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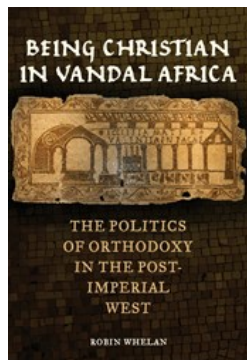
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THE UNIVERSITY PRESS GROUP

Religion

New and Best of Backlist

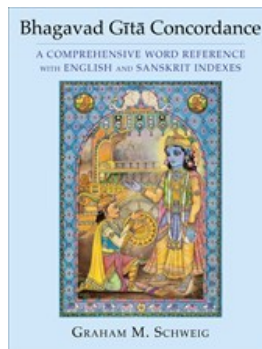
Spring / Summer 2024



Being Christian in Vandal Africa – The Politics of Orthodoxy in the Post-Imperial West

Robin Whelan
9780520401433
£30.00 • \$34.95 • Paperback
Religion / History
June 2024
University of California Press

Being Christian in Vandal Africa investigates conflicts over Christian orthodoxy in the Vandal kingdom, the successor to Roman rule in North Africa, ca. 439 to 533 c.e. Exploiting neglected texts, author Robin Whelan exposes a sophisticated culture of disputation between Nicene (“Catholic”) and Homoian (“Arian”) Christians and explores their rival claims to political and religious legitimacy. These contests—sometimes violent—are key to understanding the wider and much-debated issues of identity and state formation in the post-imperial West.



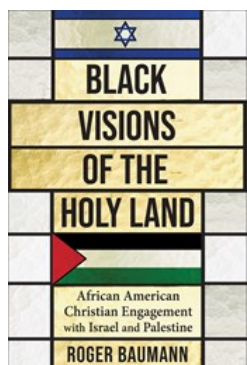
Bhagavad Gita Concordance – A Comprehensive Word Reference with English and Sanskrit Indexes

Graham M. Schweig
9780231141321
£68.00 • \$80.00 • Hardcover
Religion / Hinduism / Sacred Writings
February 2024
Columbia University Press

The Bhagavad Gītā is one of the treasures of world culture. Sacred in India, and beloved to hundreds of millions throughout the centuries and around the world, it is the best-known of all Sanskrit works in the West. There has been sustained interest in the Bhagavad Gītā for several centuries in the Anglophone world, and well over one hundred complete English translations have been published.

This book presents the first comprehensive and accessible concordance of the Bhagavad Gītā. The concordance lists every word of the original, noting all its locations and instances within the text, along with related words. It is accompanied by various supportive references, including Sanskrit and English indexes. The concordance can be linked with any translation, giving readers in-depth access to the Sanskrit text.

This book is designed for those with little or no knowledge of Sanskrit as well as those familiar with the original text. It allows readers to gain a greater reach into the Bhagavad Gītā and achieve a deeper understanding of its ideas, facilitating nuanced analyses of the text and its language. It is an essential reference for scholars, teachers, students, and other readers interested in India's spiritual classics.

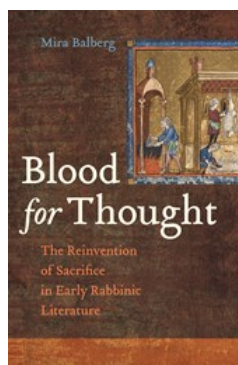


Black Visions of the Holy Land – African American Christian Engagement with Israel and Palestine

Roger Baumann
9780231198455
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Social Science / Sociology Of Religion
April 2024
Columbia University Press

Since at least the high point of the civil rights movement, African American Christianity has been widely recognized as a potent force for social change. Most attention to the political significance of Black churches, however, focuses on domestic protest and electoral politics. Yet some Black churches take a deep interest in the global issue of Israel and Palestine. Why would African American Christians get involved—and even take sides—in Palestine and Israel, and what does that reveal about the political significance of “the Black Church” today?

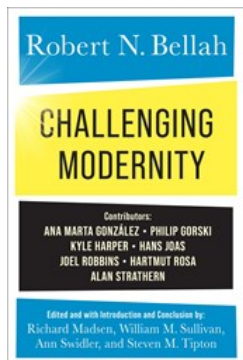
This book examines African American Christian involvement in Israel and Palestine to show how competing visions of “the Black Church” are changing through transnational political engagement. Considering cases ranging from African American Christian Zionists to Palestinian solidarity activists, Roger Baumann traces how Black religious politics transcend domestic arenas and enter global spaces. These cases, he argues, illuminate how the meaning of the ostensibly singular and unifying category of “the Black Church”—spanning its history, identity, culture, and mission—is deeply contested at every turn. *Black Visions of the Holy Land* offers new insights into how Black churches understand their political role and social significance; the ways race, religion, and politics both converge and diverge; and why the meaning of overlapping racial and religious identities shifts when moving from national to global contexts.



Blood for Thought – The Reinvention of Sacrifice in Early Rabbinic Literature

Mira Balberg
9780520401419
£30.00 • \$34.95 • Paperback
Religion / Ancient
June 2024
University of California Press

Blood for Thought delves into a relatively unexplored area of rabbinic literature: the vast corpus of laws, regulations, and instructions pertaining to sacrificial rituals. Mira Balberg traces and analyzes the ways in which the early rabbis interpreted and conceived of biblical sacrifices, reinventing them as a site through which to negotiate intellectual, cultural, and religious trends and practices in their surrounding world. Rather than viewing the rabbinic project as an attempt to generate a nonsacrificial version of Judaism, she argues that the rabbis developed a new sacrificial Jewish tradition altogether, consisting of not merely substitutes to sacrifice but elaborate practical manuals that redefined the processes themselves, radically transforming the meanings of sacrifice, its efficacy, and its value.

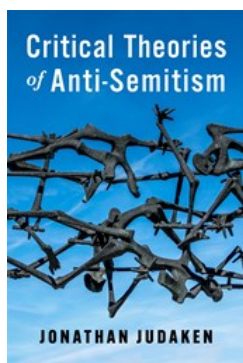


Challenging Modernity

Robert N. Bellah
9780231214896
£28.00 • \$32.00 • Paperback
Social Science / Sociology Of Religion
April 2024
Columbia University Press

From the 1960s until his death in 2013, Robert N. Bellah was the preeminent figure in the study of religion and society. He broke new ground in mapping the religious dimensions of human experience, from the great breakthroughs of the first millennium BCE to the paradoxes of American civic life. In three final essays, published here for the first time, Bellah grapples with the contradictions of modernity, and seven leading thinkers respond with profound, exhilarating new perspectives on our present predicament.

Challenging Modernity critically assesses the modern project to shed light on the tensions between its transcendent aspirations and the perils we now face. Its contributors analyze the roots of the collapse of the political, economic, and cultural institutions that have promised perpetual progress but now threaten global catastrophe. Reflecting the range of Bellah's scholarship, they span the disciplines of history, sociology, anthropology, and philosophy. They extend Bellah's insight that only deep historical, cultural, and religious understanding can help us meet modernity's harrowing challenges by sharing responsibility for the global interdependence of our common fate.

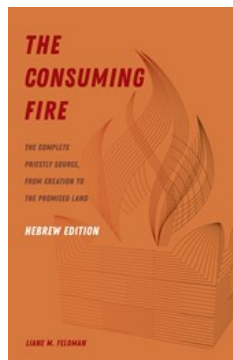


Critical Theories of Anti-Semitism

Jonathan Judaken
9780231212939
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Religion / Judaism / History
June 2024
Columbia University Press

Despite its persistence and viciousness, anti-Semitism remains undertheorized in comparison with other forms of racism and discrimination. How should anti-Semitism be defined? What are its underlying causes? Why do anti-Semites target Jews? In what ways has Judeophobia changed over time? What are the continuities and disconnects between medieval anti-Judaism and the Holocaust? How does criticism of the state of Israel relate to anti-Semitism? And how can social theory illuminate the upsurge in attacks on Jews today?

Considering these questions and many more, this book is at once a philosophical reflection on key problems in the analysis of anti-Semitism and a history of its leading theories and theorists. Jonathan Judaken explores the methodological and conceptual issues that have vexed the study of Judeophobia and calls for a reconsideration of the definitions, categories, and narratives that underpin overarching explanations. He traces how a range of thinkers have wrestled with these challenges, examining the theories of Jean-Paul Sartre, the Frankfurt School, Hannah Arendt, and Jean-François Lyotard, alongside the works of sociologists Talcott Parsons and Zygmunt Bauman and historians Léon Poliakov and George Mosse. Judaken argues against claims about the uniqueness of Judeophobia, demonstrating how it is entangled with other racisms: Islamophobia, Negrophobia, and xenophobia. *Critical Theories of Anti-Semitism* not only urges readers to question how they think about Judeophobia but also draws them into conversation with a range of leading thinkers whose insights are sorely needed in this perilous moment.

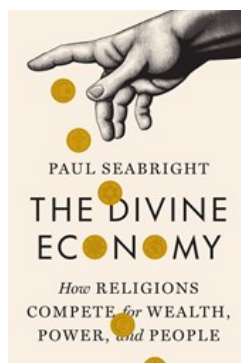


The Consuming Fire, Hebrew Edition – The Complete Priestly Source, from Creation to the Promised Land

Liane M. Feldman
9780520402867
£21.00 • \$24.95 • Paperback
Religion / Biblical Studies
May 2024
University of California Press

Embedded within the Bible lies a largely unknown story of the founding of early Israel and its religion, interwoven with tales documenting the creation of the Torah. Known as the Priestly Source, the complete text has not appeared on its own in either Hebrew or English—until now. This edition contains for the first time the full biblical Hebrew along with a new translation, annotated to guide readers through the text.

This translation by Liane M. Feldman, an authority on the text, reveals the mythical foundation for the practice of sacrifice in ancient Israelite and Jewish religion. Beginning with the creation of the world and ending at the edge of the Promised Land, the Priestly Source offers a distinctive account from over two thousand years ago of the origins of the people of Israel and a unique perspective on their relationship with their god, Yahweh—one in stark contrast to what is found when we read the Bible now.



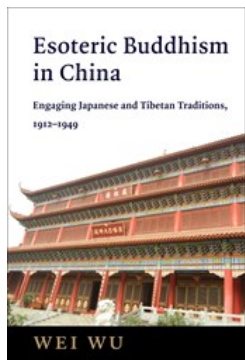
The Divine Economy – How Religions Compete for Wealth, Power, and People

Paul Seabright
9780691133003
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Hardcover
Social Science / Sociology Of Religion
May 2024
Princeton University Press

A novel economic interpretation of how religions have become so powerful in the modern world

Religion in the twenty-first century is alive and well across the world, despite its apparent decline in North America and parts of Europe. Vigorous competition between and within religious movements has led to their accumulating great power and wealth. Religions in many traditions have honed their competitive strategies over thousands of years. Today, they are big business; like businesses, they must recruit, raise funds, disburse budgets, manage facilities, organize transportation, motivate employees, and get their message out. In *The Divine Economy*, economist Paul Seabright argues that religious movements are a special kind of business: they are platforms, bringing together communities of members who seek many different things from one another—spiritual fulfilment, friendship and marriage networks, even business opportunities. Their function as platforms, he contends, is what has allowed religions to consolidate and wield power.

This power can be used for good, especially when religious movements provide their members with insurance against the shocks of modern life, and a sense of worth in their communities. It can also be used for harm: political leaders often instrumentalize religious movements for authoritarian ends, and religious leaders can exploit the trust of members to inflict sexual, emotional, financial or physical abuse, or to provoke violence against outsiders. Writing in a nonpartisan spirit, Seabright uses insights from economics to show how religion and secular society can work together in a world where some people feel no need for religion, but many continue to respond with enthusiasm to its call.

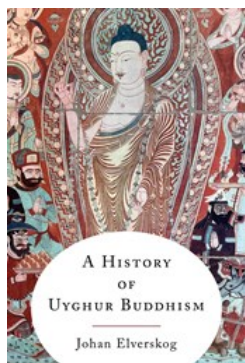


Esoteric Buddhism in China, 1912–1949

Wei Wu
9780231200691
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Religion / Buddhism / History
April 2024
Columbia University Press

During the Republican period (1912–1949) and after, many Chinese Buddhists sought inspiration from non-Chinese Buddhist traditions, showing a particular interest in esoteric teachings. What made these Buddhists dissatisfied with Chinese Buddhism, and what did they think other Buddhist traditions could offer? Which elements did they choose to follow, and which ones did they disregard? And how do their experiences recast the wider story of twentieth-century pan-Asian Buddhist reform movements?

Based on a wide range of previously unexplored Chinese sources, this book explores how esoteric Buddhist traditions have shaped the Chinese religious landscape. Wei Wu examines cross-cultural religious transmission of ideas from Japanese and Tibetan traditions, considering the various esoteric currents within Chinese Buddhist communities and how Chinese individuals and groups engaged with newly translated ideas and practices. She argues that Chinese Buddhists' assimilation of doctrinal, ritual, and institutional elements of Tibetan and Japanese esoteric Buddhism was not a simple replication but an active process of creating new meanings. Their visions of Buddhism in the modern world, as well as early twentieth-century discourses of nation building and religious reform, shaped the reception of esoteric traditions. By analyzing the Chinese interpretation and strategic adaptations of esoteric Buddhism, this book sheds new light on the intellectual development, ritual performances, and institutional formations of Chinese Buddhism in the twentieth century.



A History of Uyghur Buddhism

Johan Elverskog
9780231215251
£28.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Religion / Buddhism / History
June 2024
Columbia University Press

Today, most Uyghurs are Muslims. For centuries, however, Uyghurs were Buddhists. By around 1000 CE, they, like many of their neighbors, had decisively turned toward the Dharma, and a golden age of Uyghur Buddhism flourished under the Mongol empire. Dwelling along the Silk Road in what is now northwestern China, they stood at the center of Buddhist Eurasia, linking far-flung regions and traditions. But as Muslim power grew, Uyghur Buddhists converted to Islam, rewriting their past and erasing their Buddhist history.

This book presents the first comprehensive history of Buddhism among the Uyghurs from the ninth to the seventeenth century. Johan Elverskog traces how the Uyghurs forged their distinctive tradition, considering a variety of social, political, cultural, and religious contexts. He argues that the religious history of the Uyghurs challenges conventional narratives of the meeting of Buddhism and Islam, showing that conversion took place gradually and was driven by factors such as geopolitics, climate change, and technological innovation. Elverskog also provides a nuanced understanding of lived Buddhism, focusing on ritual practices and materiality as well as the religion's entanglements with economics, politics, and violence. A groundbreaking history of Uyghur Buddhism, this book makes a compelling case for the importance of the Uyghurs in shaping the course of both Buddhist and Asian history.



The Essential Kierkegaard

Søren Kierkegaard
9780691254067
£25.00 • \$29.95 • Paperback
Philosophy / Religious
October 2023
Princeton University Press

A comprehensive anthology of Kierkegaard's writings that offers an unmatched introduction to one of the most original and influential modern philosophers

This is the most comprehensive anthology of Søren Kierkegaard's works ever published in English. Drawn from the volumes of Princeton's authoritative *Kierkegaard's Writings* series by editors Howard and Edna Hong, these carefully chosen selections represent every major aspect of Kierkegaard's extraordinary output, which changed the course of modern intellectual history with its mix of philosophy, psychology, theology, and literary criticism. The anthology reveals the most important themes of his work, especially what it means to exist and to be human, and captures the unique character of his writings, with their shifting pseudonyms, complex dialogues, and powerful combination of irony, satire, sermon, polemic, humor, and fiction. A superb introduction and guide to the Danish philosopher, *The Essential Kierkegaard* vividly demonstrates why his work continues to speak so directly to so many readers.

- Traces the full span of Kierkegaard's writings, from his early journals to his final work
- Features generous selections from all of Kierkegaard's most important works, including *Either/Or*, *Fear and Trembling*, *Works of Love*, and *The Sickness unto Death*
- Presents selections from lesser-known writings, including *Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions* and *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air*
- Includes an introduction to Kierkegaard's writings and explanatory notes for each selection



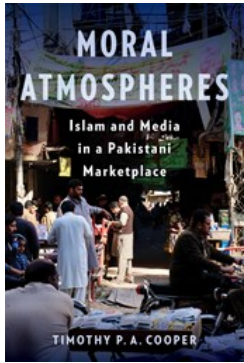
Life – The Natural History of an Early Christian Universe

Catherine Michael Chin
9780520400689
£25.00 • \$29.95 • Paperback
Religion / Christianity
April 2024
University of California Press

A vivid and intimate glimpse of ancient life under the sway of cosmic and spiritual forces that the modern world has forgotten.

Life immerses the reader in the cosmic sea of existences that made up the late ancient Mediterranean world. Loosely structured around events in the biography of one early Christian writer and traveler, this book weaves together the philosophical, religious, sensory, and scientific worlds of the later Roman Empire to tell the story of how human lives were lived under different natural and spiritual laws than those we now know today.

This book takes a highly literary and sensory approach to its subject, evoking an imagined experience of an ancient natural and supernatural world, rather than merely explaining ancient thought about the natural world. It mixes visual and literary genres to give the reader a sensory and affective experience of a thought-world that is very different from our own. An experimental intellectual history, *Life* invites readers into the premodern cosmos to experience a world that is at once familiar, strange, and deeply compelling.

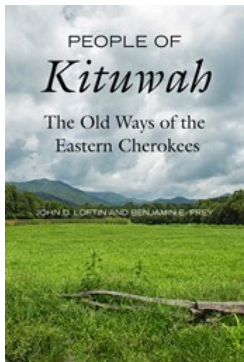


Moral Atmospheres – Islam and Media in a Pakistani Marketplace

Timothy P. A. Cooper
9780231210416
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Religion / Islam
March 2024
Columbia University Press

Lahore's Hall Road is the largest electronics market in Pakistan. Once the center of film and media piracy in South Asia, it now specializes in smartphones and accessories. For Hall Road's traders, conflicts between the economic promises and the moral dangers of film loom large. To reconcile their secular trade with their responsibilities as devoted Muslims, they often look to adjudicate the good or bad moral "atmosphere" (*mahaul*) that can cling to film and media.

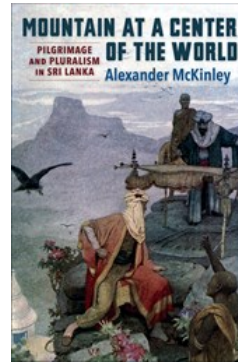
Timothy P. A. Cooper examines the diverse and coexisting moral atmospheres that surround media in Pakistan, tracing public understandings of ethical life and showing how they influence economic behavior. Drawing on extensive ethnographic work among traders, consumers, collectors, archivists, cinephiles, and cinephobes, *Moral Atmospheres* explores varied views on what the relationship between film and faith should look, sound, and feel like for Pakistan's Muslim-majority public. Cooper considers the preservation and censorship of film in and outside of the state bureaucracy, contestations surrounding heritage and urban infrastructure, and the production and circulation of sound and video recordings among the country's religious minorities. He argues that a focus on atmosphere provides ways of seeing moral thresholds as mutable and affective, rather than as fixed ethical standpoints. At once a vivid ethnography of a market street and a generative theorization of atmosphere, this book offers fresh perspectives on moral experience and the relationship between religion and media.



People of Kituwah – The Old Ways of the Eastern Cherokees

John D. Loftin
9780520400320
£30.00 • \$34.95 • Paperback
Religion / Indigenous, Folk & Tribal
May 2024
University of California Press

According to Cherokee tradition, the place of creation is Kituwah, located at the center of the world and home to the most sacred and oldest of all beloved, or mother, towns. Just by entering Kituwah, or indeed any village site, Cherokees reexperience the creation of the world, when the water beetle first surfaced with a piece of mud that later became the island on which they lived. *People of Kituwah* is a comprehensive account of the spiritual worldview and lifeways of the Eastern Cherokee people, from the creation of the world to today. Building on vast primary and secondary materials, native and non-native, this book provides a window into not only what the Cherokees perceive and understand—their notions of space and time, marriage and love, death and the afterlife, healing and traditional medicine, and rites and ceremonies—but also how their religious life evolved both before and after the calamitous coming of colonialism. Through the collaborative efforts of John D. Loftin and Benjamin E. Frey, this book offers an in-depth understanding of Cherokee culture and society.

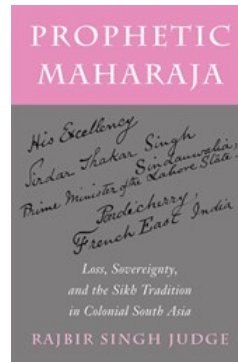


Mountain at a Center of the World – Pilgrimage and Pluralism in Sri Lanka

Alexander McKinley
9780231210614
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Religion / Sacred Places
March 2024
Columbia University Press

At the pilgrimage site of Adam's Peak in Sri Lanka, a footprint is embedded atop the mountain summit. Buddhists hold that it was left by the Buddha, Hindus say Lord Siva, and Muslims and Christians identify it with Adam, the first man. The Sri Lankan state, for its part, often uses the Peak as a prop to convey a harmonious image of religious pluralism, despite increasing Buddhist hegemony. How should the diversity of this place be understood historically and managed practically?

Considering the varied heritage of this sacred site, Alexander McKinley develops a new account of pluralism based in political ecology, representing the full array of actors and issues on the mountain. From its diverse people to rare species to deep geology, the Peak exemplifies a planetary pluralism that recognizes a multiplicity of beings while accepting competition and disorder. Taking a place-based approach, McKinley casts the mountain as an actor, exploring how its rocks, forests, and waters promote pilgrimage, inspire storytelling, and make ethical demands on human communities. Combining history and ethnography while furnishing original translations of sources from Pali, Sinhala, and Tamil, this multidisciplinary and stylistically innovative book shows how religious traditions share literal common ground in their reverence for the mountain.



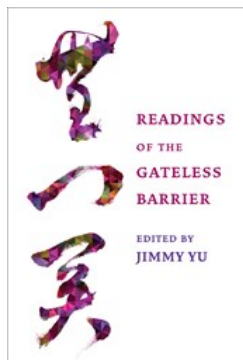
Prophetic Maharaja – Loss, Sovereignty, and the Sikh Tradition in Colonial South Asia

Rajbir Singh Judge
9780231214490
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Religion / Sikhism
July 2024
Columbia University Press

How do traditions and peoples grapple with loss, particularly when it is of such magnitude that it defies the possibility of recovery or restoration? Rajbir Singh Judge offers new ways to understand loss and the limits of history by considering Maharaja Duleep Singh and his struggle during the 1880s to reestablish Sikh rule, the lost *Khalsa Raj*, in Punjab.

Sikh sovereignty in what is today northern India and northeastern Pakistan came to an end in the middle of the nineteenth century, when the British annexed the Sikh kingdom and, eventually, exiled its child maharaja, Duleep Singh, to England. In the 1880s, Singh embarked on an abortive attempt to restore the lost Sikh kingdom. Judge explores not only Singh's efforts but also the Sikh people's responses—the dreams, fantasies, and hopes that became attached to the *Khalsa Raj*. He shows how a community engaged military, political, and psychological loss through theological debate, literary production, bodily discipline, and ethical practice in order to contest colonial politics. This book argues that Sikhs in the final decades of the nineteenth century were not simply looking to recuperate the past but to remake it—and to dwell within loss instead of transcending it—and in so doing opened new possibilities.

Bringing together Sikh tradition, psychoanalysis, and postcolonial thought, *Prophetic Maharaja* provides bracing insights into concepts of sovereignty and the writing of history.



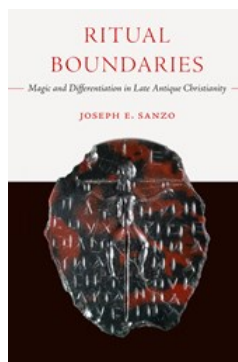
Readings of the Gateless Barrier

9780231207379
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Religion / Buddhism / Zen
July 2024
Columbia University Press

The *Gateless Barrier* is one of the most cherished yet also one of the most enigmatic Chan or Zen texts of East Asian Buddhism. Compiled by the Chinese Chan master Wumen Huikai in 1228, it contains forty-eight Zen stories of spiritual awakening called “public cases” or *gong’an* (known as *kōans* in Japanese and *kongans* in Korean). This book presents a new English translation with close readings and creative analyses of the *Gateless Barrier* from both scholarly and practitioner perspectives, allowing a range of readers to venture into the rich world of Chan and Zen.

Specialist contributors offer insights on historical context, literary structure, philosophical implications, and gendered dimensions, as well as the embodied practice and contemporary experience of the stories in the *Gateless Barrier*. By bringing together academic expertise with experiential insight from Zen teachers, this book provides a grounded and nuanced account of how the *Gateless Barrier* has been—and continues to be—practiced and lived in China, Korea, Japan, and the West.

An innovative and sophisticated study, this book is ideal for university classroom use, and it also makes the *Gateless Barrier* accessible to other first-time readers, Buddhist practitioners, and scholars.

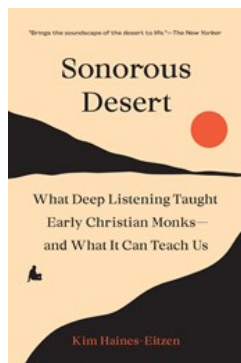


Ritual Boundaries – Magic and Differentiation in Late Antique Christianity

Joseph E. Sanzo
9780520399181
£30.00 • \$34.95 • Paperback
Religion / Antiquities & Archaeology
April 2024
University of California Press

A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program. Visit www.luminoso.org to learn more.

In *Ritual Boundaries*, Joseph E. Sanzo transforms our understanding of how early Christians experienced religion in lived practice through the study of magical objects, such as amulets and grimoires. Against the prevailing view of late antiquity as a time when only so-called elites were interested in religious and ritual differentiation, the evidence presented here reveals that the desire to distinguish between religious and ritual insiders and outsiders cut across diverse social strata. The magical evidence also offers unique insight into early biblical reception, exposing a textual world in which scriptural reading was multisensory and multitranslational. As they addressed sickness, demonic struggle, and interpersonal conflicts, Mediterranean people thus acted in ways that challenge our conceptual boundaries between Christians and non-Christians; elites and non-elites; and words, materials, and images. Sanzo helps us rethink how early Christians imagined similarity and difference among texts, traditions, groups, and rituals as they went about their daily lives.



Sonorous Desert – What Deep Listening Taught Early Christian Monks—and What It Can Teach Us

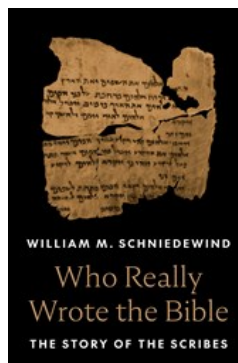
Kim Haines-Eitzen
9780691259284
£12.99 • \$14.95 • Paperback
Religion / Monasticism
April 2024
Princeton University Press

Enduring lessons from the desert soundscapes that shaped the Christian monastic tradition

For the hermits and communal monks of antiquity, the desert was a place to flee the cacophony of ordinary life in order to hear and contemplate the voice of God. But these monks discovered something surprising in their harsh desert surroundings: far from empty and silent, the desert is richly reverberant. *Sonorous Desert* shares the stories and sayings of these ancient spiritual seekers, tracing how the ambient sounds of wind, thunder, water, and animals shaped the emergence and development of early Christian monasticism.

Kim Haines-Eitzen draws on ancient monastic texts from Egypt, Sinai, and Palestine to explore how noise offered desert monks an opportunity to cultivate inner quietude, and shows how the desert quests of ancient monastics offer profound lessons for us about what it means to search for silence. Drawing on her own experiences making field recordings in the deserts of North America and Israel, she reveals how mountains, canyons, caves, rocky escarpments, and lush oases are deeply resonant places. Haines-Eitzen discusses how the desert is a place of paradoxes, both silent and noisy, pulling us toward contemplative isolation yet giving rise to vibrant collectives of fellow seekers.

Accompanied by Haines-Eitzen's evocative audio recordings of desert environments, *Sonorous Desert* reveals how desert sounds taught ancient monks about solitude, silence, and the life of community, and how they can help us understand ourselves if we slow down and listen.



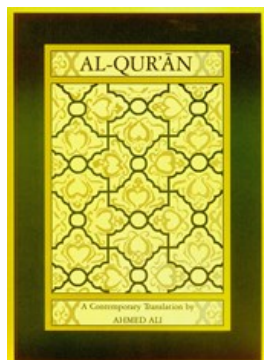
Who Really Wrote the Bible – The Story of the Scribes

William M. Schniedewind
9780691233178
£25.00 • \$29.95 • Hardcover
Religion / Biblical Studies / Exegesis & Hermeneutics
August 2024
Princeton University Press

A groundbreaking new account of the writing of the Hebrew Bible

Who wrote the Bible? Its books have no bylines. Tradition long identified Moses as the author of the Pentateuch, with Ezra as editor. Ancient readers also suggested that David wrote the psalms and Solomon wrote Proverbs and Qohelet. Although the Hebrew Bible rarely speaks of its authors, people have been fascinated by the question of its authorship since ancient times. In *Who Really Wrote the Bible*, William Schniedewind offers a bold new answer: the Bible was not written by a single author, or by a series of single authors, but by communities of scribes. The Bible does not name its authors because authorship itself was an idea enshrined in a later era by the ancient Greeks. In the pre-Hellenistic world of ancient Near Eastern literature, books were produced, preserved, and passed on by scribal communities.

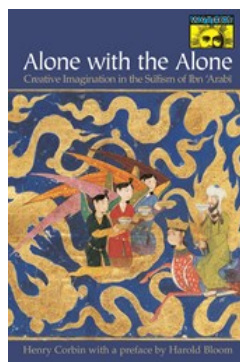
Schniedewind draws on ancient inscriptions, archaeology, and anthropology, as well as a close reading of the biblical text itself, to trace the communal origin of biblical literature. Scribes were educated through apprenticeship rather than in schools. The prophet Isaiah, for example, has his “disciples”; Elisha has his “apprentice.” This mode of learning emphasized the need to pass along the traditions of a community of practice rather than to individuate and invent. Schniedewind shows that it is anachronistic to impose our ideas about individual authorship and authors on the writing of the Bible. Ancient Israelites didn't live in books, he writes, but along dusty highways and byways. *Who Really Wrote the Bible* describes how scribes and their apprentices actually worked in ancient Jerusalem and Judah.



Al-Qur'an - A Contemporary Translation

Ahmed Ali
9780691074993
£16.99 • \$19.95 • Paperback
Religion / Islam
July 2001
Princeton University Press

This bilingual edition of the *Qur'an*, the Holy Book of Islam, was first published in the United States in 1988. Ahmed Ali, the distinguished Pakistani novelist, poet, critic, and diplomat, presents this elegant and poetic translation in a contemporary and living voice. On each page, the original Arabic and the translated English sit side by side, encouraging the reader to draw from both texts. Professor Ali also includes notes where necessary, providing the full meaning of each word and phrase. This accessible volume is truly essential for both scholars and followers of Islam.



Alone with the Alone - Creative Imagination in the S'fism of Ibn Arab'

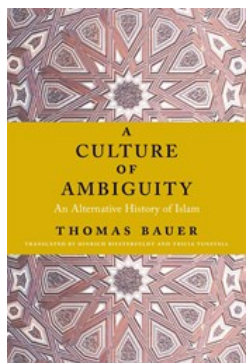
Henry Corbin
9780691058344
£40.00 • \$49.00 • Paperback
Religion / Islam
March 1998
Princeton University Press

"Henry Corbin's works are the best guide to the visionary tradition.... Corbin, like Scholem and Jonas, is remembered as a scholar of genius. He was uniquely equipped not only to recover Iranian Sufism for the West, but also to defend the principal Western traditions of esoteric spirituality."-- From the introduction by Harold Bloom

Ibn 'Arabi (1165-1240) was one of the great mystics of all time. Through the richness of his personal experience and the constructive power of his intellect, he made a unique contribution to Shi'ite Sufism. In this book, which features a powerful new preface by Harold Bloom, Henry Corbin brings us to the very core of this movement with a penetrating analysis of Ibn 'Arabi's life and doctrines.

Corbin begins with a kind of spiritual topography of the twelfth century, emphasizing the differences between exoteric and esoteric forms of Islam. He also relates Islamic mysticism to mystical thought in the West. The remainder of the book is devoted to two complementary essays: on "Sympathy and Theosophy" and "Creative Imagination and Creative Prayer." A section of notes and appendices includes original translations of numerous Sufi treatises.

Harold Bloom's preface links Sufi mysticism with Shakespeare's visionary dramas and high tragedies, such as *The Tempest* and *Hamlet*. These works, he writes, intermix the empirical world with a transcendent element. Bloom shows us that this Shakespearean cosmos is analogous to Corbin's "Imaginal Realm" of the Sufis, the place of soul or souls.



A Culture of Ambiguity - An Alternative History of Islam

Thomas Bauer
9780231170659
£30.00 • \$35.00 • Paperback
Religion / Islam / History
July 2021
Columbia University Press

In the Western imagination, Islamic cultures are dominated by dogmatic religious norms that permit no nuance. Those fighting such stereotypes have countered with a portrait of Islam's medieval "Golden Age," marked by rationality, tolerance, and even proto-secularism. How can we understand Islamic history, culture, and thought beyond this dichotomy?

In this magisterial cultural and intellectual history, Thomas Bauer reconsiders classical and modern Islam by tracing differing attitudes toward ambiguity. Over a span of many centuries, he explores the tension between one strand that aspires to annihilate all uncertainties and establish absolute, uncontested truths and another, competing tendency that looks for ways to live with ambiguity and accept complexity. Bauer ranges across cultural and linguistic ambiguities, considering premodern Islamic textual and cultural forms from law to Quranic exegesis to literary genres alongside attitudes toward religious minorities and foreigners. He emphasizes the relative absence of conflict between religious and secular discourses in classical Islamic culture, which stands in striking contrast to both present-day fundamentalism and much of European history. Bauer shows how Islam's encounter with the modern West and its demand for certainty helped bring about both Islamicist and secular liberal ideologies that in their own ways rejected ambiguity—and therefore also their own cultural traditions.

Awarded the prestigious Leibniz Prize, *A Culture of Ambiguity* not only reframes a vast range of Islamic history but also offers an interdisciplinary model for investigating the tolerance of ambiguity across cultures and eras.



Dao De Jing

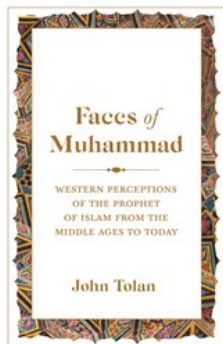
Laozi
9780691179773
£20.00 • \$23.95 • Paperback
Philosophy / Taoist
July 2020
Princeton University Press

From bestselling cartoonist C. C. Tsai, a delightfully illustrated version of the classic work of Daoist philosophy

C. C. Tsai is one of Asia's most popular cartoonists, and his editions of the Chinese classics have sold more than 40 million copies in over twenty languages. Here, he works his magic again with a delightful graphic adaptation of the complete text of Laozi's *Dao De Jing*, the beloved source of Daoist philosophy. Masterfully transforming Laozi's challenging work into entertaining and enlightening episodes, Tsai offers a uniquely fresh, relevant, and accessible version of one of the world's most influential books.

After opening with Laozi's biography from the *Shi Ji*, Tsai turns the stage over to Laozi, who patiently explains his ideas to his earnest students (and us). Laozi describes the spontaneity of natural processes, the paradoxical effects of ethical precepts, the limits of language, the values of simplicity, and, above all else, how to go with the flow. In brief episodes that tantalize and inspire, he takes us into the subtle complexities of human existence. Ultimately, Laozi, a master visionary, guides us to the mountaintop to reveal an expansive view of life.

A marvelous edition of a timeless classic, this book also presents Laozi's original Chinese text in sidebars on each page, enriching the book for readers and students of Chinese without distracting from the English-language cartoons. The text is skillfully translated by Brian Bruya, who also provides an illuminating introduction.



Faces of Muhammad – Western Perceptions of the Prophet of Islam from the Middle Ages to Today

John Tolan
9780691167060
£28.00 • \$32.00 • Hardcover
Religion / Islam / History
July 2019
Princeton University Press

Heretic and impostor or reformer and statesman? The contradictory Western visions of Muhammad

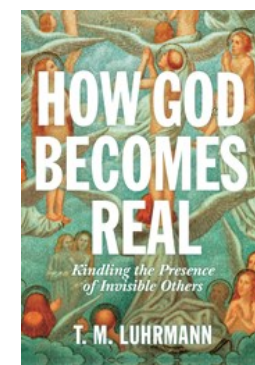
In European culture, Muhammad has been vilified as a heretic, an impostor, and a pagan idol. But these aren't the only images of the Prophet of Islam that emerge from Western history. Commentators have also portrayed Muhammad as a visionary reformer and an inspirational leader, statesman, and lawgiver. In *Faces of Muhammad*, John Tolan provides a comprehensive history of these changing, complex, and contradictory visions. Starting from the earliest calls to the faithful to join the Crusades against the "Saracens," he traces the evolution of Western conceptions of Muhammad through the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and up to the present day.

Faces of Muhammad reveals a lengthy tradition of positive portrayals of Muhammad that many will find surprising. To Reformation polemicists, the spread of Islam attested to the corruption of the established Church, and prompted them to depict Muhammad as a champion of reform. In revolutionary England, writers on both sides of the conflict drew parallels between Muhammad and Oliver Cromwell, asking whether the prophet was a rebel against legitimate authority or the bringer of a new and just order. Voltaire first saw Muhammad as an archetypal religious fanatic but later claimed him as an enemy of superstition. To Napoleon, he was simply a role model: a brilliant general, orator, and leader.

The book shows that Muhammad wears so many faces in the West because he has always acted as a mirror for its writers, their portrayals revealing more about their own concerns than the historical realities of the founder of Islam.

How God Becomes Real – Kindling the Presence of Invisible Others

T.m. Luhrmann
9780691234441
£15.99 • \$18.95 • Paperback
Religion / Spirituality
July 2022
Princeton University Press



The hard work required to make God real, how it changes the people who do it, and why it helps explain the enduring power of faith

How do gods and spirits come to feel vividly real to people—as if they were standing right next to them? Humans tend to see supernatural agents everywhere, as the cognitive science of religion has shown. But it isn't easy to maintain a sense that there are invisible spirits who care about you. In *How God Becomes Real*, acclaimed anthropologist and scholar of religion T. M. Luhrmann argues that people must work incredibly hard to make gods real and that this effort—by changing the people who do it and giving them the benefits they seek from invisible others—helps to explain the enduring power of faith.

Drawing on ethnographic studies of evangelical Christians, pagans, magicians, Zoroastrians, Black Catholics, Santería initiates, and newly orthodox Jews, Luhrmann notes that none of these people behave as if gods and spirits are simply there. Rather, these worshippers make strenuous efforts to create a world in which invisible others matter and can become intensely present and real. The faithful accomplish this through detailed stories, absorption, the cultivation of inner senses, belief in a porous mind, strong sensory experiences, prayer, and other practices. Along the way, Luhrmann shows why faith is harder than belief, why prayer is a metacognitive activity like therapy, why becoming religious is like getting engrossed in a book, and much more.

A fascinating account of why religious practices are more powerful than religious beliefs, *How God Becomes Real* suggests that faith is resilient not because it provides intuitions about gods and spirits—but because it changes the faithful in profound ways.



Fear and Trembling and The Sickness Unto Death

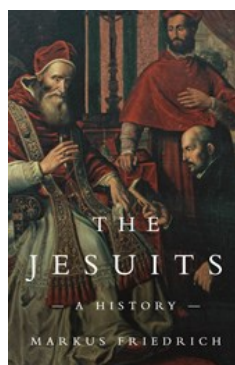
Søren Kierkegaard
9780691158310
£12.99 • \$14.95 • Paperback
Philosophy / Movements / Existentialism
May 2013
Princeton University Press

Walter Lowrie's classic, bestselling translation of Søren Kierkegaard's most important and popular books remains unmatched for its readability and literary quality. *Fear and Trembling* and *The Sickness Unto Death* established Kierkegaard as the father of existentialism and have come to define his contribution to philosophy. Lowrie's translation, first published in 1941 and later revised, was the first in English, and it has introduced hundreds of thousands of readers to Kierkegaard's thought. Kierkegaard counted *Fear and Trembling* and *The Sickness Unto Death* among "the most perfect books I have written," and in them he introduces two terms—"the absurd" and "despair"—that have become key terms in modern thought. *Fear and Trembling* takes up the story of Abraham and Isaac to explore a faith that transcends the ethical, persists in the face of the absurd, and meets its reward in the return of all that the faithful one is willing to sacrifice, while *The Sickness Unto Death* examines the spiritual anxiety of despair.

Walter Lowrie's magnificent translation of these seminal works continues to provide an ideal introduction to Kierkegaard. And, as Gordon Marino argues in a new introduction, these books are as relevant as ever in today's age of anxiety.

The Jesuits – A History

Markus Friedrich
9780691226200
£22.00 • \$27.95 • Paperback
Religion / Christianity / Catholic
October 2023
Princeton University Press

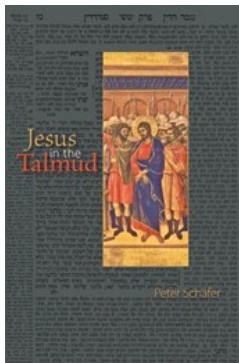


The most comprehensive and up-to-date exploration of one of the most important religious orders in the modern world

Since its founding by Ignatius of Loyola in 1540, the Society of Jesus—more commonly known as the Jesuits—has played a critical role in the events of modern history. From the Counter-Reformation to the ascent of Francis I as the first Jesuit pope, *The Jesuits* presents an intimate look at one of the most important religious orders not only in the Catholic Church, but also the world. Markus Friedrich describes an organization that has deftly walked a tightrope between sacred and secular involvement and experienced difficulties during changing times, all while shaping cultural developments from pastoral care and spirituality to art, education, and science.

Examining the Jesuits in the context of social, cultural, and world history, Friedrich sheds light on how the order shaped the culture of the Counter-Reformation and participated in the establishment of European empires, including missionary activity throughout Asia and in many parts of Africa in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He also explores the place of Jesuits in the New World and addresses the issue of Jesuit slaveholders. The Jesuits often tangled with the Roman Curia and the pope, resulting in their suppression in 1773, but the order returned in 1814 to rise again to a powerful position of influence. Friedrich demonstrates that the Jesuit fathers were not a monolithic group and he considers the distinctive spiritual legacy inherited by Pope Francis.

With its global scope and meticulous attention to archival sources and previous scholarship, *The Jesuits* illustrates the heterogeneous, varied, and contradictory perspectives of this famed religious organization.



Jesus in the Talmud

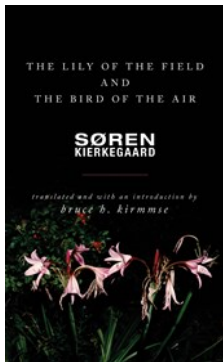
Peter Schäfer
9780691143187
£28.00 • \$33.00 • Paperback
Religion / Judaism / Talmud
October 2009
Princeton University Press

Scattered throughout the Talmud, the founding document of rabbinic Judaism in late antiquity, can be found quite a few references to Jesus—and they're not flattering. In this lucid, richly detailed, and accessible book, Peter Schäfer examines how the rabbis of the Talmud read, understood, and used the New Testament Jesus narrative to assert, ultimately, Judaism's superiority over Christianity.

The Talmudic stories make fun of Jesus' birth from a virgin, fervently contest his claim to be the Messiah and Son of God, and maintain that he was rightfully executed as a blasphemer and idolater. They subvert the Christian idea of Jesus' resurrection and insist he got the punishment he deserved in hell—and that a similar fate awaits his followers.

Schäfer contends that these stories betray a remarkable familiarity with the Gospels—especially Matthew and John—and represent a deliberate and sophisticated anti-Christian polemic that parodies the New Testament narratives. He carefully distinguishes between Babylonian and Palestinian sources, arguing that the rabbis' proud and self-confident countermesssage to that of the evangelists was possible only in the unique historical setting of Persian Babylonia, in a Jewish community that lived in relative freedom. The same could not be said of Roman and Byzantine Palestine, where the Christians aggressively consolidated their political power and the Jews therefore suffered.

A departure from past scholarship, which has played down the stories as unreliable distortions of



The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air – Three Godly Discourses

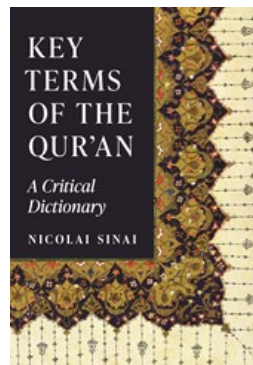
Søren Kierkegaard
9780691180830
£10.99 • \$12.95 • Paperback
Philosophy / Religious
April 2018
Princeton University Press

A masterful new translation of one of Kierkegaard's most engaging works

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells his followers to let go of earthly concerns by considering the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. Søren Kierkegaard's short masterpiece on this famous gospel passage draws out its vital lessons for readers in a rapidly modernizing and secularizing world. Trenchant, brilliant, and written in stunningly lucid prose, *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air* (1849) is one of Kierkegaard's most important books. Presented here in a fresh new translation with an informative introduction, this profound yet accessible work serves as an ideal entrée to an essential modern thinker.

The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air reveals a less familiar but deeply appealing side of the father of existentialism—unshorn of his complexity and subtlety, yet supremely approachable. As Kierkegaard later wrote of the book, "Without fighting with anybody and without speaking about myself, I said much of what needs to be said, but movingly, mildly, upliftingly."

This masterful edition introduces one of Kierkegaard's most engaging and inspiring works to a new generation of readers.



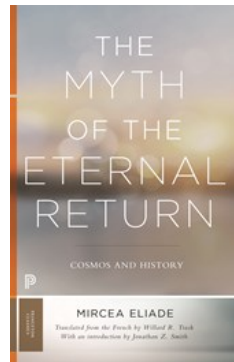
Key Terms of the Qur'an – A Critical Dictionary

Nicolai Sinai
9780691241319
£50.00 • \$60.00 • Hardcover
Religion / Islam / Koran & Sacred Writings
September 2023
Princeton University Press

An essential single-volume companion to the critical interpretation of Islamic scripture

This book provides detailed and multidisciplinary coverage of a wealth of key Qur'anic terms, with incisive entries on crucial expressions ranging from the divine names *allāh* ("God") and *al-rahmān* ("the Merciful") to the Qur'anic understanding of belief and self-surrender to God. It examines what the terms mean in Qur'anic usage, discusses how to translate them into English, and delineates the role they play in expressing the Qur'an's distinctive understanding of God, humans, and the cosmos. It offers a comprehensive but nonreductionist investigation of the relationship of Qur'anic terms to earlier traditions such as Jewish and Christian literature, pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, and Arabian epigraphy. While the dictionary is primarily engaged in ascertaining what the Qur'an would have meant to its original recipients in late antique Arabia, it makes selective and critical use of later Muslim scholarship alongside an extensive body of secondary research in English, German, and French from the nineteenth century to today.

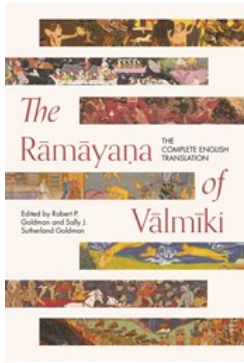
- The most authoritative historical-critical reference work on key Qur'anic terms
- Features a host of entries ranging from concise overviews to substantial essays
- Draws on comparative material such as Jewish and Christian literature, pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, and Arabian epigraphy
- Discusses how to best translate Qur'anic terms into English
- Explores the Qur'an's vision of God, humans, and the cosmos through an analysis of fundamental and recurrent Qur'anic expressions
- Accessible to readers with little or no Arabic



The Myth of the Eternal Return – Cosmos and History

Mircea Eliade
9780691182971
£18.99 • \$22.95 • Paperback
Religion / History
December 2018
Princeton University Press

First published in English in 1954, this founding work of the history of religions secured the North American reputation of the Romanian émigré-scholar Mircea Eliade. Making reference to an astonishing number of cultures and drawing on scholarship published in no fewer than half a dozen European languages, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* illuminates the religious beliefs and rituals of a wide variety of archaic religious cultures. While acknowledging that a return to their practices is impossible, Eliade passionately insists on the value of understanding their views to enrich the contemporary imagination of what it is to be human. This book includes an introduction from Jonathan Z. Smith that provides essential context and encourages readers to engage in an informed way with this classic text.



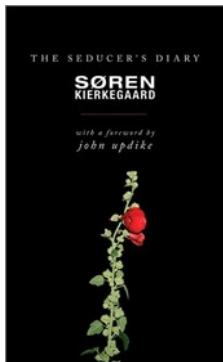
The Ramayana of Valmiki – The Complete English Translation

Robert P. Goldman
9780691206868
£25.00 • \$29.95 • Paperback
Religion / Hinduism
March 2022
Princeton University Press

The definitive English translation of the classic Sanskrit epic poem—now available in a one-volume paperback

The *Rāmāyana of Valmiki*, the monumental Sanskrit epic of the life of Rama, ideal man and incarnation of the great god Visnu, has profoundly affected the literature, art, religions, and cultures of South and Southeast Asia from antiquity to the present. Filled with thrilling battles, flying monkeys, and ten-headed demons, the work, composed almost 3,000 years ago, recounts Prince Rama's exile and his odyssey to recover his abducted wife, Sita, and establish a utopian kingdom. Now, the definitive English translation of the critical edition of this classic is available in a single volume.

Based on the authoritative seven-volume translation edited by Robert Goldman and Sally Sutherland Goldman, this volume presents the unabridged translated text in contemporary English, revised and reformatted into paragraph form. The book includes a new introduction providing important historical and literary contexts, as well as a glossary, pronunciation guide, and index. Ideal for students and general readers, this edition of the *Rāmāyana of Valmiki* introduces an extraordinary work of world literature to a new generation of readers.

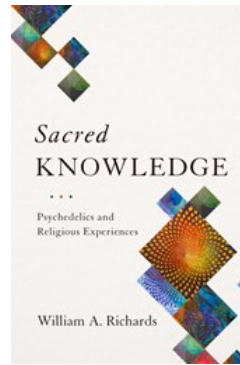


The Seducer's Diary

Søren Kierkegaard
9780691158419
£10.99 • \$12.95 • Paperback
Philosophy / Religious
May 2013
Princeton University Press

"In the vast literature of love, *The Seducer's Diary* is an intricate curiosity—a feverishly intellectual attempt to reconstruct an erotic failure as a pedagogic success, a wound masked as a boast," observes John Updike in his foreword to Søren Kierkegaard's narrative. This work, a chapter from Kierkegaard's first major volume, *Either/Or*, springs from his relationship with his fiancée, Regine Olsen. Kierkegaard fell in love with the young woman, ten years his junior, proposed to her, but then broke off their engagement a year later. This event affected Kierkegaard profoundly. Olsen became a muse for him, and a flood of volumes resulted. His attempt to set right, in writing, what he feels was a mistake in his relationship with Olsen taught him the secret of "indirect communication." *The Seducer's Diary*, then, becomes Kierkegaard's attempt to portray himself as a scoundrel and thus make their break easier for her.

Matters of marriage, the ethical versus the aesthetic, dread, and, increasingly, the severities of Christianity are pondered by Kierkegaard in this intense work.

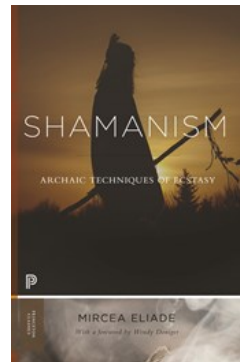


Sacred Knowledge – Psychedelics and Religious Experiences

William Richards
9780231174077
£20.00 • \$25.00 • Paperback
Religion / Spirituality
July 2018
Columbia University Press

Sacred Knowledge is the first well-documented, sophisticated account of the effect of psychedelics on biological processes, human consciousness, and revelatory religious experiences. Based on nearly three decades of legal research with volunteers, William A. Richards argues that, if used responsibly and legally, psychedelics have the potential to assuage suffering and constructively affect the quality of human life.

Richards's analysis contributes to social and political debates over the responsible integration of psychedelic substances into modern society. His book serves as an invaluable resource for readers who, whether spontaneously or with the facilitation of psychedelics, have encountered meaningful, inspiring, or even disturbing states of consciousness and seek clarity about their experiences. Testing the limits of language and conceptual frameworks, Richards makes the most of experiential phenomena that stretch our understanding of reality, advancing new frontiers in the study of belief, spiritual awakening, psychiatric treatment, and social well-being. His findings enrich humanities and scientific scholarship, expanding work in philosophy, anthropology, theology, and religious studies and bringing depth to research in mental health, psychotherapy, and psychopharmacology.

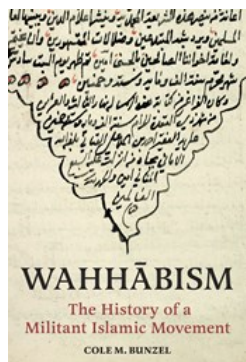


Shamanism – Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy

Mircea Eliade
9780691210667
£22.00 • \$26.95 • Paperback
Religion / Spirituality
October 2020
Princeton University Press

The foundational work on shamanism now available as a Princeton Classics paperback

Shamanism is an essential work on the study of this mysterious and fascinating phenomenon. The founder of the modern study of the history of religion, Mircea Eliade surveys the tradition through two and a half millennia of human history, moving from the shamanic traditions of Siberia and Central Asia—where shamanism was first observed—to North and South America, Indonesia, Tibet, China, and beyond. In this authoritative survey, Eliade illuminates the magico-religious life of societies that give primacy of place to the figure of the shaman—at once magician and medicine man, healer and miracle-doer, priest, mystic, and poet. Synthesizing the approaches of psychology, sociology, and ethnology, *Shamanism* remains the reference book of choice for those interested in this practice.



Wahhābism – The History of a Militant Islamic Movement

Cole M. Bunzel
9780691241593
£35.00 • \$39.95 • Hardcover
Religion / Islam / History
July 2023
Princeton University Press

An essential history of Wahhābism from its founding to the Islamic State

In the mid-eighteenth century, a controversial Islamic movement arose in the central Arabian region of Najd that forever changed the political landscape of the Arabian Peninsula and the history of Islamic thought. Its founder, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, taught that most professed Muslims were polytheists due to their veneration of Islamic saints at tombs and gravesites. He preached that true Muslims, those who worship God alone, must show hatred and enmity toward these polytheists and fight them in *jihād*. Cole Bunzel tells the story of Wahhābism from its emergence in the 1740s to its taming and coopting by the modern Saudi state in the 1920s, and shows how its legacy endures in the ideologies of al-Qā'ida and the Islamic State.

Drawing on a wealth of primary source materials, Bunzel traces the origins of Wahhābi doctrine to the religious thought of medieval theologian Ibn Taymiyya and examines its development through several generations of Wahhābi scholars. While widely seen as heretical and schismatic, the movement nonetheless flourished in central Arabia, spreading across the peninsula under the political authority of the Āl Su'ūd dynasty until the invading Egyptian army crushed it in 1818. The militant Wahhābi ethos, however, persisted well into the early twentieth century, when the Saudi kingdom used Wahhābism to bolster its legitimacy.

This incisive history is the definitive account of a militant Islamic movement founded on enmity toward non-Wahhābi Muslims and that is still with us today in the violent doctrines of Sunni jihādis.

The Way of Nature

Zhuangzi Zhuangzi
9780691179742
£18.99 • \$22.95 • Paperback
Philosophy / Eastern
July 2019
Princeton University Press



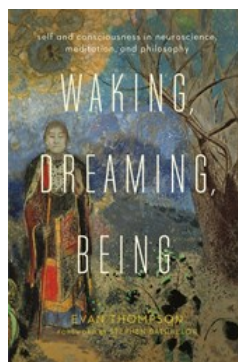
A delightfully illustrated selection of the great Daoist writings of Zhuangzi by bestselling cartoonist C. C. Tsai

C. C. Tsai is one of Asia's most popular cartoonists, and his editions of the Chinese classics have sold more than 40 million copies in over twenty languages. This volume presents Tsai's delightful graphic adaptation of the profound and humorous Daoist writings of Zhuangzi, some of the most popular and influential in the history of Asian philosophy and culture.

The Way of Nature brings together all of Tsai's beguiling cartoon illustrations of the *Zhuangzi*, which takes its name from its author. The result is a uniquely accessible and entertaining adaptation of a pillar of classical Daoism, which has deeply influenced Chinese poetry, landscape painting, martial arts, and Chan (Zen) Buddhism.

Irreverent and inspiring, *The Way of Nature* presents the memorable characters, fables, and thought experiments of Zhuangzi like no other edition, challenging readers to dig beneath conventional assumptions about self, society, and nature, and pointing to a more natural way of life. Through practical insights and far-reaching arguments, Zhuangzi shows why returning to the spontaneity of nature is the only sane response to a world of conflict.

A marvelous introduction to a timeless classic, this book also features an illuminating foreword by Edward Slingerland. In addition, Zhuangzi's original Chinese text is artfully presented in narrow sidebars on each page, enriching the book for readers and students of Chinese without distracting from the self-contained English-language cartoons. The text is skillfully translated by Brian Bruya, who also provides an introduction.



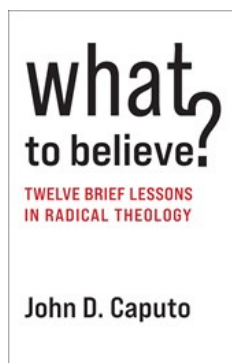
Waking, Dreaming, Being – Self and Consciousness in Neuroscience, Meditation, and Philosophy

Evan Thompson
9780231136952
£18.99 • \$22.95 • Paperback
Religion / Buddhism
September 2017
Columbia University Press

A renowned philosopher of the mind, also known for his groundbreaking work on Buddhism and cognitive science, Evan Thompson combines the latest neuroscience research on sleep, dreaming, and meditation with Indian and Western philosophy of mind, casting new light on the self and its relation to the brain.

Thompson shows how the self is a changing process, not a static thing. When we are awake we identify with our body, but if we let our mind wander or daydream, we project a mentally imagined self into the remembered past or anticipated future. As we fall asleep, the impression of being a bounded self distinct from the world dissolves, but the self reappears in the dream state. If we have a lucid dream, we no longer identify only with the self within the dream. Our sense of self now includes our dreaming self, the "I" as dreamer. Finally, as we meditate—either in the waking state or in a lucid dream—we can observe whatever images or thoughts arise and how we tend to identify with them as "me." We can also experience sheer awareness itself, distinct from the changing contents that make up our image of the self.

Contemplative traditions say that we can learn to let go of the self, so that when we die we can witness its dissolution with equanimity. Thompson weaves together neuroscience, philosophy, and personal narrative to depict these transformations, adding uncommon depth to life's profound questions. Contemplative experience comes to illuminate scientific findings, and scientific evidence enriches the vast knowledge acquired by contemplatives.



What to Believe? – Twelve Brief Lessons in Radical Theology

John D. Caputo
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If you no longer "believe in God," the Supreme Being of classical theology, or you never did in the first place, is there anything you still ought to believe, anything you should cherish unconditionally, no matter what? In this lively and accessible book, addressed to believers, "recovering" believers, disbelievers, nonbelievers, and "nones" alike—to anyone in search of what they really do believe—the acclaimed philosopher and theologian John D. Caputo seeks out what there is to believe, with or without religion.

Writing in a lucid and witty style, Caputo offers a bold account of a "radical theology" that is anything but what the word *theology* suggests to most people. His point of departure is autobiographical, describing growing up in the world of pre-Vatican II Catholicism, serving as an altar boy, and spending four years in a Catholic religious order after high school. Caputo places Augustine's *Confessions*, Tillich's *Dynamics of Faith*, and Jacques Derrida and postmodern theory in conversation in the service of what he calls the "mystical sense of life." He argues that radical theology is not simply an academic exercise but describes a concrete practice immediately relevant to the daily lives of believers and nonbelievers alike. *What to Believe?* is an engaging introduction to radical theology for all readers curious about what religion can mean today.

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