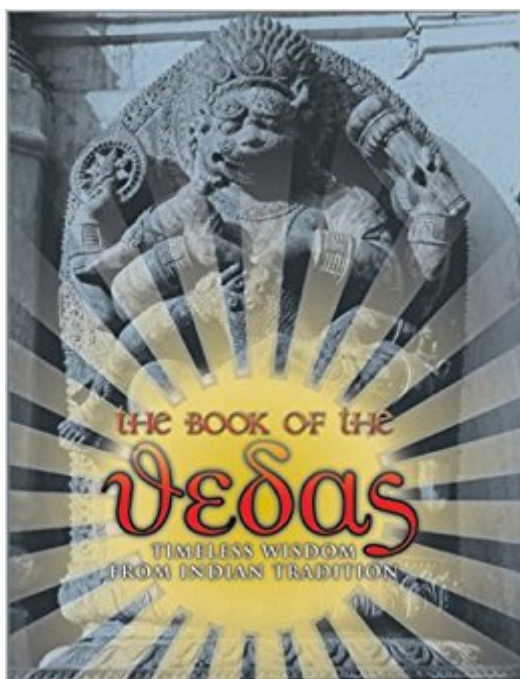


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The Book Of The Vedas: Timeless Wisdom From Indian Tradition (Quarto Book)



Synopsis

Readers seeking spiritual enlightenment, as well as those interested in comparative religion, will find a concise, clearly written introduction to one of the world's great and ancient faiths in this attractive volume. Placing special emphasis on the Vedas, the author describes the historical and geographical background of Hinduism and discusses the religion's various classic texts. The Vedas share their place along with the Upanishads and the two great Hindu epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana as being among the most important documents of Hindu literature. The Vedas are Hinduism's original holy texts and the basis of its faith, roughly comparable to the Judeo-Christian Bible. The author presents sample readings from the Vedas to give readers an illuminating glimpse into Hindu theology and its pantheon of gods and goddesses. He concludes with a survey of Hindu culture, including marriage and burial customs; the caste system; and Hindu festivals. Here are answers to fundamental questions that include: Who are Kali, Shiva, and Krishna? What is karma? How do ancient Hindu precepts retain their significance in the modern world? This beautiful volume contains more than 200 color illustrations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

THE BOOKS OF THE VEDAS is a modern summary of hymns from ancient India, with short chapters that trace the history of practices that still affect our world. I am hardly a practitioner of any of the forms of meditation mentioned in this book, but it is quite convincing that many aspects of the Hindu religious experience have found an important place in the modern world. The index is small but useful. It can be found after the picture of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi with Paul, George, and John

of the Beatles on page 125. Designed by an educational publisher in London, it was printed in China and manufactured in Singapore with colorful pictures on slick paper, with pages that are smaller than a typical magazine. The print often appears on portions of a picture that is in a single color, as on page 45, which has a caption: "BACKGROUND Shiva is an ascetic, the only one of the godhead who is forever in deep meditation." The head, with a jewel in the position of the third eye, is above the printed text for that page, but only an arm and naval can be discerned clearly in the area where his body is obscured by the text. On page 15, by fading out where his leg runs into the text, the knee of a Brahmin at a lakeside in Pushkar seems to disappear. Though the Introduction starts on page 6 with a tiny Chapter 1 designation, there seems to be a new title each time the page is turned. The Quest for Inner Peace (p. 8), The Indus Valley Civilization (p. 10), etc. Holy Writings are described in Chapter 2 with some emphasis on how ancient the sacred hymns were. The Upanishads are called a "slim collection of Sanskrit verses . . . called the Vedanta, meaning `End of the Vedas.'" (p. 25). This page introduces maya, Brahman, atman, karma, and samsara, with simple explanations.

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