



MAGICAL PROGENY, MODERN TECHNOLOGY

A Hindu Bioethics of Assisted
Reproductive Technology
Swasti Bhattacharyya

**A Hindu bioethics of
reproductive technology that
references the Mahābhārata.**

Magical Progeny, Modern Technology examines Hindu perspectives on assisted reproductive technology

through an exploration of birth narratives in the great Indian epic the *Mahābhārata*. Reproductive technology is at the forefront of contemporary bioethical debates, and in the United States often centers on ethical issues framed by conflicts among legal, scientific, and religious perspectives. Author Swasti Bhattacharyya weaves together elements from South Asian studies, religion, literature, law, and bioethics, as well as experiences from her previous career as a nurse, to construct a Hindu response to the debate. Through analysis of the mythic stories in the *Mahābhārata*, specifically the birth narratives of the five Pāṇḍava brothers and their Kaurava cousins, she draws out principles and characteristics of Hindu thought. She broadens the bioethical discussions by applying Hindu perspectives to a California court case over the parentage of a child conceived through reproductive technology and compares specific Hindu and Roman Catholic attitudes toward assisted reproductive technology. *Magical Progeny, Modern Technology* provides insightful ways to explore ethical issues and highlights concerns often overlooked in contemporary discussions occurring within the United States.

“Throughout her telling of ancient stories that are magically reborn in modern settings, the author combines humanity with logic to make this seminal work a clear, concise, and necessary exploration of ethical issues relating to assisted reproductive technology.” — S. Cromwell Crawford, author of *Hindu Bioethics for the Twenty-first Century*

“This book is a welcome addition to a field where the religious voices of the Judeo-Christian tradition are sometimes the only ones heard. It offers a fair and balanced treatment of the Hindu tradition and exemplifies sensitivity to the diversity of this tradition.” — Anantanand Rambachan, author of *The Advaita Worldview: God, World, and Humanity*

Swasti Bhattacharyya is Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Buena Vista University.

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KNOWING THE SPIRIT

Ostad Elahi
Translated and with
an Introduction by
James Winston Morris

**A modern spiritual classic
on the perfection of the soul
by a beloved writer from the
Islamic Shiite tradition.**

Ostad Elahi's *Knowing the Spirit* is a concise and remarkably illuminating philosophic account of our unique place in the universe: of the creative expressions of the divine Spirit throughout nature and of its deepening perfection through all the challenges and lessons of our existence in this world and beyond. This revealing book provides a single vision that draws together those symbolic teachings and spiritual insights familiar to many Western readers today through the classical Sufi poetry of Rumi, Hafez, and Attar. The historical context and language of *Knowing the Spirit* are marked by the confluence of classical Islamic philosophy, Sufi thought, Shiite esotericism, and their scriptural sources. But Elahi's thought integrates those influences and marks them with the magisterial imprint of his own profound spiritual experience and characteristic simplicity, openness, and directness of expression. This translation offers audiences a singular masterpiece of recent Islamic thought and spirituality, opening up fundamental human perspectives and possibilities too often clouded by the distractions of current events. In addition, the emphatic universality of both the subject and presentation of *Knowing the Spirit* points the way to unsuspected bridges between different civilizations and religious traditions, to the prospect of an inclusive “science of spirituality” based on the common ground of each person's spiritual life and experience.

Ostad Elahi (1895–1974) was born in Iran and was equally renowned as a master musician, an accomplished judge, and a remarkable philosopher and spiritual teacher.

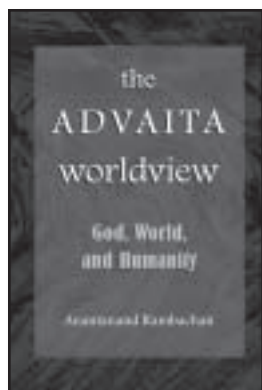
James Winston Morris is Sharjah Chair of Islamic Studies and Director of Research and Graduate Studies at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, The University of Exeter in England. He is the author of many books including *The Reflective Heart: Discovering Spiritual Intelligence in Ibn 'Arabi's Meccan Illuminations* and *Orientations: Islamic Thought in a World Civilisation*.

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THE ADVAITA WORLDVIEW

God, World, and Humanity
Anantanand Rambachan

A new interpretation of Hindu tradition focusing on the nature of God, the value of the world, and the meaning of liberation.



In this book, Anantanand Rambachan offers a fresh and detailed perspective on Advaita Vedānta, Hinduism's most influential and revered religious tradition. Rambachan, who is both a scholar and an Advaitin, attends closely to the Upaniṣads and authentic commentaries of Śaṅkara to challenge the tradition and to reconsider central aspects of its current teachings. His reconstruction and reinterpretation of Advaita focuses in particular on the nature of *brahman*, the status of the world in relation to *brahman*, and the meaning and relevance of liberation.

Rambachan queries contemporary representations of an impersonal *brahman* and the need for popular, hierarchical distinctions such as those between a higher (*parā*) and lower (*aparā*) *brahman*. Such distinctions, Rambachan argues, are inconsistent with the non-dual nature of *brahman* and are unnecessary when *brahman*'s relationship with the world is correctly understood. Questioning Advaita's traditional emphasis on renunciation and world-denial, Rambachan expands the understanding of suffering (*duḥkha*) and liberation (*mokṣa*) and addresses socioeconomic as well as gender and caste inequalities. Positing that the world is a celebrative expression of God's fullness, this book advances Advaita as a universal and uninhibited path to a liberated life committed to compassion, equality, and justice.

"This is a fine introduction to, and argument for a reinterpretation of, Advaita Vedānta by a scholar who is also an Advaitin. The book is thus constructive in two senses; it is theological and largely positive, while still solid scholarship. Such a combination, especially done well, is rare." — Andrew O. Fort, author of *Jīvanmukti in Transformation: Embodied Liberation in Advaita and Neo-Vedānta*

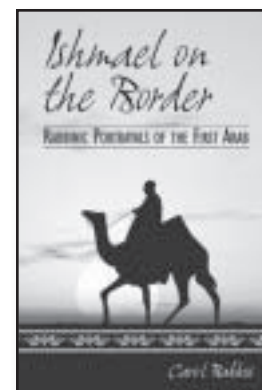
Anantanand Rambachan is Professor of Religion at St. Olaf College and is the author of several books, including *The Limits of Scripture: Vivekananda's Reinterpretation of the Vedas*.

A volume in the SUNY series in Religious Studies
Harold Coward, editor

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\$56.50 hc 0-7914-6851-8

ISHMAEL ON THE BORDER

Rabbinic Portrayals
of the First Arab
Carol Bakhos



Explores rabbinic views of Ishmael, the biblical figure seen as the first Arab.

Ishmael on the Border is an in-depth study of the rabbinic treatment of Abraham's firstborn son, Ishmael.

This book examines Ishmael's conflicted portrayal over a thousand-year period and traces the shifts and nuances in his representation within the Jewish tradition before and after the emergence of Islam.

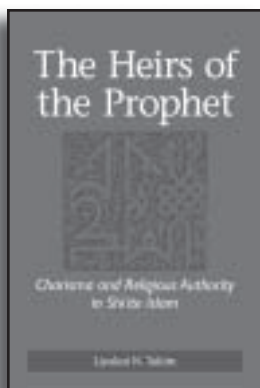
In classical rabbinic texts, Ishmael is depicted in a variety of ways. By examining the biblical account of Ishmael's life, Carol Bakhos points to the tension between his membership in and expulsion from Abraham's household—on the one hand he is circumcised with Abraham, yet on the other, because of divine favor, his brother supplants him as primogenitor. The rabbis address his liminal status in a variety of ways. Like Esau, he is often depicted in antipodal terms. He is Israel's "Other." Yet, Bakhos notes, the emergence of Islam and the changing ethnic, religious, and political landscape of the Near East in the seventh century affected later, medieval rabbinic depictions of Ishmael, whereby he becomes the symbol of Islam and the eponymous prototype of Arabs. With this inquiry into the rabbinic portrayal of Ishmael, the book confronts the interfacing of history and hermeneutics and the ways in which the rabbis inhabited a world of intertwined political, social, and theological forces.

"This book is an excellent, readable, and much-needed resuscitation of the reputation of Ishmael. Bakhos's masterful control of the rabbinic and collateral traditions combined with her keen eye for relevant detail make this book an informative pleasure to read. It is also an important contribution to presenting a more nuanced view of the polemic between Jews and Muslims over this major biblical figure." — Gordon D. Newby, author of *History of the Jews of Arabia: From Ancient Times to Their Eclipse under Islam*

Carol Bakhos is Professor of Late Antique Judaism at the University of California at Los Angeles and is the editor of *Ancient Judaism in its Hellenistic Context*.

A volume in the SUNY series in
Judaica: Hermeneutics, Mysticism, and Religion
Michael Fishbane, Robert Goldenberg, and
Elliot Wolfson, editors

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\$60.00 hc 0-7914-6759-7



THE HEIRS OF THE PROPHET

Charisma and Religious Authority in Shi'ite Islam
Liyakat N. Takim

Looks at how various factions used the tradition that scholars were the "heirs of the Prophet" during the classical period of Islam (570–1258 CE).

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, different religious factions within the Muslim community laid claim to the Prophet's legacy. Drawing on research from Sunni and Shi'ite literature, Liyakat N. Takim explores how these various groups, including the caliphs, scholars, Sufi holy men, and the Shi'ite imams and their disciples, competed to be the Prophetic heirs. The book also illustrates how the tradition of the "heirs of the Prophet" was often a polemical tool used by its bearers to demand obedience and loyalty from the Muslim community by imposing an authoritative rendition of texts, beliefs, and religious practices. Those who did not obey were marginalized and demonized. While examining the competition for Muhammad's charismatic authority, Takim investigates the Shi'ite self-understanding of authority and argues that this was an important factor in the formation of a distinct Shi'ite leadership. *The Heirs of the Prophet* also provides a new understanding of textual authority in Islam by examining authority construction and the struggle for legitimacy evidenced in Islamic biographical dictionaries.

"This book is very well written and demonstrates a vast knowledge and intimate familiarity with both primary and secondary sources on the topic of the Shi'ite imams and their deputies. Takim's exploration of how authority was constructed and made legitimate in early Shi'ite biographies, exegeses, legal theories, *kalam*, and the like, forges new ground in the field." — Kathryn Kueny, author of *The Rhetoric of Sobriety: Wine in Early Islam*

Liyakat N. Takim is Associate Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Denver.

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\$65.00 hc 0-7914-6737-6



RULES OF THE GAME

Quiz Shows and American Culture
Olaf Hoerschelmann

Critically examines the quiz show genre in American culture from the 1930s to the present.

From *The \$64,000 Question* and *Twenty-One* to *Jeopardy* and *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, quiz shows have

permeated American culture ever since their beginnings in early radio. In *Rules of the Game*, Olaf Hoerschelmann critically examines the quiz show genre in American culture, drawing on a large body of radio and television programs and on archival materials relating to the broadcast industry, program sponsors, advertising agencies, and individual producers. Hoerschelmann relates quiz shows to the larger social and industrial structures from which they originate and examines the connection of quiz shows to the production of knowledge in American society. He also provides a rethinking of media genre theory, offering a detailed analysis of the text-audience relationships on quiz shows and their significance for the practice of broadcasting.

"As the first in-depth, book-length investigation of quiz shows, *Rules of the Game* stands out through its historic scope, theoretical depth, and thorough research. It adds an important new perspective by linking the popularity and transformations of the genre over the years to the ever-changing surrounding ideological formations. The book challenges current media scholarship and establishes Hoerschelmann as one of the leading experts in this area." — Elfriede Fürsich, Boston College

"With excellent research and intriguing readings of the programs, Hoerschelmann examines some very important issues, including a neglected but major broadcast genre, the differences in audience relations to television from cinema, and the political economy of the genre. More than just a general history of quiz and game shows, the book raises larger questions within television studies." — Sean Griffin, coauthor of *Queer Images: A History of Gay and Lesbian Film in America*

Olaf Hoerschelmann is Associate Professor of Media Theory and Criticism at Eastern Illinois University.

JULY | 240 pp
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