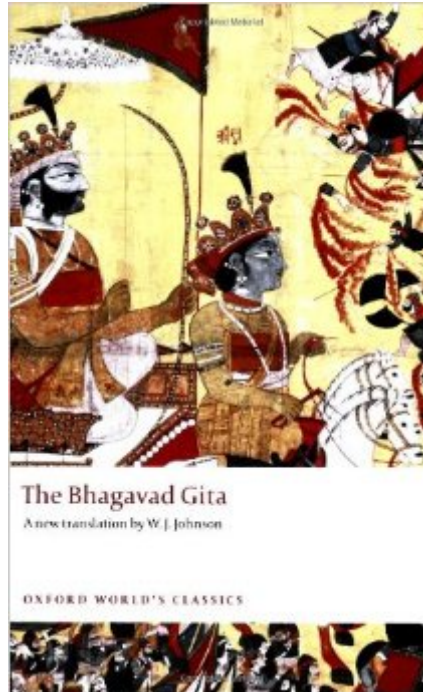


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The Bhagavad Gita (Oxford World's Classics)



Synopsis

The Bhagavad Gita is the most widely read Hindu religious text in the Western world and a key work for understanding Indian religions and the way Hinduism has been represented in modern India and the West. The poem considers social and religious duty, the nature of sacrifice, and the relationship of human beings to God, and continues to inspire a wide variety of interpretations, both within India and beyond. This new translation captures all the force and beauty of the original language of this awe-inspiring poem. Ideal for readers encountering the Bhagavad Gita for the first time, this edition provides a full cultural and historical context in its introduction and notes. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

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Customer Reviews

The Bhagavad-Gita is a philosophical poem, the title of which is translated as "Song of the Lord." It is often read as a stand-alone work, but it is included in the sixth book of longest known epic poem, entitled the Mahabharata. In The Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna teaches the warrior-prince Arjuna about sacred duty (dharma.) The setting is the battlefield at Kurukshetra as a war is about to get underway. Arjuna asks his charioteer, Krishna, to halt the vehicle between the opposing armies. Arjuna is struck with a crisis of conscience. He doesn't want to fight and kill

the men on the opposing side--some of whom are related to him by blood and others of whom are well-respected elders. Arjuna can see no virtue in the war. Krishna, after briefly mocking what he describes as Arjuna's newly developed cowardice, goes on to offer his explanation of why it is that Arjuna should fight. The first argument is that nobody really dies because consciousness is reborn. This makes sense if you believe in reincarnation | otherwise, not so much. A concise restatement of this argument is presented in the 11th teaching: "I am time grown old, creating world destruction, set in motion to annihilate worlds; even without you, all these warriors arrayed in hostile ranks will cease to exist. Therefore, arise and win glory! Conquer your foes and fulfill your kingship! They are already killed by me. Be just my instrument, the archer at my side!" Another of Krishna's arguments is that if Arjuna fails to fulfill his duty he will be thought less of by others. This is an odd argument to make as Krishna makes a more compelling case for ridding oneself of ego, whereas this seems to be saying that one should put what others think of one above doing what one believes is right.

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