



THE BUDDHIST VIṢṆU

Religious Transformation, Politics, and Culture

JOHN CLIFFORD HOLT

Buddhist Visnu Religious Transformation Politics And Culture

Jorge Manuel Flores



Buddhist Visnu Religious Transformation Politics And Culture:

The Buddhist Viṣṇu John Clifford Holt, 2008-01-01 John Holt's groundbreaking study examines the assimilation transformation and subordination of the Hindu deity Visnu within the contexts of Sri Lanka's history and Sinhala Buddhist religious culture. Holt argues that political agendas and social forces as much as doctrinal concerns have shaped the shifting patterns of the veneration of Visnu in Sri Lanka. Holt begins with a comparative look at the assimilation of the Buddha in Hinduism. He then explores the role and rationale of medieval Sinhala kings in assimilating Visnu into Sinhala Buddhism. Offering analyses of texts many of which have never before been translated into English, Holt considers the development of Visnu in Buddhist literature and the changing practices of deity veneration. Shifting to the present, Holt describes the efforts of contemporary Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka to discourage the veneration of Visnu, suggesting that many are motivated by a reactionary fear that their culture and society will soon be overrun by the influences and practices of Hindus, Muslims, and Christians.

The Temple Road Towards a Great India Marta Kudelska, Dorota Kamińska-Jones, Agnieszka Staszczyk, Agata Świerżowska, 2019-11-30 This book presents an analysis of the foundations organised by the Birla family in India. Several generations were involved in the renovation and establishment of sanctuaries, temples, and other sacral buildings. As a result, between 1933 and 1998, nineteen Birla Mandirs were established, mainly in northern and central India. All the temples have the capacity to surprise with their various decorative motifs not seen in other places, which, apart from their aesthetic function, above all, bear important symbolic content. Therefore, is it possible to treat the Birla Mandirs as a specific medium, the carrier of a particular message that is not only religious but with a significance that permeates other layers of social and political discourse? This message, as the authors of the book claim, have a bearing on the socio-political thought of India, supported by the creation and propagation of ideas related to identity and a national art. It also conveys the idea of hierarchical Hindu inclusivism, which, although considering all religions as equal, treats Hinduism in a unique way, seeing within it the most perfect form of religion, giving man the opportunity to learn the highest truth. The book also examines whether the temples founded by the Birla family and the religious activities undertaken therein apply the concept of inventing tradition and whether traditions created or modernised in contemporary times are a way of enhancing the appeal of the message conveyed from temple to society. *The Vastness of Culture* is a series of publications presenting cultural studies and emphasizing the role of comparative research and analyses that reveal similarities, differences, and intercultural influences. In our publications, cultures and civilizations are in a state of constant flux, engaging in dialogue, creating new understandings, competing for meaning under the influence of global content without any clear boundaries but with a vastness that forces questions to be raised.

Theravada Buddhism Kate Crosby, 2013-09-16 Theravada Buddhism provides a comprehensive introductory overview of the history, teachings, and current practice of an often misunderstood form of one of the world's oldest religious traditions. Explores Theravada Buddhism's origins, evolution, teachings, and practices. Considers

the practice of Theravada beyond Sri Lanka and Thailand by exploring a wealth of material from countries including Bangladesh Cambodia and Vietnam Reveals its rich and varied traditions and corrects common misunderstandings about links to other practices such as early Buddhism or Hinayana Buddhism Incorporates student friendly features including a glossary and other study aids **The Sri Lanka Reader** John Holt, 2011-04-13 Fifty four images and more than ninety classic and contemporary texts introduce Sri Lankas recorded history of more than two and a half millennia **Hindu Christian Faqir** Timothy Dobe, 2015 In the mid nineteenth century the American missionary James Butler predicted that Christian conversion and British law together would eradicate Indian ascetics His disgust for Hindu holy men sadhus whom he called saints yogis and filthy fakirs was largely shared by orientalist scholars and British officials who likewise imagined these religious elites to be a leading symptom of India s degeneration Yet within some thirty years of Butler s writing modern Indian ascetics such as the neo Vedantin Hindu Swami Rama Tirtha 1873 1906 and paradoxically the Protestant Christian convert Sadhu Sundar Singh 1889 1929 achieved international fame as embodiments of the spiritual superiority of the East over the West Timothy S Dobe s fine grained account of the lives of Sundar Singh and Rama Tirtha offers a window on the surprising reversals and potentials of Indian ascetic sainthood in the colonial contact zone His study develops a new model of Indian holy men that is historicized religiously pluralistic and located within the tensions and intersections of ascetic practice and modernity The first in depth account of two internationally recognized modern holy men in the colonially crucial region of Punjab Hindu Christian Faqir offers new examples and contexts for thinking through these wider issues Drawing on unexplored Urdu writings by and about both figures Dobe argues not only that Hinduism and Protestant Christianity are here intimately linked but that these links are forged from the stuff of regional Islamic traditions of Sufi holy men faqir He also re conceives Indian sainthood through an in depth examination of ascetic practice as embodied religion public performance and relationship rather than as a theological otherworldly and isolated ideal **Teaching Buddhism** Todd Lewis, Gary Delaney DeAngelis, 2017 Buddhist studies is a rapidly changing field of research constantly transforming and adapting to new scholarship This creates a problem for instructors both in a university setting and in monastic schools as they try to develop a curriculum based on a body of scholarship that continually shifts in focus and expands to new areas Teaching Buddhism establishes a dialogue between the community of instructors of Buddhism and leading scholars in the field who are updating revising and correcting earlier understandings of Buddhist traditions Each chapter presents new ideas within a particular theme of Buddhist studies and explores how courses can be enhanced with these insights Contributors in the first section focus on the typical approaches figures and traditions in undergraduate courses such as the role of philosophy in Buddhism Nagarjuna Yogacara Buddhism tantric traditions and Zen Buddhism They describe the impact of recent developments like new studies in the cognitive sciences on scholarship in those areas Part Two examines how political engagement and ritual practice have shaped the tradition throughout its history Focus then shifts to the issues facing instructors of Buddhism

dilemmas for the scholar practitioner in the academic and monastic classroom the tradition s possible roles in teaching feminism and diversity and how to present the tradition in the context of a world religions course In the final section contributors offer stories of their own experiences teaching paying particular attention to the ways in which American culture has impacted them They discuss the development of courses on American Buddhism using course material on the family and children the history and trajectory of a Buddhist Christian dialog and Buddhist bioethics environmentalism economic development and social justice In synthesizing this vast and varied body of research the contributors in this volume have provided an invaluable service to the field

Spirits of the Place John Clifford Holt, 2009-07-29 *Spirits of the Place* is a rare and timely contribution to our understanding of religious culture in Laos and Southeast Asia Most often studied as a part of Thai Vietnamese or Khmer history Laos remains a terra incognita to most Westerners and to many of the people living throughout Asia as well John Holt s new book brings this fascinating nation into focus With its overview of Lao Buddhism and analysis of how shifting political power from royalty to democracy to communism has impacted Lao religious culture the book offers an integrated account of the entwined political and religious history of Laos from the fourteenth century to the contemporary era Holt advances the provocative argument that common Lao knowledge of important aspects of Theravada Buddhist thought and practice has been heavily conditioned by an indigenous religious culture dominated by the veneration of phi spirits whose powers are thought to prevail over and within specific social and geographical domains The enduring influence of traditional spirit cults in Lao culture and society has brought about major changes in how the figure of the Buddha and the powers associated with Buddhist temples and reliquaries indeed how all ritual spaces and times have been understood by the Lao Despite vigorous attempts by Buddhist royalty French rationalists and most recently by communist ideologues to eliminate the worship of phi spirit cults have not been displaced they continue to persist and show no signs of abating Not only have the spirits resisted eradication but they have withstood synthesis subordination and transformation by Buddhist political and ecclesiastical powers Rather than reduce Buddhist religious culture to a set of simple commonalities Holt takes a comparative approach using his nearly thirty years experience with Sri Lanka to elucidate what is unique about Lao Buddhism This stimulating book invites students in the fields of the history of religion and Buddhist and Southeast Asian studies to take a fresh look at prevailing assumptions and perhaps reconsider the place of Buddhism in Laos and Southeast Asia

Sri Lanka at the Crossroads of History Zoltán Biedermann, Alan Strathern, 2017-06-07 The peoples of Sri Lanka have participated in far flung trading networks religious formations and Asian and European empires for millennia This interdisciplinary volume sets out to draw Sri Lanka into the field of Asian and Global History by showing how the latest wave of scholarship has explored the island as a crossroads a place defined by its openness to movement across the Indian Ocean Experts in the history archaeology literature and art of the island from c 500 BCE to c 1850 CE use Lankan material to explore a number of pressing scholarly debates They address these matters from their varied disciplinary perspectives and

diverse array of sources critically assessing concepts such as ethnicity cosmopolitanism and localisation and elucidating the subtle ways in which the foreign may be resisted and embraced at the same time The individual chapters and the volume as a whole are a welcome addition to the history and historiography of Sri Lanka as well as studies of the Indian Ocean region kingship colonialism imperialism and early modernity

The Buddhist World John Powers, 2015-10-05 The Buddhist World joins a series of books on the world's great religions and cultures offering a lively and up to date survey of Buddhist studies for students and scholars alike It explores regional varieties of Buddhism and core topics including buddha nature ritual and pilgrimage In addition to historical and geo political views of Buddhism the volume features thematic chapters on philosophical concepts such as ethics as well as social constructs and categories such as community and family The book also addresses lived Buddhism in its many forms examining the ways in which modernity is reshaping traditional structures ancient doctrines and cosmological beliefs

Re-exploring the Links Jorge Manuel Flores, 2007 The island of Ceilao occupied a permanent and singular place in the political imagination of early modern Portugal Concurrently the Portuguese left a strong imprint in the Sri Lankan collective memory of the period Five centuries later a group of historians art historians anthropologists and linguists reflect on the multiple dimensions of this phenomenon by rethinking texts and maps ruined churches and ivory caskets oral tales and Creole communities Authored by 15 international scholars Re exploring the Links is divided in four parts Political Realities and Cultural Imagination Religion Conflict and Interaction Space and Heritage Construction Representation Language and Ethnicity Identity and Memory While published on the occasion of the Portuguese arrival in Sri Lanka five centuries ago this book is far from being a celebratory piece Re exploring the Links does not conform to nationalist models of historical interpretation and refuses both the rhetoric of discovery and the rhetoric of aggression The aim of the volume is not to celebrate encounters but to reinvent an academic debate independent of any political agenda and concerning a history that is Portuguese and Sri Lankan alike

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY Chandra R de Silva Portugal and Sri Lanka Recent Trends in Historiography **POLITICAL REALITIES AND CULTURAL IMAGINATION** S Pathmanathan The Portuguese in Northeast Sri Lanka 1543 1658 An Assessment of Impressions Recorded in Tamil Chronicles and Poems Rohini Paranavitana Sinhalese War Poems and the Portuguese Karunasena Dias Paranavitana The Portuguese Tombos as a Source of Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Sri Lankan History Rui Manuel Loureiro The Matter of Ceylon in Diogo do Couto's Decadas da Asia Jorge Flores Maria Augusta Lima Cruz A Tale of Two Cities a Veteran Soldier or the Struggle for Endangered Nobilities The Two Jornadas de Huva 1633 1635 **RELIGION CONFLICT AND INTERACTION** Alan Strathern The Conversion of Rulers in Portuguese Era Sri Lanka John Clifford Holt Buddhist Rebuttals The Changing of the Gods and Royal Re legitimization in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Sri Lanka Ines G Zupanov Goan Brahmins in the Land of Promise Missionaries Spies and Gentiles in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Sri Lanka Jurrien van Goor State and Religion under the Dutch in Ceylon c 1640 1796 **SPACE AND HERITAGE CONSTRUCTION**

REPRESENTATION Zoltan Biedermann Perceptions and Representations of the Sri Lankan Space in Sixteenth Century Portuguese Texts and Maps Helder Carita Portuguese Influenced Religious Architecture in Ceylon Creation Types and Continuity Nuno Vassallo e Silva An Art for Export Sinhalese Ivory and Crystal in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries LANGUAGE AND ETHNICITY IDENTITY AND MEMORY Kenneth David Jackson Singelle Nona Jinggli Nona A Traveling Portuguese Burgher Muse Dennis B McGilvray The Portuguese Burghers of Eastern Sri Lanka in the Wake of Civil War and Tsunami Buddhist and Islamic Orders in Southern Asia R. Michael Feener, Anne M. Blackburn, 2018-11-30 Over the last few decades historians and other scholars have succeeded in identifying diverse patterns of connection linking religious communities across Asia and beyond Yet despite the fruits of this specialist research scholars in the subfields of Islamic and Buddhist studies have rarely engaged with each other to share investigative approaches and methods of interpretation This volume was conceived to open up new spaces of creative interaction between scholars in both fields that will increase our understanding of the circulation and localization of religious texts institutional models ritual practices and literary specialists The book's approach is to scrutinize one major dimension of the history of religion in Southern Asia religious orders Orders here referring to Sufi *arqas* and Buddhist monastic and other ritual lineages established means by which far flung local communities could come to be recognized and engaged as part of a broader world of co religionists while presenting their particular religious traditions and their human representatives as attractive and authoritative to potential new communities of devotees Contributors to the volume direct their attention toward analogous developments mutually illuminating for both fields of study Some explain how certain orders took shape in Southern Asia over the course of the nineteenth century contextualizing these institutional developments in relation to local and transregional political formations shifting literary and ritual preferences and trade connections Others show how the circulation of people ideas texts objects and practices across Southern Asia a region in which both Buddhism and Islam have a long and substantial presence brought diverse currents of internal reform and notions of ritual and lineage purity to the region All chapters draw readers attention to the fact that networked persons were not always strongly institutionalized and often moved through Southern Asia and developed local bases without the oversight of complex corporate organizations Buddhist and Islamic Orders in Southern Asia brings cutting edge research to bear on conversations about how orders have functioned within these two traditions to expand and sustain transregional religious networks It will help to develop a better understanding of the complex roles played by religious networks in the history of Southern Asia (Dis)connected Empires Zoltán Biedermann, 2018 Dis connected Empires offers a new contribution to the current debate on the role of global history in a world of resurgent nationalisms Biedermann explores the world of early diplomatic connections between Europe and Asia in the Renaissance focusing on the rarely told story of Portuguese encounters with the Buddhist kingdoms of Sri Lanka

Unearthly Powers Alan Strathern, 2019-03-21 This ground breaking study sets out a new understanding of

transformations in the interaction between religion and political authority throughout history "*Ravanisation*": *The Revitalisation of Ravana among Sinhalese Buddhists in Post-War Sri Lanka* Deborah de Koning, 2022-01-05 This book discusses Ravanisation the revitalisation of Ravana among Sinhalese Buddhists in post war after 2009 Sri Lanka The Hindu Ramayana generally portrays Ravana as a cruel king How and why then has Ravana gained the interest of Sinhalese Buddhists This study takes an ethnographic perspective to answer these questions The book discusses multiple Ravana representations that have emerged at an urban Buddhist site the Sri Devram Maha Viharaya and a rural site Lakegala and discloses how Ravanisation relates to Sinhalese Buddhist ethno nationalism In addition the material ritual and spatial perspectives offer unique insights in the personal and local relevance of Ravana Dr Deborah de Koning holds a PhD degree in Religious Studies Tilburg University research funded by the Dutch Research Council and currently works as lecturer Intercultural Communication and Hinduism and Buddhism at the Christian University of Applied Sciences CHE The Netherlands *Ravana's Kingdom* Justin W. Henry, 2022 In *Ravana's Kingdom* Justin W Henry delves into the historical literary reception of the Ramayana in Sri Lanka charting how the demon king antagonist Ravana has become an unlikely cultural hero among Sinhala Buddhists over the past decade *The Hindus* Wendy Doniger, 2010-09-30 An engrossing and definitive narrative account of history and myth that offers a new way of understanding one of the world's oldest major religions The Hindus elucidates the relationship between recorded history and imaginary worlds Hinduism does not lend itself easily to a strictly chronological account many of its central texts cannot be reliably dated even within a century its central tenets karma dharma to name just two arise at particular moments in Indian history and differ in each era between genders and caste to caste and what is shared among Hindus is overwhelmingly outnumbered by the things that are unique to one group or another Yet the greatness of Hinduism its vitality its earthiness its vividness lies precisely in many of those idiosyncratic qualities that continue to inspire debate today Wendy Doniger is one of the foremost scholars of Hinduism in the world With her inimitable insight and expertise Doniger illuminates those moments within the tradition that resist forces that would standardize or establish a canon Without reversing or misrepresenting the historical hierarchies she reveals how Sanskrit and vernacular sources are rich in knowledge of and compassion toward women and lower castes how they debate tensions surrounding religion violence and tolerance and how animals are the key to important shifts in attitudes toward different social classes The Hindus brings a fascinating multiplicity of actors and stories to the stage to show how brilliant and creative thinkers many of them far removed from Brahmin authors of Sanskrit texts have kept Hinduism alive in ways that other scholars have not fully explored In this unique and authoritative account debates about Hindu traditions become platforms from which to consider the ironies and overlooked epiphanies of history **Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion, Volume 34**, 2025-04-10 Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion Volume 34 takes an intersectional approach to the study of religious and non religious belief in different geographical contexts using a variety of

methods and always privileging the layered identities of those who live religion and non religion in their daily lives The Open Section includes articles on topics of everyday significance such as experiences of Zakat in Qatar Muslim marriages in Britain and Indian migrants living in Indonesia The Special Section A Sociology of Religion or Belief in South Asia includes articles that interrogate the politics of religious identity in India Pakistan and Bangladesh Throughout this volume demonstrates how experiences of belief are shaped by local and historical contexts in addition to theology

The Evolution of Religions

Lance Grande, 2024-02-13 Thousands of religions have adherents today and countless more have existed throughout history What accounts for this astonishing diversity This extraordinarily ambitious and comprehensive book demonstrates how evolutionary systematics and philosophy can yield new insight into the development of organized religion Lance Grande a leading evolutionary systematist examines the growth and diversification of hundreds of religions over time highlighting their historical interrelationships Combining evolutionary theory with a wealth of cultural records he explores the formation extinction and diversification of different world religions including the many branches of Asian cyclicism polytheism and monotheism Grande deploys an illuminating graphic system of evolutionary trees to illustrate historical interrelationships among the world's major religious traditions rejecting colonialist and hierarchical ladder of progress views of evolution Extensive and informative illustrations clearly and vividly indicate complex historical developments and help readers grasp the breadth of interconnections across eras and cultures The Evolution of Religions marshals compelling evidence starting far back in time that all major belief systems are related despite the many conflicts that have taken place among them By emphasizing these broad historical interconnections this book promotes the need for greater tolerance and deeper unbiased understanding of cultural diversity Such traits may be necessary for the future survival of humanity

THE DHAMMA

AND DALITS KAMNA SAGAR, B R Ambedkar founded NeoBuddhism a revolutionary Buddhist societal reformation movement Neo Buddhism began on October 14 1956 as a revolutionary Buddhist movement when Ambedkar and about 4000 000 of his supporters converted to Buddhism Since the Dalits first became Buddhist in Nagpur in 1956 Buddhism spread across India generating different nationalist movements throughout Maharashtra State The purpose of the study was to deal with dis unity in postmodern Maharashtra through interaction with and understanding the practice of a new generation of Ambedkarite group Buddhists living in Mumbai I emphasize the two intertwined themes first the practice of Navayana and its influence on Buddhism developments and second the approach of Buddhist mobilization within traditions Contradictions about expression daily experiences the meaning of tradition and the effect of human acts on changing and transforming cultures are fundamental to the topic of analysis The findings reveal that there are tensions between B R Ambedkar and Buddha's perceptions and reverence The ambedkarite Buddhists favor the Navayana's secular and ethical values which conflict with Ambedkar and Buddha in Maharashtra's local districts Abuse structural challenges and efforts by Revolutionaries to incorporate Buddhists in Indian society generate anxiety crisis and radical mobilization among Buddhists I

suggest how this response is a minority defence way to protect its culture and identity It primarily focuses on social empowerment particularly for the Mahar group among the underprivileged Above all it is a movement for self respect equality and justice for all people regardless of class caste religion or faith Aside from that as a socialist theory Neo Buddhism is a powerful force for religious movements founded on socioeconomic and moral ideals In essence it could be argued that neo Buddhism is primarily concerned with a move that is seen as a stimulant for the well of society s oppressed classes

Hinduism in the World Knut A. Jacobsen, 2025-05-30 This book explores Hindu religion from a global perspective and investigates the presence of Hindu religious traditions and some of their diversity worldwide Hindu traditions are on the move and are established in many new locations around the world and old and new traditions are continuously changing and being invented and reinvented The chapters of the book explore these processes and some of the many forms of Hinduism found around the world due to Hindu expansions and suggest different ways of understanding these transformations The different chapters of the book present new case studies based on historical and ethnographic research that expand on the empirical material typically used to generalize about Hinduism in the world and emphasize diversity A timely overview and analysis of Hinduism outside India with a focus on the diversity of Hindu traditions and their contemporary transformation in a number of different geographical settings worldwide this book will be of interest to students and scholars of Hinduism South Asian religion and society Asian religions and migration and religion in the contemporary world

Buddhist Visnu Religious Transformation Politics And Culture Book Review: Unveiling the Power of Words

In some sort of driven by information and connectivity, the energy of words has become more evident than ever. They have the capability to inspire, provoke, and ignite change. Such is the essence of the book **Buddhist Visnu Religious Transformation Politics And Culture**, a literary masterpiece that delves deep in to the significance of words and their effect on our lives. Compiled by a renowned author, this captivating work takes readers on a transformative journey, unraveling the secrets and potential behind every word. In this review, we will explore the book is key themes, examine its writing style, and analyze its overall impact on readers.

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