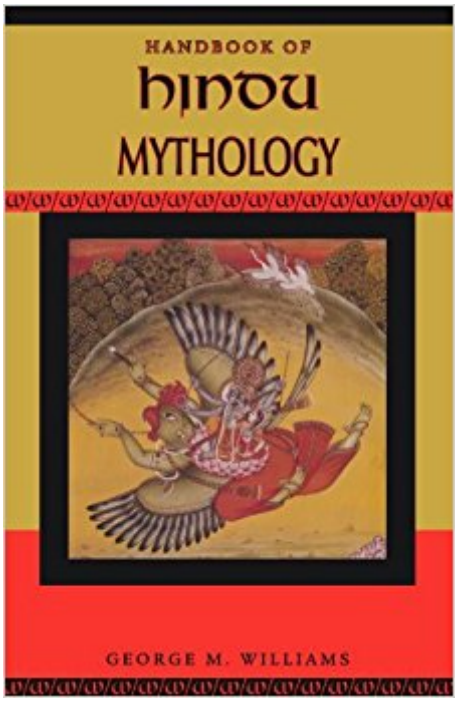
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Handbook Of Hindu Mythology (Handbooks Of World Mythology)



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Synopsis

Unlike many other ancient mythologies, Hinduism thrives in the modern world. One billion followers and countless others have been captivated by its symbolic representations of love, karma, and reincarnation. Handbook of Hindu Mythology offers an informative introduction to this dauntingly complex mythology of multifaceted deities, lengthy heroic tales, and arcane philosophies-all with a 3,000-year history of reinterpretations and adaptations. Williams offers a number of pathways by which to approach Hinduism's ever-changing gods and goddesses (e.g., BrahmÃƒÂ¢, Vishnu, Siva), spiritual verses (such as the vedas), secular epics (including the RÃƒÂ¢mÃƒÂ¢yana and the MahÃƒÂ¢bhÃƒÂ¢rata), myths within myths, devotional and esoteric traditions, psychic and yogic disciplines, and magical practices. With this handbook, readers can explore the history of Hindu mythology, follow a detailed timeline of key episodes and historical events, and look up specific elements of historical or contemporary Hinduism in a beautifully illustrated reference work. It is the ideal introduction to the origins of Hinduism, the culture that shaped it from antiquity to the present, and the age-old stories, ideas, and traditions that speak to the human condition as eloquently today as ever. Including annotated bibliographies, a glossary of cultural and mythological terms, and numerous illustrations, here is a gold mine of information on Hindu mythology.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Williams has compiled a learned text based on sound knowledge of the Hindu religion. His methodical coverage of variant spellings, pronunciation, and capitalization in the preface is a

valuable guide to writers and researchers. The division of the subject into periods and themes in the introduction simplifies the task of comprehending beliefs and rituals that evolved over five millennia. The text is meticulously compiled, with ample cross-referencing. Attractive illustrations contribute to the understanding of Indian lore in art.A-Z entries on "Characters, Themes, and Concepts," among them Brahma, Mahabharata, Parvati, Vishnu, and Yoga, make up the bulk of the text. An appendix charts Vedic gods by periods as a handy guide to development of the Hindu pantheon. A summary of resources suggests readings at various levels, including children's books. The annotated bibliography lists works as old as James Hastings' revered Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (1908-1929) and as recent as online Sanskrit dictionaries. A seven-page glossary offers uncomplicated definitions of 246 pivotal terms. The work concludes with a detailed index containing numerous cross-references for maximum accuracy.Overall, the handbook is a prize catch for public, church, temple, school, and college libraries. In the style of a patient, respectful teacher, Williams has introduced one of the world's long-lived belief systems. RBBCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

"[T]his elegantly crafted work is designed for the general reader and will be a reliable reference standard for all library collections." - Library Journal"Williams has compiled a learned text based on sound knowledge of the Hindu religion. His methodical coverage of variant spellings, pronunciation, and capitalization in the preface is a valuable guide to writers and researchers . . . Overall, the handbook is a prize catch for public, church, temple, school, and college libraries." - Booklist"This handbook will be helpful to the novice in Hindu mythology . . . accessible to the general reader." - American Reference Books Annual"Williams's introduction is an extraordinary piece that should be recommended to any student first approaching Hindu mythology . . . recommended without reservation to all libraries . . . highly recommended; general and academic readers." - Choice --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

This really is a great work for reference. It has a dictionary feel to it, which was not what I expected. For westerners, one would need full texts as further reference (which I do, and probably could not write on this topic otherwise). The Handbook offers citations of other texts (Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, etc.) and works as a very good secondary resource.I definitely recommend the Handbook for anybody taking a comparative religion course or anything regarding Hindu deities, it's just the best reference I've found.

The book is full of errors. The mistakes are so bad that it becomes obvious that the author has little or no knowledge of Hinduism. Some examples: Calls Sati, Sita. Gets confused between Bhrigu and Sukracharya. Why write error-ridden books like this?

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