



Who Invented Hinduism? Essays On Religion In History

David N. Lorenzen

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Who Invented Hinduism? presents ten masterly essays on the history of religious movements and ideologies in India by the eminent scholar of religious studies, David N. Lorenzen. Stretching from a discussion on the role of religion, skin colour and language in distinguishing between the Aryas and the Dasas, to a study of the ways in which contact between Hindus, on the one hand, and Muslims and Christians, on the other, changed the nature of the Hindu religion, the volume asks two principal questions: how did the religion of the Hindus affect the course of Indian history and what sort of an impact did the events of Indian history have on the Hindu religion. The essays cast a critical eye on scholarly arguments which are based as much on current fashion or on conventional wisdom as on evidence available in historical documents. Taking issue with renowned scholars such as Louis Dumont, Romila Thapar, Thomas Trautmann and Dipesh Chakrabarty on some central conceptions of the religious history of India, Lorenzen establishes alternative positions on the same through a thorough and compelling look at a vast array of literary sources. Touching upon some controversial arguments, this well-timed and insightful volume draws attention to the unavoidably influential role of religion in the history of India, and in doing so, it creates a wider space for further discussion focusing on this central issue. Contents Series Editor's Foreword Preface 1. Who Invented Hinduism? 2. Warrior Acetics in Indian History 3. Early Evidence for Tantric Religion 4. Traditions of Non-caste Hinduism: The Kabir Panth 5. The Life of Kabir in Legend 6. The Social Ideologies of Hagiography: Sankara, Tukaram and Kabir 7. Religion, Skin Colour and Language: Arya and Non-Arya in the Vedic Period 8. The Religious Ideology of Gupta Kingship 9. Europeans in Late Mughal South Asia: The Perceptions of Italian Missionaries 10. Marco della Tomba in Hindustan Epilogue Bibliography Index

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