



Rethinking Hindu Identity (Religion in Culture)

Dwijendra Narayan Jha

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Recent years have seen the emergence of a virulent version of Hindu nationalism and fundamentalism in India under the banner of Hindutva. This xenophobic movement has obfuscated and mystified the notion of Hindu identity and reinforced its stereotypes. Its arguments range from the patently unscientific - humankind was created in India, as was the first civilisation - to historical whitewash: Hinduism has continued in one, unchanged form for 5000 years; Hinduism has always been a tolerant faith. 'Rethinking Hindu Identity' offers a corrective based on a deep and detailed reading of Indian history. Written in a riveting style, this study provides a fresh history of Hinduism - its practices, its beliefs, its differences and inconsistencies, and its own myths about itself. Along the way, the book systematically demolishes the arguments of Hindu fundamentalism and nationalism, revealing how the real history of Hinduism is much more complex.

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