

Pakistani-Indian relationship. His deep desire to see better relations between Pakistan and India is obvious, and his prescriptions are sensible. They will surely provide a starting point for interesting and productive classroom discussion. I hope readers of *India and Pakistan: Continued Conflict or Cooperation?* will take Wolpert's advice to heart and help move the conversation forward equipped with a better understanding of this topic. ■

THOMAS LAMONT teaches a senior elective on Modern Indian History at the Groton School in Groton, Massachusetts. During his sabbatical from Groton School in 2007, he taught at The Doon School in Dehradun, India. He is a member of Educators for Teaching India, an independent organization based in Boston that promotes the teaching of India and South Asia in American secondary and middle schools. He also teaches Modern Chinese History, International Relations, World History, and United States History. He has a BA in History from Harvard University and an MPhil in History from The University of Oxford.

Dharma

BY ALF HILTEBEITEL

HONOLULU: UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PRESS, 2010

208 PAGES, ISBN: 978-0824834869, PAPERBACK

Reviewed by Catherine Benton

Part of the University of Hawai'i series "Dimensions of Asian Spirituality," Alf Hildebeitel's *Dharma* presents an enlightening discussion of *dharma*, a fundamental component of Hindu and Buddhist thinking. One of the goals of the "Dimensions of Asian Spirituality" series is to make available "short but comprehensive works [by distinguished scholars] on specific Asian . . . works devoted to the full articulation of a concept central to one or more of Asia's spiritual traditions." More specifically, this series aims to present this concept "in historical context for the non-specialist reader" and to create a forum for a scholar to present his or her "own views of [its] contemporary spiritual relevance . . . for global citizens of the twenty-first century."¹ Hildebeitel's *Dharma* meets these goals, providing an in-depth discussion of *dharma* using examples from the story literature that illustrate classical Hindu and Buddhist texts.

Integral to Hindu and Buddhist thinking, the word *dharma* expresses different but related meanings in these two traditions, and conveys a broad range of richly-textured concepts, even within each tradition. Dharmic (virtuous, principled) actions of various sorts can be traced to the Sanskrit root *dhṛ*, meaning to uphold or support, which the wonderfully poetic and imaginative Sanskrit language fleshes out in concepts as different as law (that which gives structure or support to order in a society) and an element of reality (that which upholds the component structure of reality).

Hildebeitel takes on the enormous challenge of unraveling the colorful strands of *dharma* in several important texts of the South Asian Buddhist and Hindu traditions and presenting their multilayered resonances. Readers familiar with the *Rigveda* and the *Chāndogya*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, and *Katha Upanishads*, or with the two Indian epics, the *Ramāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* (containing within it the well-known *Bhagavad Gītā*) will find many stories they recognize. On the Buddhist side, Hildebeitel unpacks the third-century BCE *dharma* inscribed on Aśoka's edict pillars, the *dharma* expounded in the early Buddhist *Tripitaka*, and the first-century *dharma* expressed in Aśvaghosa's *Buddhacarita*.

Though *dharma* is not always easy to grasp for those of us not raised in a *dharma*-imbued society, Hildebeitel's organization of chapters around stories grounded in particular *dharma*s is helpful for those interested in this organizing principle as a way to better understand Hindu and Buddhist religious teachings. Because each chapter highlights *dharma* as a religious or philosophical construct, individual chapters work as discrete discussions that can be digested in any order.

Hildebeitel explains in his opening chapter that this book is *about dharma as a South Asian spirituality. Along with yoga and karma, dharma is one of a few terms that have come to emblemize Indian spirituality not only in the West but throughout Asia* (4).

In terms of classroom use, given the richness and central importance of *dharma* within South Asian religious thinking, *Dharma* would be an excellent supplementary text for undergraduate courses exploring Hindu or Buddhist traditions. For instructors of these courses or anyone interested in the philosophical complexities of this concept and its relevance to twenty-first century ethical concerns, *Dharma* is a superb reference guide, intellectually stimulating and enjoyable. ■

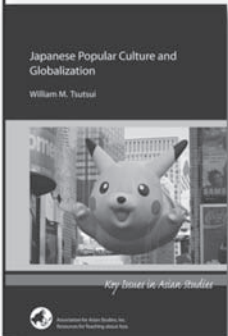
NOTES

1. Description of "Dimensions of Asian Spirituality" series on copyright page of *Dharma* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 2010).

CATHERINE BENTON is Associate Professor and Chair of Religion and Asian Studies at Lake Forest College in Illinois, where she teaches courses in Asian religious traditions and literatures. She is the author of *God of Desire, Tales of Kamadeva in Sanskrit Story Literature* (SUNY Press, 2006) and is currently working on a study of women's religious rituals at Sufi shrines in twenty-first century Maharashtra.

Key Issues in Asian Studies

Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization



Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization
William M. Tsutsui

William M. Tsutsui

"The riotous, rich and multilayered nature of Japanese popular culture is crisply presented in this delightful overview. Hardcore student fans, bewildered teachers, and clueless scholars will all benefit from the way William Tsutsui makes sense of the diverse styles, narratives and images surfacing in manga, anime, TV drama, music, and cinema. Professor Tsutsui's engaging guide to some of the most important themes, historical threads, and scholarly theories found in such a vast cultural domain is guaranteed to charm readers and to enhance our appreciation of its irresistible appeal and global reach."

Laura Miller
University of Missouri-St. Louis

ISBN 978-0-924304-62-0, Pb: 92 pages.
List Price: \$10 (AAS Member Price: \$8)

Association for Asian Studies, Inc.
www.asian-studies.org