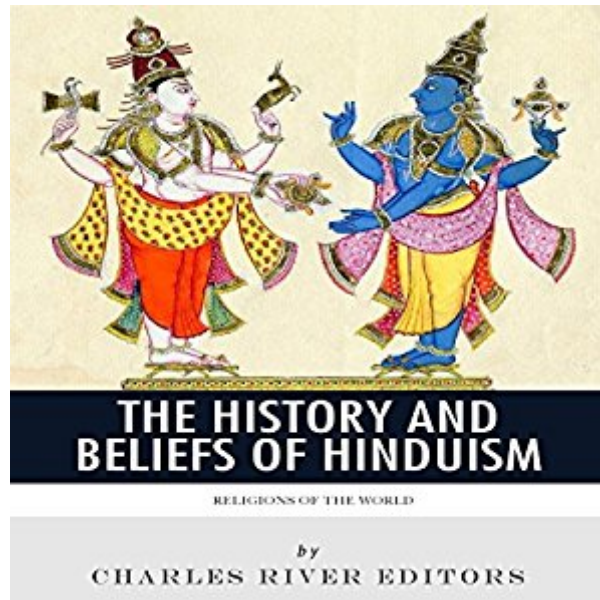


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Religions Of The World: The History And Beliefs Of Hinduism



Synopsis

A lot of ink has been spilled covering the lives of history's most influential figures, but how much of the forest is lost for the trees? Throughout time, people have been religious by nature, and billions today adhere to unique faiths across the world. In Charles River Editors' *Religions of the World*, listeners can get caught up to speed on today's religions and yesterday's religions in the time it takes to finish a commute, while learning interesting facts long forgotten or never known. In the west, Hinduism is a religion that everyone has heard of, but one that few nonpractitioners truly understand. Today, it is widely regarded as one of the world's great religions and considered the indigenous religion of India, with practices and beliefs stretching back thousands of years. However, many of these so-called facts are actually erroneous. Hinduism, as it is conceived of today, is a conglomerate of a number of indigenous Indian religions; in fact, prior to the migration of Islam and the corporate invasion of the British, Hinduism may not have existed at all. Rather, a number of local religious traditions had very old belief systems dating back hundreds or thousands of years, depending on the tradition, and many worshiped gods that are no longer worshiped today. In essence, it was only the nonindigenous populations in India, namely the Turks and later the British, who defined what Hinduism was. The British in particular asked only a certain subset of native informants from Bengal "what their religion was" and got a very particular answer, giving rise to the west's perception of a singular religious Indian tradition known as Hinduism.

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