosmology and geometrical cosmography in late-traditional China. Henderson ends the book with a chapter on Qing scholars' anticosmological worldview.


Based on three lectures, this work focuses on the concept of moral self-cultivation in the Confucian tradition. After an initial introduction of related ideas in the Shang and Zhou dynasties, Ivanhoe turns to the philosophy of Confucius, Mencius, Xunzi, Zhu Xi, Wang Yangming, and Dai Zhen for the specific treatment of the notion of self-cultivation.


This work is a scholarly survey of mysticism in Daoist thought and practice from the fourth century BCE through to the Tang dynasty (618-966 CE). It dwells equally on the earlier writings of Laozi and Zhuangzi as well as the later Daoist movements. The book begins with a theoretical exposition of mysticism in human experience and demonstrates the continuous development of Daoism as a form of mystical philosophy well before and during the impact of Buddhism.


This is a comprehensive study of Laozi as the divine persona of the Dao and is divided into two roughly equal sections. The first surveys the historical evidence in hagiographies, inscriptions, and art, while the second aims to uncover the mythological significance of the data. The work thus combines the methods of the sinologist and the scholar of comparative religion in an attempt to paint a more complete picture of Lord Lao.


This collection of essays by leading Daoist scholars presents the person and the text together. Scholarly essays on the textual interpretation of the Daode jing are complemented by historical studies of Laozi, the legendary author of the text, and his incorporation into the Daoist pantheon.


This rich and detailed study aims to answer the question "What is Daoism?" by examining its religious practices. Part I examines the cosmological context of Chinese religion. Part II analyzes specific Daoist liturgies for the living and for the dead. Part III is concerned with the relationship between liturgical Daoism and Chinese society.


This book studies the evolution of writing in early China, examining all sorts of materials from divinatory records, written communications with the dead, and official documents, to philosophical texts, chronicles, and religious commentaries. In so doing, the book demonstrates the various functions of these writings, such as governing people, controlling officials, and forming communities. Lewis argues that this culture of writing ultimately produced a body of literature upon which imperial authority was built.
Suggestions for Further Reading


Widely recognized as a representative of contemporary Confucianism, Liu complains that little work has been done in the West to study the tradition from a contemporary, rather than a historical, perspective. This book, of which two-thirds are previously written articles and one-third new materials, is just such an attempt on the part of Liu to fill this gap.


Arguing against naturalistic interpretations of Xunzi’s concept of Tian (Heaven), Machle here offers a close reading of the Tian Lun, which is usually referred to in English as the Essay on Nature or the Discussion of Heaven. The core of the work is a translation of the Tian Lun, with extensive commentary, and it is both preceded and followed by other chapters dealing with interpretive problems and other issues.


This book is a collection of eight essays plus a bibliographical appendix, the experimental nature of which lies in its contributors not being all sinologists. The stated aim of this collection is to view Zhuangzi from “many different vantage points while using diverse methodological approaches.” The contributors include A. C. Graham, Chad Hansen, Victor Mair, Michael Saso, and Hideki Yukawa, the 1949 Nobel Prize winner in physics.


Written over the course of more than twenty-five years, this work offers for the first time full English translations of the three key chapters on cosmology in the Huainanzi, which are Tianwen xun (The Treatise on the Patterns of Heaven), Dizing xun (The Treatise on Topography), and Shici xun (The Treatise on the Seasonal Rules). Additionally, there is an appendix of related material by Christopher Cullen.


This work is a technical, comprehensive, and detailed guide not only to the theoretical basis of Chinese medicine but also to the traditional Chinese way of correlative thinking. The correlation of yin-yang and the five phases with the seasons, physiological systems, and the heavens is presupposed by many Chinese religious ideas and practices.


This book examines historical and philosophical changes in the representation of women and virtue in Early China. It is organized into two parts. The first deals with two divergent views of women in early texts, for example, either as agents of virtue or as causes of chaos, with particular attention given to the textual analysis of the Lienü zhuan (Collected Life Stories of Women). The second part focuses on the discussion of two pairs of concepts, yin-yang and nei-wai (inner-outer), both of which have been used to justify the inferior status of women. Lisa Raphals ends the book with remarks concerning the role of contemporary “Neo-Confucian” ideologies and their appropriations of Chinese views of gender.


This historical survey is a vital introduction to Daoism from the Warring States period (403–222 BCE) through to the Yuan dynasty (1279–1367 CE). Eschewing the division of Daoism into “philosophy” and “religion,” the work presents the development of Daoist thought and practice hand in hand, emphasizing the medieval period, which saw the rapid flourishing of the major Daoist movements. The work is intended for a general educated audience and thus does not include an extensive academic apparatus.


This book is an expanded edition of the French original published in 1979, and presents a detailed, systematic survey of the Shangqing (Highest Clarity or Great Purity) movement that began around 565 CE with a series of revelations to a religious visionary, Yang Xi. The movement
became one of the three major schools of medieval Daoism, emphasizing the inner vision of gods in the body.


Schipper trained as a sinologist in Paris before moving to Taiwan where he became the first Westerner to be ordained as a Daoist priest. This combination of scholarly training and first-hand experience has resulted in a remarkable book. It is perhaps the only general guide in English to the actual practice of Daoism, its social significance, and its theoretical and historical foundations.


In dealing with the world of thought in ancient China, Schwartz intentionally avoids comprehensive coverage and instead chooses to concentrate on issues and themes that he deems of particular significance. By focusing on modes of thought reflected in the texts of the so-called “high culture,” such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism, Schwartz suggests that the elite culture of China, while sharing a common Neolithic background with the popular culture, later diverges in crucial ways from it.


Convinced that ancient China was already a highly literate culture hundreds of years before Confucius, Shaughnessy devotes the eight essays collected in this volume to the study of the works allegedly produced by the Zhou people. By examining China’s oldest classics, which include the *Zhouyi* (Changes of Zhou), the *Shangshu* (Venerated Documents), and the *Shijing* (Classic of Poetry), Shaughnessy tries to determine the original meaning and context of the text. In some cases he is also able to show how this original meaning may have been changed or obscured by later traditions.


Nine previously published or presented papers form the nine chapters of this volume, with such topics as Confucianism and the political order, scripture and the sage, the sage as saint, Christian and Confucian dimensions of the problem of suffering, and a contemporary Confucian phenomenon in Japan. To the question of whether Confucianism is a religion or not, Taylor’s answer is a positive Yes.


This monumental, detailed history covers the introduction of Buddhism to China in the latter Han dynasty up to the death of Hui-Yuan (433 CE).


Taking an interpretive rather than exegetical approach to Zhong yong (commonly known as the *Doctrine of the Mean*), Tu Weiming endeavors to show how there is an inner logic running through the seemingly unconnected statements in this Confucian classic. After an initial chapter on the text, Tu spends the next three in analyzing the three key notions of jinci (the profound person), zheng (politics), and cheng (sincerity), seeking to demonstrate that through the inter-related issues of the profound person, the fiduciary community, and moral metaphysics, one can discern a holistic humanist vision in Zhong yong.


Through the nine essays collected in this book, Tu Weiming attempts to answer the question posed to him by Robert Bellah: “What is the Confucian self?” Taking seriously the centrality of self-cultivation in the Confucian tradition, Tu explores the many subtle dimensions of Confucian thought by trying to understand Confucius in the light of Mencius and Mengzi in the light of Wang Yangming.


This collection of articles offers historical and comparative cultural perspectives on the Confucian intellectual, the underlying thesis being that the Confucian literati exemplify the intellectual spirit when they conscientiously repossess the way, transmit culture, and rectify politics. The
nine essays are grouped in three interrelated parts: the first four deal with the classical period, the next three with the Neo-Confucian era, and the last two with modern times.


Based on his celebrated analysis of the affinity between Protestantism and capitalism, Weber aims to investigate the relationship of capital and religion in Chinese society. Part One draws a picture of the sociological foundations of China, including discussions on Chinese money, city and guild, central and local governments, and feudal and fiscal as well as army organizations. Part Two examines the literati and the Confucian life orientation. Part Three considers Daoism, and then discusses the relationship between Confucianism and Puritanism.


The penetration of Buddhism in Chinese society reached its zenith in the T’ang dynasty (618–906 CE). This historical survey emphasizes the relations of the Buddhist church with the central government rather than Buddhist doctrine or liturgy.

*Contemporary Philosophy and Religion*


This book represents over twenty years of scholarly work on the part of Ch’eng, a leading contemporary Confucian philosopher. Grouped into three parts, “Chinese Philosophical Orientations,” “Confucian Dimensions,” and “Neo-Confucian Dimensions,” these articles, while individually self-contained studies of specific topics, collectively present a thorough and detailed image of Confucianism for the philosophically literate reader.


This powerful and provocative book is a meditation on China’s intellectual and religious situation in the light of the Tian’ anmen massacre on June 4th, 1989. Julia Ching’s focuses her analysis on the question:

“Which is more important: to be human or to be Chinese?” The book contains an appendix of documents.


This book contains papers from a conference on “Confucianism and Human Rights” held at the East-West Center in Honolulu in 1995, with a variety of topics ranging from the Yellow Emperor tradition to rites and rights in Ming China. W. Theodore de Bary offers in the introduction a general survey of the basic thesis and argument of each essay as well as seven statements in the form of a rough consensus for future dialogue between China and the West. The book ends the discussion of “Confucianism and Human Rights” with two epilogues written by Tu Weiming and Louis Henkin.


This anthropological study of popular Chinese religion covers the major Chinese festivals, local and official cults in Taiwan and China, and contemporary Daoist practices. Based on the author’s fieldwork, as well as that of other anthropologists and scholars of religion, the text describes numerous rituals and offers a systematic explanation of the functioning of Chinese religion.


This is an anthology of documents relating to the Chinese religious situation since the cultural revolution. It is divided into two sections: documents of religious policy by government and religious leaders, and documents dealing with religious practice, including Chinese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Christianity, atheism, and Marxism.


This book comes out of a workshop on Confucian humanism sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1989. The purpose of the workshop was “to explore Confucian ethics as a common intellectual discourse in East Asia from a multidisciplinary and cross-cultural perspective,” with special attention given to its role in the shaping of such perceptions as selfhood, family relations, gender, social
organization and political authority, popular beliefs, and economic culture in East Asia.


Based on his fieldwork in the town of Sanxia in Taiwan from 1976 to 1979, Weller takes in this study the ghost-feeding ritual as the starting point for a more general analysis of religious unity and diversity in China. By examining the viewpoints of three major kinds of participants in the ceremony—ordinary worshippers, religious specialists and the secular elite—he tries to demonstrate how the same ritual can be differently experienced and interpreted by different people.

Annotated Bibliography: Buddhism

Reference Works

Bibliographies


Dictionaries and Encyclopedias


A concise "glossary" of Buddhist peoples, places, texts, and terms. Entries provide very little beyond basic definitions, making this work useful primarily as a quick reference for those lacking familiarity with Buddhist tradition.


A single volume encyclopedia covering "significant persons, places, events, texts, doctrines, practices, institutions, and movements." An outline of Buddhist scriptures, a chronology, and a brief introductory section providing historical perspective and descriptions of fundamental Buddhist concepts make the text more accessible to beginning students of Buddhism. The historical framework of the text limits its value with respect to contemporary aspects of Buddhist culture.

Primary Sources


This brief and highly accessible collection of texts was designed with the lay reader in mind. Included are excerpts from the Jatakas, Ashvaghosa’s Bhadbcarita, and works dealing with central doctrines of Buddhism, including the Dhammapada and Dhammapada, and “The Questions of King Milinda.” Conze’s compendium concludes with a treatment of the “other worlds” of Buddhism as depicted in Tibetan and Pure Land sources.


Surveying the broad linguistic, geographical and philosophical expanse of the tradition, this collection offers selections from the Hiinayana/Tradition of the Elders, Mahayana, Tantric, and Sino-Japanese branches of Buddhism. Translations are presented without commentary or explanatory notes.


Accessibility and intelligibility outweigh literal precision in Conze’s translation of the verse and prose texts of the Prajnaparamita. The Ratnapada (verse sūtra) presents a lively and direct encapsulation of early Mahayana thought, employing similes throughout to illuminate key concepts. The Asata (prose text) presents a dialogue among the Buddha, his leading student, and various other interlocutors which rationally and more systematically presents Buddhist doctrines and ethics.


A comprehensive and entertaining collection of myths and folklore surrounding the lives of the Buddha. The Jatakas are translated together with their presumably apocryphal introductions, which ostensibly locate their
narration within the course of the Buddha’s teaching. These stories colorfully capture central Buddhist concepts concerning the human condition and ethics as well as encapsulating early popular beliefs.


This collection of texts, together with Lopez’s supplementary materials, emphasize the practical and experiential dimensions of Buddhism, rather than the philosophical-theoretical. Lopez seeks to represent texts, voices, and traditions often excluded from academic anthologies. Selections include prayers, songs, autobiographies, and ritual manuals, many appearing for the first time in translation. Detailed introductions and notations provide readers with necessary background and make available the innovative insights of recent scholarship.


This collection of diverse texts introduces readers to the complexity and richness of Tibetan religious culture. Entries reflect both Buddhist and Bon perspectives on a variety of topics, including hagiography, demonology, prayer, death, and ultimate reality. Ample preparatory materials furnish historical and theoretical background and trace the connections and cross-fertilization among traditions.

**Secondary Sources**


Marrying the comparative philosophical approach of the Kyoto School with rigorous textual scholarship, Abe introduces readers to the thought of Dogen Kigen, founder of the Japanese Soto Zen sect. Featured discussions include Dogen’s views of the Buddha-nature, time/space, and death and rebirth. The author offers a helpful glossary of Sino-Japanese terms.


This work continues the comparative and critical elaboration of Buddhist philosophico-philosophical engagements with Western philosophical and theological issues. The goals are to clarify Abe’s interpretation of the Zen philosophy of the Kyoto school and the articulation of a common spiritual basis for human exchange and fulfillment. Particular attention is paid to the thought of leading twentieth-century Christian theologians, including Tillich, Altizer, and Knitter.


The second companion volume to Abe’s *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*, which continues the comparative and critical elaboration of Buddhist philosophical engagements with Western philosophical and theological issues. Abe’s interpretation of the Zen philosophy of the Kyoto school is made explicit, as is the articulation of a common spiritual basis for human exchange and fulfillment. Particular attention is paid to the thought of leading twentieth-century Christian theologians, including Tillich, Altizer, and Knitter.


These essays by a leading scholar seek to clarify the authentic spirit of Mahāyāna Buddhism and reveal the profound philosophy undergirding the often unphilosophical practice of Zen. Steeped in the tradition of the Kyoto School and arguing from the position that philosophy is necessarily a comparative discipline, Abe engages perennial Western philosophical questions and categories, while also elaborating the Buddhist perspective. He also asserts a personalistic cosmology, rooted in the ultimate of Emptiness/Suchness, which may provide the spiritual foundation for humanity in a global age.


A historical review of the relationship between Buddhist Asia and the European West, emphasizing the evolution of Western attitudes toward Buddhism. The text focuses on developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and does not consider the influence of Buddhism in North America. The anecdotal style of the text makes it especially accessible to non-academics seeking understanding of the dialogue between Buddhist and Western thought.


A generally accessible overview of Tibetan Buddhism focusing on selected representative primary sources. An introductory section examines
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the daily and annual schedule of monasteries. Through its candid portrayal, this work offers a needed balance to Western (mis)conceptions of Zen Buddhism.


Conze offers a straightforward interpretation of central debates and major themes in Indian Buddhist thought. Part One examines the doctrines of early ("archaic") Buddhism as well as the scholarly difficulties that attend any such examination. Part Two explores the historic traditions of the Śāhāvīras (Theravādins), examining scholastic debates and soteriological theories, while Part Three surveys the Mahāyāna tradition, with some discussion of broadly held doctrinal positions, more detailed treatments of Mādhyamika and Yogācāra schools, and a review of Buddhist logic.


This work provides a useful historical outline of the development of the Buddhist tradition, best used in combination with more detailed sources. Conze divides his survey into four periods, each characterized by different geographical and cultural contexts, philosophical orientations, and soteriological conceptions of the ideal human. The first period (500–0 BCE) occurred in India, emphasizing psychology and propounding the ideal of the Arhat; the second (0–500 CE) marks Buddhism's expansion into East Asia, and emphasizes ontological reflection with the Buddhasattva as its ideal; the third period (500–1000 CE) witnesses the establishment of Buddhism as a pan-Asian cultural and religious force, with attention directed to cosmology and the figure of the Siddha. Conze argues that the last period, spanning the past thousand years, has seen no renewal of the tradition, but has demonstrated its dogged persistence.


Subverting distinctions between philosophy and religion, and between high and low traditions, Eckel reviews the concept of emptiness and the figure of the Buddha through the eyes of Bhāvaviveka, a sixth century Buddhist philosopher, monk, and devotee. Central to this quest is the identification in Mahāyāna thought of the Buddha and emptiness and prolonged reflection on the act and meaning of seeing. Relying heavily upon the travel diaries of the Chinese monk Hsuan-tsang, and drawing on artistic, philosophical, and literary sources, the author reconstructs
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Bhāvaviveka’s imaginative world, locating the concept of emptiness within a system of religious symbolism and practice, and offers insight into the devotional and philosophical relationship of presence and absence as experienced in confronting the image (or “no-image”) of the Buddha. The book concludes with translated excerpts of Bhāvaviveka’s Madhyamakabhūtanikāra (Verses on the Essence of the Middle Way) and its autocummentary Tarkajñatā (Flame of Reason).


A comprehensive, and at times anecdotal, record of the religious figures and schools which have contributed to the establishment of Buddhism in the West. Field begins with a survey of the life of Śākyamuni Buddha and early Buddhism, then traces the diverse currents of the tradition as they flowed into America. Special attention is paid to the role of Sir William Jones in introducing Buddhist thought to the West, and to the American Transcendentalists in particular, the significance of the first World Parliament of Religions (1893), and to representing the histories and experiences of Indian, Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese Buddhists. A final chapter reflects upon problems facing contemporary communities and movements, and the struggle over the future form of Buddhism in America.


Mixing Buddhism and feminism, the authors relate women’s experiences with and reflections upon the spiritual journey. Essays treat critically the negative impact of body-eschewing practices and traditions, issues of body image and female identity, and affirm that the body, as the intersection of the internal and external worlds, is the locus of true spiritual struggle and fulfillment.


This detailed and erudite compendium of articles, drawn from lectures delivered at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, clarifies the influences upon and constitutive elements of the early formation of Buddhist doctrine. Gombrich addresses themes that include the Buddha’s critique of essentialist philosophy, the subtle connections between Buddhist and brahmanical thought, the role of allegory and satire in religious discourse, and historic trends toward literalist interpretations of canonical sayings.


Gombrich synthesizes recent scholarship and provides a valuable introduction to one of the “three vehicles” or branches of Buddhism. The author organizes his narrative around three major points of change: Śākyamuni’s founding of the tradition, the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka and the resultant shift in Theravāda thought and identity, and the impact of and responses to Protestant missionary and British colonial activities. Throughout, Gombrich explains essential Theravāda interpretations of Buddhist doctrine while situating them within their socio-historical context. Notable is his treatment of “Protestant Buddhism” in contemporary Sri Lanka.


A feminist reconstruction of Buddhist theology, aimed at reasserting the central role of egalitarian and liberating symbolism in Buddhist doctrine, as opposed to patriarchal and misogynist practices of Buddhist institutions. Gross contends that a post-patriarchal Buddhism must emphasize this-worldly spirituality, adopt an androgynous human model (one that affirms both maleness and femaleness), and recognize the particularly feminine aspects of the Buddhist sangha (community). The author also provides a broad historical overview of Buddhism and an analysis of key Buddhist concepts and they relate to her feminist critique.


An introductory text aimed at conveying the living tradition of Buddhism by “relating Buddhism to modern ways of thinking.” The author provides a section on formative historical events and doctrine of Buddhism in India through the emergence of the Mahāyāna school, and in Central, East, and Southeast Asia. A second section extensively surveys Buddhist practice, with emphasis on both its classical sources and its role in contemporary Buddhist life. The inclusion of figures, maps, and a topical bibliography should increase the attractiveness of the work for beginning students and general readers.


An introduction to the central religious and philosophical concepts of early Buddhism, from the Buddha through the development of early
Hinayana and Mahayana schools. The text is intended for beginning students and general readers and assumes no familiarity with Buddhist tradition. Besides providing historical background and a systematic survey of Buddhist doctrine, the author also attempts to use Buddhist thought as a means to introduce important aspects of the study of philosophy, often through critical evaluation of Buddhist doctrine.


A translation of a 1974 Japanese text surveying early Indian Buddhist history. The work is divided into 3 sections: early Buddhism (from Pre-Buddhist Indian religion to the reign of Asoka), Hinayana Buddhism, and early Mahayana Buddhism. Each section deals with both historical development and with central doctrines and practices of the various traditions. Special emphasis is given to the emergence of the Hinayana and Mahayana schools, particularly Hiakawa's contention that the latter was an organized movement of the Indian laity.


An anthology of ten essays collectively intended to provide an introduction to the Buddhist worldview. Central Buddhist concepts are illustrated through direct discussion of Buddhist doctrine (particular the axiom of dependent co-origination), consideration of various forms of Buddhist practice (specifically Tantric visualization and female roles in Buddhist tradition), examination of classical and contemporary Japanese literature, and a comparative religious approach to Buddhist mysticism.


A work directed at a general audience on the potential contribution of Buddhist thought to understanding society and implementing political and social change. Includes discussions of the Buddhist view of the human condition, relationship of Mahayana tradition to the understanding of social phenomena, Buddhist training and practice and the different forms of Buddhist social activism, foundations of historical and contemporary Buddhist societies, and the application of Buddhist thought to a variety of modern social problems. Buddhist thought is contrasted with Western "egoic" dualism, and the value of Buddhism in the "transformation of contemporary Western consciousness" serves as a central theme.


A survey of Buddhist thought examining both general philosophical foundations and historical development. A central current of the text is the explanation of Buddhist doctrine in terms of contemporary (typically Western) philosophical themes; the work thus requires significant philosophical background to be of great value to the reader.


A narrative retelling of the life of the Buddha as a historical figure, focusing on formative influences on Siddhartha's philosophy and a detailed portrayal of his travels and teachings subsequent to his enlightenment. The text provides both a readable historical account and a useful introduction to Buddhist philosophy as presented primarily through narrative translations of the Buddha's later discourses. Philosophical categories touched on throughout the biography include Buddhist metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and socio-political views.


A concise introductory work, made accessible to those with no familiarity with Buddhist tradition. With the use of simple explanatory text, Keown focuses primarily on Buddhist thought and practice, with limited mention of historical foundations (i.e., a brief section on the life of the Buddha), and some discussion of the role of Buddhism in the modern world.


A historical survey of the contributions of various aspects of Japanese religion to the economic, social, and political development of Japan. Kitagawa examines a number of themes in approaching the role of religion, including religious leadership, means of apprehending truth, the interaction of religious and feudal systems, and issues of modernity. The work addresses Japanese Confucianism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Christianity, and the "new religions."


Klein opens a dialogue concerning the self between Tibetan Buddhist and modern Western feminist perspectives, based in part on their mutual emphasis upon practical action and the marriage of theory with experience. Mixing theoretical analysis of Mahayana thought, feminist insight, and Tibetan conceptions of the self as embedded in a network of relations,
Suggestions for Further Reading

with a clear emphasis upon liberating practice centered on the figure of Yeshe Tsogyal, Great Bliss Queen and protector of the Great Completeness tradition, the author seeks to open transformative avenues for both scholarship and daily living.


Originally published in 1968, this text provides a survey of Japanese religious history from the Meiji Restoration (1868) to the latter half of the twentieth century. In sections on the Difficulties of Modernization, Religious Oppression under Militarism, and the Age of Religious Freedom, Murakami explores in particular the influence of Japanese economics and politics on the development of religious movements. The author espouses a separation of religion and government, and devotes significant energy to discussions of the Shinto religion, with emphasis on critiques of modern State Shinto. The text also explores the roles of Buddhism, Christianity, and the "new religions" (sectarian organizations deemed "pseudo-religions" by the Japanese government).


A comprehensive survey of Indian Buddhist thought, exhaustively annotated throughout with both bibliographic references and the author's addenda. This volume is clearly offered as a sourcebook for advanced students of Indian Buddhism, as indicated both in its detail and the fact that over half the text consists of bibliographic footnote. The focus of the work tends to be on Japanese scholarship in the field, and may therefore be of particular value to Western students.


A philosophical treatise built around the dialogue of Buddhist thought with Western religion and philosophy. Primarily through the exploration of the concept of śūnyatā (emptiness/nothingness) Nishitani offers a critique of classical Western dualistic thinking (both religious and secular) and a reinterpretation of Western philosophical and religious concepts from a Buddhist perspective. The complexity of some of the author's arguments suggests the assumption of some prior familiarity with Buddhist philosophy.


Articulating a vision of practice theory which prioritizes actors' intentions and interpretations of events, Ortner examines why the Sherpas, who for centuries had practiced a form of Buddhism led by married lamas, went through great effort to found celibate monasteries in the early twentieth century. Central to her narrative is the Sherpa cultural schema of heroic rivalry, exile, and triumphant return. The author combines data from ethnography, oral, and political-economic history to reveal the interaction between internal structural contradictions and external forces that contribute to the rise of cultural crises and the articulation of innovative solutions, and offers a perceptive study of the integral role of socio-economic forces play in shaping traditions.


These selections, some translated into English for the first time here, together with Paul's insightful commentary, explore the impact of religious and ideological constructs upon the gender definition and women's conceptions of the self. Part One explores the traditional feminine imagery of temptress and mother; Part Two examines the figures of the nun and bodhisattva, treating the sociological paths available to women; Part Three offers the most positive images of women set forth in Pure Land texts and the story of Queen Śrīmāla, a future Buddha. This work fills a significant gap in scholarship of the Mahāyāna tradition.


An overview of Buddhism in America intended for those familiar with the basic concepts and schools of Asian Buddhism. The text considers the historical development of American Buddhism from its emergence in the late 19th century to the present (with emphasis on the interrelationship of Buddhism with the new American cultural context); the specific manifestations of American Buddhism as illustrated through eight major groups of various Asian origins; and the potential of Buddhism as an influential aspect of general American religious life and culture.


A general survey of Indian philosophy as expressed primarily through the religious thought of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions. The author attempts to introduce fundamental characteristics of Indian thought and
trace the development of these in religious text and doctrine. Comparative treatments of the philosophies of these three religions and illustrations of their influences on Indian thought in general are provided throughout.


A standard introduction to the teachings of the Buddha as translated from the classical texts of the Pali canon. Excerpts of the canon are chosen to illustrate the central concepts of Buddhism, including the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, karma, rebirth, dependent origination, and the doctrine of no-self. The author provides thorough and readily accessible commentary throughout, directed at general audiences seeking a basic understanding of Buddhist thought.


An introductory text aimed at providing a straightforward narrative account of Buddhist history to the general reader and beginning student. The author presents chapters on early Buddhist development (the life and teaching of the Buddha through the emergence of Mahâyâna), and then considers individually the historical development of Buddhist tradition in its present homes throughout Asia and the West. An extensive glossary and topical bibliography serve as further aids for those unfamiliar with the tradition.


A widely accepted textbook providing a critical/historical introduction to Buddhist tradition. The text explores ritual, doctrine, and institutions as major themes throughout its primarily historical survey of Buddhism. Special emphasis is given to Indian Buddhism (roughly half the text), inasmuch as it provides the “common stock” of thought for later Buddhist traditions. Useful appendices (an overview of scriptures, glossary, and topical bibliography in particular) add to the accessibility of this work as an introductory text.


Samuel argues that all forms of Buddhism exist somewhere on a continuum between the shamanic (embodied by the tantric lama whose power and authority derive from inspirational and charismatic experience) and the clerical (wherein authority rests with monks who derive their power from scholarship, rationality and discipline). Tibetan Buddhism is exceptional to the degree that the shamanic element remains vital throughout the various manifestations of the tradition. Part One surveys the diversity of Tibetan Buddhist institutions and traditions in light of this shamanic-clerical scheme. Part Two catalogs the beliefs, rituals, and various practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism, and demonstrates the impact of the shamanic orientation upon ethical, pragmatic, and compassionate practice. Part Three sketches the historical introduction and development of Buddhism in Tibet, noting the subtle interactions among the several schools.


A readily accessible introduction to Buddhist philosophy for Western audiences. Sharma presents major Buddhist concepts by exploring the response of Buddhist thought to a number of familiar Western religious and philosophical concepts, such as God and the Holy, the Problem of Evil, revelation and faith, claims of ultimate truth, and human destiny and immortality.


A broad historical overview of Buddhism from the pre-Buddhist Indian context to the nineteenth century. The majority of the text is devoted to Indian Buddhism, with traditions in other nations receiving individual chapters of approximately five pages each. The text presents a chronological and developmental discussion of the various doctrines and schools, with consideration of the associated institutions. This volume is intended as an entry into the study of Buddhist history, and it provides a comprehensive topical bibliography to stimulate further inquiry.


An accurate yet exceedingly shallow (of necessity, given its brevity and scope) survey of the major religious traditions of Asia: Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Asian Islam, Sikhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Shintoism. Smart attempts to give a balanced view by systematically exploring specific dimensions of each tradition: ritual, religious experience, myth, doctrine, ethics, and society. Intended for those seeking a broad and readily accessible introduction to any or all of the Asian religions.

An anthology of primary texts and other writings addressing Buddhist doctrine, ritual, myth, community, and daily life. Translated texts include both canonical and non-canonical sources; various other works include anthropological observations of Buddhist ritual and practice, and essays by historians of religions and travelers in Buddhist nations. The text is broadly divided into sections, first on the foundations of Buddhism in India (focusing on the “Three Jewels” of doctrine, Dharma, and Sangha), and then on the development of the tradition outside of India.


The author contends that “to understand the cultural life of the Japanese people...it is essential to delve into the secrets of Zen Buddhism.” He accordingly provides a survey of Zen influences on various aspects of Japanese culture, including Samurai and the art of swordsmanship, haiku, the art of tea, the visual arts, and reverence for nature. A brief section on the nature of Zen serves as an introduction.


A collection of translated classical writings providing a broad introduction to Zen Buddhism, directed primarily at non-academic Western readers seeking some understanding of the meaning and practice of Zen.


An introductory text on the role of Theravāda Buddhism in defining the societies of Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka. The influences of the Buddhist worldview in three different societal contexts (the traditional vallage, the nation state, and the modern urban center) are explored. The text is divided into three sections, respectively addressing the importance of popular Buddhist thought and ritual in synthesizing religious ideals with personal and social life, the use of Buddhism to legitimate political structure, and the response of the tradition to changes associated with modernity.


This excellent introduction unites philosophical and historical surveys of the Tibetan Buddhism with core texts of the tradition. Throughout

Thurman emphasizes the centrality of religious and spiritual leaders in shaping belief and practice. Primary texts in the translation include treatments of mentor worship, practicing liberating wisdom, meeting the Buddha in the mentor, and the Dalai Lama’s address in Oslo upon receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize.


Warder surveys the origins and spread of Buddhism across the South Asian subcontinent up to the Muslim invasions, explaining core doctrines and major philosophical debates within their social, intellectual, and historical contexts. After treating issues of methodology, the author examines Indian civilization prior to and during the life of the Buddha, offers a brief biography of Śākyamuni, and gives an encapsulation of his teachings. The work then treats theories of causation, the popularization of Buddhism, particularly under the reign of Asoka, the rise of Sthaviravada and Mahāyāna traditions, Buddhist idealism and knowledge theory, and the rise and influence of Buddhist universities. Warder sticks close to primary texts, paying special attention to the collections of Tripitakas, and is ever attuned to issues of text formation and interpretation.


An introduction to the diversity of Mahāyāna doctrine and practice intended for those having some familiarity with Buddhist tradition. The text covers historical and philosophical origins, central doctrinal ideas and textual sources for various Mahāyāna schools, and practice-oriented facets of the tradition including devotional aspects in the cults of key Bodhisattvas and Buddhas.

Yamasaki, Taiko. Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism. Boston: Shambhala, 1988. Trans. by Richard and Cynthia Peterson, ed. by Yasuyoshi Morimoto and David Kidd, with a forward by Carmen Blacker. Based on the author's Mikkyo Meiso To Shinsou Shinri and Mikkyo Meisobo. This valuable work traces the history of esoteric Buddhism, beginning in India through its arrival and development in Japan. Yamasaki outlines key tenets of Shingon, including its emphasis upon enlightenment in this life and an emphasis upon the possibility of marshalling desires for soteriological ends, and surveys Shingon psychological theory and the types and uses of mandalas. Most significant are the authors in depth treatments of ritual and visualization practices.
Annotated Bibliography: Hinduism

Reference Works


Dictionaries and Encyclopedias


A concise and extensive reference covering texts, persons, gods, philosophical terms, cultural artifacts, and other topics. Entries tend to focus on Vedic literature and tradition, and little is made of developments after the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries. Accessibility of this work to general readers is complicated by the usage of exclusively Sanskrit entries, although the addition of a limited selection of English equivalents, provided as an appendix, mitigates the difficulty to some extent.


A single volume reference with entries on significant religious, social, and political figures, textual sources, doctrines, rituals, schools and movements, and central Hindu religious and cultural concepts. A brief introductory section provides a very broad historical perspective and some overview of Hindu doctrine and community. Entries typically offer little detail but should be useful as introductions for readers lacking familiarity with Hinduism. An extensive topical bibliography provides ample suggestions for further reading.


An illustrated two volume reference touching broadly on all aspects of Hindu religion and culture. Entries on religion tend to focus on Hindu mythology rather than philosophical concepts.

Primary Sources


A collection from the ten million couplets traditionally ascribed to the classical Puranas, the primary sources for the study of Hindu mythology. Puranas are grouped according to specific sects of Hindu worship, most prominently the gods Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa, and Śiva. With the exception of introductory sections for each general grouping, the stories are presented in generally accessible translation without commentary or annotation.


See next annotation.


Olivelle’s volume is a recent collection of twelve of the principal Upaniṣads, presented alongside the original Sanskrit texts and offered in accessible contemporary translation. A general introduction (providing a historical and social overview of the Indian context and a survey of Vedic ritual and thought) and brief individual summaries are provided. The text is extensively annotated, and the relegation of notes to a separate appendix, while potentially frustrating to scholarly investigation of the work, should be a welcome feature for the beginning student and general reader. Hume’s text represents a widely adopted collection of scholarly translations, including a comprehensive introductory section on the philosophy of the Upaniṣads. Translations are again exhaustively annotated, but presented here in a more archaic style than that of Olivelle.


A popular translation of the classic epic text. Intended for general readers, Miller’s simple English translation attempts to preserve the literary qualities of the Sanskrit original. Includes a brief introduction aimed at providing ideological and textual perspective within the wider context of the Hindu epic literature, and an afterward on Henry David Thoreau’s take on the Gītā offers a more familiar Western interpretation of the text.


An admittedly “eclectic” collection of hymns culled from the classic Vedic text, translated with the general reader in mind. Hymns have been selected for the insight they provide into Vedic mythology, philosophy,
and ritual, or simply on the basis of their universality and poetry. Individual hymns are provided context by the author’s brief introductions, and annotations are helpful but unobtrusive.


An anthology of primary texts from sources throughout the Hindu tradition, including the Vedas, Upaniṣads, epics, puranas, shastras, tantras, and several poetic schools. The aim of the work is to provide for the beginning student or general reader a very broad introduction to Hindu primary texts in a single concise volume. Introductory passages are brief, and notes are limited to bibliographic reference.


An indispensable resource for beginning students, this work gathers translations of important texts of nearly all major Indian philosophical schools. Radhakrishnan and Moore offer selections from the Vedas and Upaniṣads, the Gītā and Mahābhārata, and representative works of orthodox Hindu philosophical schools, including the Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta traditions. The sourcebook concludes with selections from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan’s own work. The editors’ introductions and outlines provide necessary historical and theoretical background for students new with Indian philosophical thought, and the bibliography is an outstanding resource for further intellectual exploration.

Secondary Sources


Synthesizing recent scholarship in archaeology and paleontology, the authors present a comprehensive and detailed survey of the cultural development of the South Asian subcontinent. Part One describes the constitutional elements of Indian civilization, including prehistoric environmental factors, hunter-gatherer and nomadic pastoralist societies, and the rise of agriculture. Part Two examines the growth of an urban Indian civilization, while Part Three examines its legacy in later cultural development, including trends in subcontinental unity and diversity.


This rich collection of essays explores mantras from a variety of philosophical, religious, and linguistic perspectives. Authors assess the relations and relevance of mantras to a range of subjects, including Wittgensteinian word games, comparative theology, tantric ritual, meditation, cosmology, and ancient medicinal practice.


Babb is concerned with describing the unity of the Hindu tradition, wherein there is a seeming disjunction between the traditions philosophical and popular religious manifestations, and among the plurality of ritual and devotional systems. Through a focused study of beliefs and practices in the rice-growing region of Madhya Pradesh known as Chhatarpur, the author discloses patterns and consistencies that underscore the systemic aspects of the broad Hindu tradition. His microcosmic analysis may prove fruitful for reflection on macrocosmic issues.


This collection offers descriptive analysis of a number of movements and figures that have shaped Indian religious life and thought in the past century. Essays examine political Hinduism, S. Radhakrishnan, Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda, and Ramakrishnan. Note: the first edition includes a third section, “Religion and National Goals,” which surveys contemporary religio-political issues.


A detailed and comprehensive study of the religious material culture of ancient and medieval India. Combining gyspical, numismatic, archaeological, and art historical research, Banerjea explores the origin and evolution of image worship, iconographic terminology, and artistic codes, while also exploring the religious import of cultic icons and introducing readers to the core tenets of the schools and traditions under consideration.


This masterful survey introduces readers to the social, political, artistic, linguistic, agricultural, and intellectual history of Pre-Muslim India. The various religious traditions are introduced within their broader cultural context. A treasure-trove of appendices covers topics ranging from cosmology, epistemology, and logic to physiology, coinage, and weights and measures.
Suggestions for Further Reading


The author surveys the origins of Saktism, the religion of the great goddess and personification of primordial energy and transforming power, from its roots in the prehistoric cult of the Mother Goddess through its modern manifestations. Throughout Bhattacharyya underscores the responsiveness of the tradition in adapting to new contexts and pressures, while also stressing its unifying characteristics. Throughout its long and variegated history, the cult of Sakti has remained a vital religion of the masses, ever identifying the Feminine Principle with both the plight and hope of the oppressed.


Bhattacharyya introduces the intricate and polyphonic literature, art, history, and thought of Indian esoteric traditions, and sketches the evolution of Tantraism in Hindu and Buddhist traditions, noting internal structural developments and external influences. Chapters treat Tantric elements in early/early-Visnu-Veda religious systems, the relation of Tantrism and popular piety, and the growth of sophisticated Sakti traditions.


A compact but informative overview of the development of Hindu religious thought and experience from Vedic roots through the modern era. Brockington surveys early impersonal and theistic trends in devotion and literature, and the development of orthodox, heterodox and sectarian movements. Particularly commendable are the treatments of Bhakti (devotional) movements in the North and South and the author's insights into the continued adaptability and strength of the broad Hindu tradition.


Chatterjee clearly and succinctly traces the myriad streams of religious and philosophical thought, ranging from Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, and evangelical Christianity, which fed Gandhi's own unique perspective. She explores connections among religion, morality, and practice, Gandhi's communal understanding of moksa (liberation), his approach to the reality and richness of religious pluralism, and the doctrine of ahimsa and its relation to the truth.


A straightforward and highly accessible overview of major historic traditions of Indian and Hindu thought, including Vaishēṣika, Śāṅkhyā, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta schools. The introduction provides some historical framework and highlights commonalities among traditions.


Clooney invites readers to immerse themselves in the songs of the Tiruvaymoli, composed by the ninth century Hindu poet-saint for the god Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa, and to explore with him the religious worlds that texts unlock for their readers. Drawing on these songs and their rich commentarial tradition, Clooney examines the relations among text, reader, and context, and illumines the ways in which texts form religious experience and inform theological thought. Ever sensitive to the problems of comparative religious studies, Clooney provides the reader with an intensive examination of Hindu religious thought from within.


Clooney explores the theological and interpretive process in the writings of Śāṅkara and other Advaita Vedānta texts, arguing that these works are best understood as part of the Mīmāṃsā tradition of Vedic interpretation. While a work of comparative theology, it is included here for its worthwhile contribution to the understanding of the Advaita practice of theology and exegesis, not to mention its subtle and sensitive treatment of the problem of comparisons across religious traditions and of the relations which pertain between religious texts, their readers, and truth.


This massive chronological account of Indian thought represents major traditions and movements and articulates the subtle and contextual significance of Indian philosophical terminology. Major topics included are the Vedas Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads (vol.1), the Śāṅkara school of Vedānta (vol. 2), Vaishāvīva thought and southern theism (vol.

Designed for a general audience, this comprehensive anthology illustrates major patterns and trends in religious life in South Asia. Volume One deals with the major traditions of Brahmanism, Jainism and Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism. Special emphasis is placed upon the devotional and social aspects of Hinduism, rather than the philosophical. Volume Two charts the interaction of traditions with the West, Hindu and Muslim renaissance, and the interplay of Indian traditions within political life.


This feminist critique of the ideology of *pativrata* examines the ideal of womanhood in Hindu tradition and Indian culture. Through studies of and interviews with the village women of her birthplace and historic generalizations, Dhruvarajan explores the impact of religious standards upon social structures, identity, and the daily lives of women.


This seminal and enduringly controversial work explores the caste system in India with regard to its relationship to paradigms of social organization, the categories of pure and impure, and examines the impact of caste upon the structure of daily familial, political, and religious life. Dumont also compares differing conceptions of hierarchy and caste in India and the West as well as the intellectual and prejudicial pitfalls that beset academic study of the topic.


A sophisticated and sensitive introduction to the Hindu tradition centered around (darsan) the sacred. Eck's work provides needed balance to the primarily textual emphasis of other studies, and skillfully guides readers through a survey of the religious significance of the rich material culture of India.


This eloquent and insightful inquiry into religious pluralism and the benefits of inter-religious dialogue combines Eck's exemplary scholarship with the testimony of her personal experiences, ranging from Montana Methodism to time spent as a student of the Hindu tradition in India. Eck illustrates the intellectual and spiritual value of concepts and practices from the Hindu tradition for followers of other faiths, addresses issues surrounding exclusivist, inclusivist, and pluralist approaches to religious difference, stresses the need and inherent worth of honest, respectful conversation, and charts the history and future of religious diversity in America.


Noting that questions concerning the human condition (and, in particular, the temporality and historicity of human existence) have been at the forefront of modern philosophical speculation, Eliade invites Western thinkers to open themselves to Indian understandings of human consciousness and techniques for its liberation. Towards this end, he offers a comprehensive exposition of Yogic history, doctrine, and technique. Topics receiving special attention include the symbolism and methodology of Yoga and Yoga's relation to tantrism, Indian folklore, and aboriginal devotion. Eliade's subtle and sensitive treatment highlights the Yogic tradition's unparalleled insight into the conditioning of human consciousness and the means by which one restores consciousness to its pure, unconditioned—and therefore free and immortal—form.


This somewhat dated though still helpful study explores the rise of new religious movements in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Farquhar pays close attention to the commingling of influences arising from the "old faiths" of India (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, and Zoroastrianism) and modern Western missionary Christianity that contribute to the self-definition and evolution of these reform, revolutionary, and reactionary movements.


Drawing upon a wealth of primary sources, Flood offers an insightful
and balanced introduction to significant devotional, philosophical, ritual, and artistic themes in the traditions that comprise Hinduism. Topics include the significance of the Vedas, the rise of classical orthodoxy, the cults of Viṣṇu, Śiva, and various goddesses, and contemporary manifestations of the ancient tradition. Flood's bibliography is comprehensive and commendable.


Designed for students new to the Hindu tradition, this concise text portrays the constituent elements of “living Hinduism” and opens avenues for discussion and dialogue. Part One, “The Hindu Way of Life,” explains central beliefs, symbols, rituals, festivals, deities, and surveys the caste system. Part Two, “History and Traditions,” provides a condensed introduction to the history of Indus valley civilization, the Vedic period, and the development of Vedānta and Bhakti schools.


Fuller offers a portrait of popular Hindu belief and practice that critically synthesizes recent anthropological research while remaining accessible to the general reader. Focusing upon the central themes of divine-human relations and hierarchic structures, the author examines the Hindu pantheon, worship and sacrifice, the caste system, women’s devotions, and misfortune. Fuller treats the Hindu calendar in its own appendix and provides a useful glossary and bibliographic guide for further study.


In this concise and well-documented introduction, Goudriaan offers readers a historical overview and discussion of central tenets, while Hoen surveys the constituents of Tantric practice with a heavy emphasis upon the function and role of mantras, and Gupta explores elements of worship (puja) and meditation (yoga).


In this intense piece of literary and historical scholarship, Hardy investigates the origins of viraha-bhakti (emotional devotion) to the god Kṛṣṇa. Analysis of the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa, Cankān, and Alvar texts illuminates the birth and transformation of Kṛṣṇa myths and their incorporation in devotional life.


A collection of essays outlining the underlying tension between unchanging and transcendent religious ideals and the imperfect and immanent realities of human society. Specifically, the Hindu ideal of Braham and the worldly order symbolized by the king are depicted in a relationship of often problematic co-existence. Heesterman focuses primarily on the Vedic sacrificial system and the ancient Indian political order of kingship, with further commentary on the responses of Indian tradition to modernity.


This collection inquires into the nature and practice of popular religion in the urban setting of Banaras. Essays, ranging in subject matter from the Ramlila (dramatizations of the epic of Ram), to contemporary Muslim-Hindu conflict, to the influence of market impulses upon devotion, combine to paint a vivid portrait of the complex vitality of this ancient pilgrimage site and of the modern manifestations of the Hindu tradition.


The author provides a broad and surprisingly detailed (given its brevity) historical survey of the central themes of Hinduism, from pre-Aryan societies to Hindu reform movements in the twentieth century. Aspects of Hindu tradition not strictly religious (e.g., cultural and political aspects) are largely unaddressed.


A classic text on Indian thought, despite its age, Keith provides a comprehensive account of Vedic philosophy with thorough reference to primary texts. The impressive detail of this two-volume work and the absence of translations of original sources within the text itself (requiring either extensive cross referencing or intimate knowledge of the field) limits accessibility to more advanced students of Hinduism.


A “sourcebook” providing portraits of the central Hindu goddesses. Historical perspectives are provided along with a summary of particular
myths and rituals associated with each goddess. The text also explores the significance of these figures in illustrating Hindu religious concepts, with an emphasis on the influence of goddess imagery on Hindu perceptions of the feminine.


A concise introductory overview of Hindu religious thought and tradition. Historical perspective is provided for analysis of Hindu philosophy, myth, ritual, art, and social structures. The author's portrayal of the Hindu world view as a "tension" between dharma (duty) and moksa (release) serves as an underlying theme in discussions of central Hindu beliefs and associated cultural forms. The second editions includes an expanded section on feminine imagery and participation in Hinduism.


The author attempts to convey "the living tradition of the Hindus" through a survey of Hindu religion as it influences contemporary thought and culture. The text provides an introduction to the development of Hinduism and its textual foundation and underlying theology; a discussion of the three marga (paths of salvation) of work, knowledge, and loving devotion as they feature in contemporary worship; an examination of Hindu philosophy, social order, and the sacralization of time and space as they provide support to the structure of Hindu tradition; and some mention of the contemporary interaction of Hinduism with the West.


A brief introduction to Hinduism presupposing no prior knowledge of the tradition. The text is divided primarily into sections on historical foundations, Hindu representations of reality, and Hindu ritual practice, with a minor section on contemporary Hindu society.


An attempt to portray Hindu women as "active agents of their own positive constructs" through a consideration of the part played by women in a variety of religious rituals. Four categories of feminine roles and ritual are explored: the ritual wife, power in the home, the ritual of dance, and the pursuit of salvation. Through feminist interpretation of Hindu text and tradition, women are portrayed as more than passive victims of oppressive Hindu ideologies. Emphasis is placed throughout on interpretations of Hindu ritual as seen by its female practitioners, thus providing often surprising insight into the motivation behind feminine participation in Hindu religious practice.


A discussion of the traditional Hindu understanding of law prior to the adoption in India of Western judicial concepts. Lingat explores the relationship between the religious notion of dharma (duty) and the establishment of a juridical system by first extensively examining the traditional and textual sources of dharma and subsequently systematizing the development of interpreted dharma into rule of law through the influence of custom and royal ordinance.


A comprehensive comparative study of three schools of Vedānta deriving from the thought of the Hindu theologians Saṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva. The author stresses the diversity of Vedantic study in referring to distinctions between these schools in the understanding of Brahman, epistemology, and transcendence.


A comprehensive survey of Indian history from pre-Aryan peoples to the formation of an independent state in 1947; with the addition of several brief appendices on developments in the following two decades. Special emphasis is placed upon political, social, economic, and cultural developments, as opposed to specific personalities. As suggested by the title, the text is intended for those with some previous knowledge of Indian history.


A detailed general study (conducted in the middle third of the twentieth century) on the basic social principles guiding Indian village life. The text focuses on the primary societal groups and the interactions between them, with the aim of fostering understanding of Indian caste society. Economic, political, and religious influences on social order are generally
not considered. The detail and size (two volumes, over 650 pages) of this work recommend it to those seeking more than simply an introduction to Indian social order.


These essays apply ethnographic and ethnosociological approaches, employing South Asian concepts and categories, to the study of Indian religions and cultures. Entries include discussions of issues arising in the ethnosociological discipline, the question of distinctly Indian modes of thought, interpretations of misfortune, and the concept of purity.


A collection of essays by various authors addressing the intersection of the Hindu religion and Indian environmentalism. Both positive and negative influences of Hindu thought are examined, with special emphasis on the symbolism and imagery that form the basis of Indian attitudes and behaviors toward nature. Specific issues explored include the potential role of the ascetic outlook in ecological ethics, the role of karma, the sacralization of Hindu time and space, concepts of purity and impurity, the influence of the orthodox emphasis on transcendence, and the relationship of Hindu worldviews to modern secular environmentalism.


An examination of the understanding of the Great Goddess in Hindu Brahmanical tradition. The text traces historic origins of goddess motifs in the Vedic and Brahmanic traditions, explores the formulation of the Great Goddess through the principles of prakṛti (Nature/material existence), sakti (energy/power), and māyā (illusion), and considers the cultural implications of this formulation, especially with respect to contemporary gender issues in Hindu society.


A highly accessible introductory text aimed at providing some initial familiarity with various aspects of Hindu religion and culture. Topics covered include historic development, doctrine and practice, ethics, spirituality, philosophy, and contemporary issues such as gender and the influence of Hinduism on the West.


A comprehensive historical and geographical survey of Indian art and architecture. Contributions of Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain traditions are examined, with consideration of the mythic and metaphysical aspects of specific forms. The text is extensively illustrated throughout, and artistic themes are developed through reference to particular works. Most likely to be of greatest interest to students of art and architecture, this work provides an excellent introduction to the art forms common to South Asia and their historical and cultural foundations.


A collection of nineteen essays aimed at providing a diversity of approaches to the understanding of Indian spirituality of the "classical period." Essays range from those of general scope (e.g., "Vedānta as philosophy of spiritual life") to those with highly specified foci (e.g., an article on the use of the term buddhiyoga in the Bhagavad Gītā). Some articles assume prior familiarity with Hindu philosophy. The focus of the collection is on spirituality as developed in the elite intellectual tradition of classical Hinduism.


A textual, historical, and interpretive re-reading of the Yoga Sātra and the thought of Patanjali aimed towards a more complete understanding of the relationship of Yogic theory to Yogic practice. The author challenges common conceptions of Yoga darsana by contending that Patanjali's Yoga promotes a "responsible engagement" of spirit and material existence toward a liberated selfhood which enables a more fulfilling worldly existence without subjection to worldly identification. The text provides a survey of early Hindu Yogic forms as well as a treatment of the theoretical issues. The complexity of Whicher's argument assumes some knowledge of Hindu philosophy.


This fascinating collection of essays paints a vivid, incisive, and often humorous portrait of the diversity of the Hindu diaspora. Part One examines the changing faces of Hinduism in India and explores the interplay between a tradition's mode of transmission and its content. Part
Suggestions for Further Reading

Two surveys issues surrounding the transplantation of Indian religious traditions onto foreign soil, primarily focused upon the religiously and culturally diverse landscape of America. Topics include the impact of Western missionary and educational activity upon the evolution of Hindu traditions, questions surrounding translation of texts, the role of ritual in transmission of religious belief, and intellectual and spiritual cross-pollination among traditions.


A survey of some of the dominant myths and mythological symbols of the Hindu tradition, accompanied by examples of their representations in Indian art and architecture. The central focus of the text is directed to Hindu mythology, with illustrations serving primarily as supporting material. Common themes and homogeneity within the diverse world of Hindu myth are explored, with occasional treatment of issues of methodology and interpretation.

Annotated Bibliography: Theories of Comparison


This work embarks upon a complex investigation of the history, dialectics, and current practice of the symbolic analysis of cultural diversity with an aim of formulating a general comparative approach to the study of symbolic processes. Boon examines the interrelationships of cultures as they differ in time and space through the medium and critique of various sociological and philosophical methods. In addition, Boon uses an array of cross-cultural and historical discussions to integrate different secular and religious symbolic forms in order to form a model of the type of symbolic analysis Boon advocates. More specifically, Boon proceeds upon the hypothesis that both cultures and the methods of investigating them are plural, and posits, for the examination of cultures, a method of dialectical analysis that employs the interrelation of opposed yet complementary comparative theoretical approaches.


This work develops a brief account of the history of comparative religious studies and a general overview of the major religions of the world. The individual analyses of each of the major religious traditions in this investigation focus on the notion of deity and selfhood that is given expression by each of the major religions in their sacred texts. Of particular interest for contemporary comparative studies is the final chapter of this work, which identifies and classifies several primary categories for comparison developed by a number of European scholars.


Working to draw comparisons primarily in the panoramic field of primitive religions, this investigation locates its comparative trajectory in the initial analysis of external or outward acts that fall within the sphere of religious activity, and then in the internal world of thought and feeling. Such external objects for comparison are described as including the places where religious acts are performed, the people who perform them, the means required for religious action, and the occasions to which such actions are attached. Internal acts for comparison are said to include elements of belief, conceptions of the significance of ritual, and the understanding of Powers toward which worship is directed. These later internal acts are construed to be located most explicitly for investigation in the myth, literature, and history of more highly organized religions, which externalize belief through their modes of worship. Within this larger methodological framework, comparative analysis of an array of religious traditions is pursued under the topics of sacred art, spirits and gods, sacred products, and religious morality.


Offering some preliminary explanations concerning the broader elements of the comparative study of religions and acknowledging the necessity for a kind of religious dialogue that takes into account cultural differences, this work introduces central themes evident in the religious faiths of Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism. By identifying the differences evident in these faiths, chosen specifically because they are commonly practiced in every country of the English-speaking world, it is the authors’ intent to illustrate a picture of the whole diverse range of religious worship. Other categories for comparison are suggested as well, including prayer, religious festival, and communal belief.

This extensive comparative study explores commonalities shared by primitive religious traditions in accordance with those exhibited in patterns manifest in cosmic heirophanies understood as sacred. Eliade analyses of divine forms, myths, religious symbols, and other natural heirophanies considered sacred in primitive religions, facilitating a more specialized comparative study of religions. A bibliography arranged according to topical study follows each chapter.


This exhaustive historical account of the emergence and growth of the discipline of comparative religious studies offers a broad introduction to the major fields, schools, and central theorists in the comparative study of religions. Of primary concern is the outline of methodological strategies and the tracing of their theoretical development.


This work provides the readers with a wide array of literature concerning what anthropologists have found out about religion over the past one hundred years. The various selected essays are viewed by the editors to represent two types of 'comparative religion'. The first involves the method by which common denominator conceptual generalizations are extracted from a mass of variants and used as tools to make comparisons between similar types of phenomena. The second understands similarities in cultural form and structure as providing key typologies or categories for comparison that achieve a kind of objectivity that allows for comparative neutrality. Other essays present comparative perspectives that employ both methods or in some way fall under the broader anthropological concerns addressed in this collection.


This series of essays providing introductory material in all the major religious traditions as well as in African, Near East, and Eskimo traditions, is itself introduced by essays on the scope of comparative theories of religion. Later essays then draw comparisons on major religious themes including creation, models of relationships, the nature and destiny of man, good and evil, salvation, death, and immortality. Final considerations are given to central contemporary religious movements and themes relevant to the future of religion.


Acknowledging the hypothetical character of contemporary comparative methodologies, Neville posits that the central task of comparative theology is the disclosure and understanding of the contexts in which various religious expressions of divinity are true. Necessary to this task, for Neville, is the development of a methodology for comparing religious traditions that may in fact be incommensurate. Accordingly, Neville argues that such a methodology must identify and critically assess a general conception of divinity that allows other conceptions, symbols, and images of divinity to be related and ordered, and, further, to make explicit descriptive speculative hypotheses that articulate and contextualize this conception of divinity for the purpose of generating plausible philosophical categories that might serve as a conceptual ground for comparison. Upon such premises, Neville advocates a general conception of divinity based on a specialized account of creation ex nihilo and dialectically explores the fundamental categories of creativity and nothingness as they relate to the intellectual traditions of Christianity, Buddhism, and Confucianism.


Paden develops the far-reaching concept of "world," specifically in the sense of being an environment or "place," as an organizing category for the study of religion. More precisely, the concept of "world" for this study is construed as the operating environment of language and behavioral options that persons presuppose and inhabit at any given point in any particular form of human action. With such an encompassing idea of context and the further thesis arguing for the presence of multiple worlds, this work endeavors to investigate distinctive life-categories of the "insider" across the lines of different religious traditions while specifically examining religious myth, ritual, deity, and systems of purity. Also included is a brief synopsis and critique of traditional strategies of comparison employed in the study of religions.

Platvoet argues for the abandonment of global modes of comparison that impose no restrictions upon the number and type of religions to be compared, instead favoring the adoption of a limiting, restricted approach to the comparisons of religion. This work employs a number of analytical tools for comparison derived from a theory of religion that postulates religion as a process of communication between a human being or a group of human beings and one or more of the "metaphysical" beings whom they believe to exist and to affect their lives. The central premises posited for a limiting comparative study of religion include the in-depth study of the particular facets of religion selected for comparison and the subjective lives of the authors who wrote on them. The methodological tools employed for such analytical and comparative work include descriptive accounts of the communication networks ('field'), modes of communication ('process'), and the larger historical and institutional contexts ('context') considered relevant to the facet of religion selected for comparison.


Although not developing its own methodology for the comparative study of religion, this work reviews the conceptual development of the academic field of comparative religious studies, highlighting its major trends and the thought of its most central theorists. Following a preliminary examination of the antecedents of comparative religious studies is a detailed account of the way different thinkers and early intellectual movements in anthropological, sociological, psychological, and philosophical disciplines contributed in shaping the efforts and concerns of the contemporary comparative study of religion.


This work operates under the premise that there exists a coherence or unity in humankind's religious history (exemplified in certain metaphysical truths), and endeavors to reflect on how the understanding and perspectives of distinct religious traditions resemble this common history in different ways. Further, Smith considers and critiques the way conceptual categories evident in each of the major religious traditions of the world may, according to their own character, potentially function as comparative categories of universal significance in relation to all forms of religion. Central to this analysis is the belief that conceptualizing and understanding the concepts of others must be historically anchored (even in the case of history-transcending or self-transcending concepts such as those associated with deity).


Wach develops a systematic approach for the analysis of religious experience, drawing on sociological, historical, philological, and phenomenological methodology to develop a broad philosophical account of the nature of religious experience. Also, there is an account of the methodology developed for this study and a defense of typological categorization for the purpose of organizing the endless variety of phenomenon provided by the history, psychology, and sociology of religion.