

mahan kosh

Mahan Kosh: A Comprehensive Guide to India's Premier Encyclopedic Lexicon

Understanding India's rich cultural, historical, and linguistic diversity requires access to authoritative and comprehensive reference works. One such monumental achievement is the **Mahan Kosh**, an extensive encyclopedic lexicon that encapsulates the vast heritage of Indian civilization. This article delves into the origins, significance, structure, and contribution of the Mahan Kosh, providing you with an in-depth understanding of this invaluable resource.

Introduction to Mahan Kosh

The **Mahan Kosh**, often regarded as one of the most comprehensive encyclopedic dictionaries of Indian history, culture, literature, and philosophy, was compiled during the early 20th century. Its name, derived from Sanskrit words 'Mahan' (great) and 'Kosh' (dictionary or lexicon), signifies a 'Great Dictionary' that aims to serve as a definitive reference for scholars, students, and enthusiasts interested in Indian studies.

Historical Background and Development

Origins and Compilation

The Mahan Kosh was primarily compiled under the auspices of the Government of India in the early 1900s. It was envisioned as a monumental work to document the vast and diverse knowledge pertaining to India's history, languages, religions, arts, and sciences. The project was spearheaded by eminent scholars of the time, including Dr. Bhau Daji and others dedicated to preserving Indian heritage.

The compilation process involved gathering entries from a wide range of sources, including classical texts, inscriptions, manuscripts, and contemporary scholarly research. The task was monumental, requiring meticulous cross-referencing, verification, and scholarly rigor.

Significance in Indian Scholarship

The Mahan Kosh holds a unique position in Indian academic circles for several reasons:

- It serves as a bridge connecting ancient traditions with modern scholarship.
- It offers comprehensive coverage of Indian terminologies, biographical entries, and historical events.
- It reflects the linguistic diversity of India, including entries in Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali, and other regional languages.
- It acts as a foundational reference for researchers, historians, linguists, and students.

Structure and Content of Mahan Kosh

Organization and Entries

The Mahan Kosh is organized alphabetically, covering a vast array of entries across multiple disciplines. Its structure includes:

- Biographical sketches of notable figures in Indian history, literature, politics, and religion.
- Definitions and explanations of key concepts, terms, and philosophies.
- Descriptions of geographical locations, institutions, and artifacts.
- Summaries of historical events, movements, and cultural practices.

Each entry is detailed, often including etymology, historical context, and references to primary sources.

Languages and Accessibility

While the primary language of the Mahan Kosh is Sanskrit, it incorporates entries in Hindi, Bengali, and other regional languages, reflecting the linguistic plurality of India. This multilingual approach enhances its accessibility and scholarly value.

The lexicon was originally published in multiple volumes, making it a massive reference work. Modern editions or digital versions have aimed to preserve and disseminate this knowledge for wider audiences.

Impact and Legacy of Mahan Kosh

Academic and Cultural Contributions

The Mahan Kosh has played a vital role in:

- Standardizing Indian terminology and nomenclature.
- Providing authoritative biographical data on historical figures.
- Supporting linguistic research and the development of Indian lexicography.
- Serving as a foundational resource for translations and interpretations of Indian texts.

Its comprehensive nature has made it indispensable for scholars engaged in Indian studies.

Modern Relevance and Digital Initiatives

In recent years, efforts have been made to digitize the Mahan Kosh, making it accessible to a global audience. Digital libraries and academic portals now host searchable versions, enabling quick reference and research.

Additionally, scholars and institutions continue to update and expand upon the work, integrating new findings and interpretations to keep the lexicon relevant.

How to Access and Use Mahan Kosh

Availability

- Printed Editions: The original multi-volume sets can be found in major university and research libraries.
- Digital Versions: Some editions have been digitized and are available through academic repositories or government digital libraries.
- Online Platforms: Certain scholarly websites host searchable versions of the Mahan Kosh, often with annotations and supplementary information.

Using Mahan Kosh Effectively

To maximize the utility of the Mahan Kosh:

- Familiarize yourself with its alphabetical organization.
- Use cross-references within entries for related topics.
- Consult related volumes for comprehensive understanding.
- Leverage digital search functions for quick lookup.

Conclusion

The **Mahan Kosh** stands as a testament to India's scholarly heritage and commitment to preserving its vast cultural knowledge. Its detailed entries and comprehensive coverage make it an unparalleled resource for anyone interested in Indian history, languages, and traditions. Whether accessed through traditional print or modern digital means, the Mahan Kosh continues to serve as a cornerstone of Indian scholarship, illuminating the rich tapestry of India's past and present.

Keywords for SEO Optimization:

- Mahan Kosh
- Indian encyclopedic lexicon
- Indian history dictionary
- Indian cultural encyclopedia
- Indian language glossary
- Indian scholar reference
- Indian heritage resources
- Historical figures India
- Indian terminology
- Indian lexicography

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Mahan Kosh' and who authored it?

'Mahan Kosh' is an extensive Hindi-language encyclopedic dictionary authored by Dr. Ram Nath Pandey, providing detailed information on Indian history, culture, and literature.

Why is 'Mahan Kosh' considered a significant reference work in Hindi literature?

'Mahan Kosh' is regarded as a comprehensive and authoritative resource that consolidates vast knowledge about Indian civilization, making it an essential reference for scholars and students of Hindi literature.

How has 'Mahan Kosh' contributed to the preservation of Indian cultural heritage?

By documenting and detailing numerous aspects of Indian history, traditions, and concepts, 'Mahan Kosh' has helped preserve and promote Indian cultural heritage for future generations.

Are there digital versions or online access available for 'Mahan Kosh'?

Yes, several digital editions and online platforms provide access to 'Mahan Kosh', making it more accessible for researchers, students, and enthusiasts worldwide.

What are some unique features of 'Mahan Kosh' that distinguish it from other encyclopedic dictionaries?

'Mahan Kosh' offers extensive entries on Indian history, mythology, linguistics, and cultural terms, often including detailed explanations and cross-references, which set it apart from other dictionaries.

Has 'Mahan Kosh' been updated or expanded since its original publication?

While the original 'Mahan Kosh' was published in the early 20th century, various editions and supplementary volumes have been released to include new research and discoveries, ensuring its relevance.

In what contexts is 'Mahan Kosh' most commonly used today?

It is primarily used by scholars, students, historians, and researchers for authoritative information on Indian history, culture, and language studies.

How does 'Mahan Kosh' influence modern Hindi lexicography and scholarship?

'Mahan Kosh' has set a benchmark for comprehensive and scholarly Hindi reference works, inspiring subsequent lexicographers and enriching Hindi language and cultural research.

Can 'Mahan Kosh' be considered a foundational text for understanding Indian civilization?

Yes, due to its extensive and detailed entries on Indian history, mythology, and cultural concepts, 'Mahan Kosh' is regarded as a foundational resource for understanding Indian civilization.

Additional Resources

Mahan Kosh: The Encyclopedic Marvel of Urdu Lexicography

Introduction

Mahan Kosh stands as a monumental achievement in the realm of Urdu lexicography. As one of the most comprehensive and authoritative encyclopedic dictionaries of the Urdu language, it has played a pivotal role in shaping the understanding, preservation, and propagation of Urdu vocabulary and literature. Published in the early 20th century, Mahan Kosh is not merely a dictionary; it is a scholarly compendium that encapsulates the richness and depth of Urdu, offering insights into its etymology, usage, and cultural significance. This article aims to explore the origins, structure, significance, and enduring legacy of Mahan Kosh, illuminating its vital role in linguistic history.

Historical Context and Origin

The Birth of Mahan Kosh

The inception of Mahan Kosh can be traced back to the vibrant intellectual milieu of British India during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The period was marked by a surge in scholarly interest in Urdu language and literature, driven by efforts to preserve cultural identity amidst colonial rule. Several scholars, writers, and linguists recognized the need for a comprehensive lexicographical resource that would serve as an authoritative reference for students, writers, and researchers.

The project was spearheaded by Khan Bahadur Syed Muhammad Ashraf, a renowned Urdu scholar, lexicographer, and educator. His dedication to compiling a lexicon that encapsulated the breadth of Urdu vocabulary led to the conceptualization of the Mahan Kosh, which translates to "Great Dictionary." The endeavor was ambitious, involving meticulous research, collection of words from classical and contemporary sources, and rigorous verification.

Compilation and Publication

The compilation process spanned decades, involving extensive collaboration with linguists, poets, and historians. It aimed to include not only standard vocabulary but also idiomatic expressions, regional dialects, and historical terms. The dictionary was published in multiple volumes, beginning with the first volume in 1938, culminating in a comprehensive multi-volume work.

The publication was supported by the government and literary circles, recognizing its importance as a cultural artifact. The Mahan Kosh quickly gained recognition for its scholarly rigor and exhaustive coverage, setting a new standard for Urdu lexicography.

Structure and Content of Mahan Kosh

Scope and Coverage

Mahan Kosh is distinguished by its extensive scope, encompassing:

- Vocabulary from Classical to Modern Urdu: It includes words from medieval poetry, religious texts, and contemporary usage.
- Etymology and Word Origins: Detailed explanations tracing the roots of words, often linking them to Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, and Turkic languages.
- Idioms and Phrases: Common idiomatic expressions and their contextual meanings.
- Historical and Cultural References: Terms related to historical events, cultural practices, and traditional crafts.
- Regional Dialects: Variants and regionalisms from different Urdu-speaking areas.

Organizational Structure

The dictionary is organized alphabetically, with entries typically consisting of:

- The word or phrase.
- Pronunciation guides.
- Part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, etc.).
- Definitions, with contextual explanations.
- Etymological notes.
- Example sentences from literary sources.

This meticulous organization makes Mahan Kosh both a linguistic and literary treasure trove, facilitating deep understanding and scholarly research.

Special Features

- Cross-References: Many entries include cross-references to related words, enhancing navigability.
- Illustrations and Annotations: Occasionally, the entries include notes on usage, regional variations, or poetic implications.
- Historical Annotations: Some words include historical context, illustrating their evolution over time.

Significance and Impact

Preservation of Language and Literature

Mahan Kosh's comprehensive nature has played a crucial role in preserving Urdu's linguistic heritage. By documenting archaic and regional words, it helps prevent language attrition and preserves the cultural nuances embedded in Urdu literature.

Educational and Scholarly Utility

For students, teachers, and scholars, Mahan Kosh remains an indispensable

reference. Its detailed etymologies assist in understanding the complex origins of Urdu vocabulary, fostering deeper appreciation of the language's multicultural influences.

Cultural and National Identity

During a period of colonial dominance and cultural identity crises, Mahan Kosh became a symbol of Urdu's rich literary tradition and cultural independence. It bolstered efforts to elevate Urdu as a language of intellectual and literary excellence.

Influence on Subsequent Lexicography

The success of Mahan Kosh set a precedent for future lexicographical projects in Urdu and other South Asian languages. It influenced subsequent dictionaries and linguistic research, inspiring lexicographers to adopt rigorous standards.

Legacy and Modern Relevance

Enduring Scholarly Value

Even decades after its publication, Mahan Kosh remains a vital resource. Its meticulous entries continue to be cited in academic research, literary analysis, and linguistic studies.

Digital Era and Digitization

In recent years, efforts have been made to digitize Mahan Kosh, making it accessible to a global audience. Digital versions provide search functionalities, hyperlinks, and annotations, enhancing usability.

Challenges and Criticisms

Despite its grandeur, Mahan Kosh faced challenges such as:

- Limited updates: The original publication was static, and language evolves rapidly.
- Accessibility: Physical copies are rare and expensive, limiting access.
- Scope limitations: Some critics argue that it focuses heavily on classical and formal Urdu, underrepresenting colloquial and regional dialects.

Future Prospects

The future of Mahan Kosh lies in integrating it into digital lexicographical platforms, leveraging artificial intelligence for updates, and expanding its scope to include contemporary slang, technological terms, and evolving usage patterns.

Conclusion

Mahan Kosh stands as a testament to the scholarly dedication to Urdu language and literature. Its meticulous compilation, authoritative content, and cultural significance have cemented its status as a cornerstone in Urdu lexicography. As the language continues to evolve in the digital age, the legacy of Mahan Kosh inspires ongoing efforts to preserve, study, and celebrate Urdu's rich linguistic heritage. Whether as a historical document or a living resource, Mahan Kosh exemplifies the profound connection between language, culture, and identity—a true monument to Urdu's literary grandeur.

Mahan Kosh

mahan kosh: *History of Sikh Gurus Retold: 1606-1708 C.E* Surjit Singh Gandhi, 2007 The Impulse Behind The Study In Hand Was The Longing To Find Adequate Answers To Certain Vital Questions What Exactly Does Sikhism Stand For? Why Was It Originated And Developed By Guru Nanak And His Nine Successors? How Did It Strike Roots Among People? What Institutions And Structures The Gurus Evolved To Highlight And Escalate It? What Type Of Praxis Of Man And Society Gurus Visualized? How Was It Different From Contemporary Religious Systems Islam, Hinduism, Sahajyana, Buddhism, Nathism, Bhakti System Etc.? Was It A Synthesis Of Different Traits Of Different Religions? Was It A Syncretism Of Hindu And Muslim Cultures Or Was It An Independent System? Did Sikhism Purport To Design To Raise Itself On Premises Different From The Ones Which Formed The Foundations Of Hindu Or Other Societies? Was It Merely Reformist Movement Aiming At Certain Targets Within Time And Space Or A Distinct Spirito-Social Process To Urge The People To March Towards Integrated Development Both At Micro And Macro Levels? What Was The True Nature Of Supreme Reality As Conceived By The Gurus? How Is This Related With The Universe Including Man And How Does It Permeate, Pervade And Operate The Whole Universe? What Type Of Society Conforms To God S Will And How Was Its Consummation Possible? Which Models Of Polity And Social Edifice Were Recommended By The Gurus? Is Sikhism A Life-Affirming Dispensation Or Life-Negating Philosophy? Why Was Structural Bonding Of Religion And Politics Effected And Institutionalised? What Is The Place Of Sikhism In The Comity Of Religions And How It Is Relevant To Challenges Of The Present-Day World? Such Questions And A Lot More Being Vital And Crucial For The Understanding Of The Role Of Gurus And Their Dispensation, Have Been Fully Taken Cognizance Of In The Present Study.

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Impulse Behind The Study In Hand Was The Longing To Find Adequate Answers To Certain Vital Questions What Exactly Does Sikhism Stand For? Why Was It Originated And Developed By Guru Nanak And His Nine Successors? How Did It Strike Roots Among People? What Institutions And Structures The Gurus Evolved To Highlight And Escalate It? What Type Of Praxis Of Man And Society Gurus Visualized? How Was It Different From Contemporary Religious Systems Islam, Hinduism, Sahajyana, Buddhism, Nathism, Bhakti System Etc.? Was It A Synthesis Of Different Traits Of Different Religions? Was It A Syncretism Of Hindu And Muslim Cultures Or Was It An Independent System? Did Sikhism Purport To Design To Raise Itself On Premises Different From The Ones Which Formed The Foundations Of Hindu Or Other Societies? Was It Merely Reformist Movement Aiming At Certain Targets Within Time And Space Or A Distinct Spirito-Social Process To Urge The People To March Towards Integrated Development Both At Micro And Macro Levels? What Was The True Nature Of Supreme Reality As Conceived By The Gurus? How Is This Related With The Universe Including Man And How Does It Permeate, Pervade And Operate The Whole Universe? What Type Of Society Conforms To God S Will And How Was Its Consummation Possible? Which Models Of Polity And Social Edifice Were Recommended By The Gurus? Is Sikhism A Life-Affirming Dispensation Or Life-Negating Philosophy? Why Was Structural Bonding Of Religion And Politics Effected And Institutionalised? What Is The Place Of Sikhism In The Comity Of Religions And How It Is Relevant To Challenges Of The Present-Day World? Such Questions And A Lot More Being Vital And Crucial For The Understanding Of The Role Of Gurus And Their Dispensation, Have Been Fully Taken Cognizance Of In The Present Study.

mahan kosh: Sikhism ,

mahan kosh: Who Are the Sikhs? Gian Singh Sandhu, 2023-03-28 Who Are the Sikhs? is teeming with knowledge, references, and answers to 300 frequently asked questions about Sikhi (the Sikh Faith) and its socio-religious and politico-economic affairs. The author traces the origin or road map of the Sikh faith and identity, and delves into the who, why, what, when, and where of the Creator and the Creation, including evolution. Sikh beliefs, ethics, and practices are eloquently described. The question-and-answer format makes it easier for a reader to choose a topic and find a quick answer. It's ideal for conversation students, researchers, interfaith couples, multicultural communities, and anyone who wants to know Sikhs. The book embodies both simplicity and scholarly details. The author depicts Sikh philosophy, theology, ideology, and relevance to contemporary life in a common phraseology, making it simpler for the average reader to comprehend. He also shows how susceptible and uncharted trails (such as abortion, test-tube babies, surrogate mothering, artificial insemination, etc.) can be approached and strategized through Gurbani, the spiritual utterances in the Sikh Scripture.

mahan kosh: HEIRS OF THE LAND Professor Bhupinder Singh Solicitor, 2024-05-15 Heirs of the Land book represents the History of the Sikhs in a true spirit before the Mankind; and emboldens and encourage especially the Heirs of the Great Punjab, the Sikhs, to study their history, its people, and places those that had been ignored not only by the Indian and Pakistan States sponsored so-called Historians, but also, who are trying hard to dilute the Sikh Revolution of the SatGuru Nnak Sahib. Therefore, the author shall die in peace if this work inspires the historians to look at Harappa Civilisation and the Sikh-Revolution in its true inception. SatGuru Granth Sahib, the Living Guru of the Sikhs in the Globe proclaimed that the soul dwells in the body and imbue with SatGuru's Shabad (the Ambrosial Nectar). We should purify our body in the contemplation of the SatGuru's Shabad and eradicate Doubt Dubida duibDw; the Almighty Lord Giver of Peace Himself bestows His Mercy, Kirpa ikRpw, unites us with Himself: kwieAw ibrKu pMKI ivic vwsW] AMimRqu cugih gur sbid invwsW] (1068-17) KAA-I-AA BIRKHU PANKHEE VICH I WAASAA. AnMRITU CHUGAHI GUR SABADI NIWAASAA. The body is the tree; the bird of the soul dwells within it. It drinks in the Ambrosial Nectar, resting in the Word of the SatGuru's Shabad. aufih n mUly n Awvih n jwhI inj Gir vwsW pwieAw]13] kwieAw soDih sbdu vIcwrih] UDDAHI NA MOOLAY NA AAVAHI NA JAAHEE NIJ GHARI WAASAA PAA-I-AA.13. KAA-I-AA SODHAHI SABADU VEECHAARAHI. It never flies away, and it does not come or go; it dwells within the home of its own self. ||13|| Purify the body

and contemplate the Shabad. moh TgaurI Brmu invwrih] Awpy ik@pw kry suKdwqw Awpy myil imlwieAw]14] (1068-19) MOH THAG-UREE BHARAMU NIVAARAH. AAPAY KrIPAA KARAY SUKHDAATAA AAPAY MAYLI MILAA-I-AA. Remove the poisonous drug of emotional attachment and eradicate doubt. The Giver of peace Himself bestows His Mercy and unites us in Union with Himself. ||14|| SatGuru Amardas Sahib 3rd Nanak, Rag Maru, SGGs. p. 1068.

mahan kosh: *Religious Pluralism in Punjab* Joginder Singh, 2017-08-22 This book analyses the heterogeneous modes of meditation, prayer, initiation, beliefs and practices, codes of conduct, ethics and life-style of the contemporary Sikh Sants, Babas, Gurus and Satgurus in Punjab.

mahan kosh: Information Seeking Behaviour of Users in Punjabi Literature Dr. Gurmeet Singh, 2021-09-11 Our society's literate population who are into research and teaching are dependent on libraries for accessing information and information sources. Thus the significance and need of library and information services are widely realized and recognized. Library users always appreciate if the relevant and accurate information is quickly and timely made available to them. Students, research scholars and faculty members are mostly dependent upon the library for information resources and services to fulfill their information needs and to keep themselves up to date. Libraries are acquiring relevant material to meet the requirements of the changing demands of the users. The procurement of information resources by the library and its proper organization helps in information dissemination expeditiously and ensures its optimum use by the users. Users' interests are of prime importance in the library sector. It has a direct bearing on information-seeking behaviour which differs from individual to individual and from discipline to discipline. This book will be of great interest to research scholars, faculty members, students of Punjabi Literature. It will help the librarians to organize their collection accordingly. This book is based on the study conducted by the research in perspective of six universities i.e. University of Delhi (Delhi), University of Jammu (Jammu), Kurukshetra University (Kurukshetra), Panjab University (Chandigarh), Punjabi University (Patiala), Guru Nanak Dev University (Amritsar).

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mahan kosh: *Sikhism, a Perspective* Maan Singh Nirankari (dr.), 2008

mahan kosh: International Bibliography of Sikh Studies Rajwant Singh Chilana, 2006-01-16 The International Bibliography of Sikh Studies brings together all books, composite works, journal articles, conference proceedings, theses, dissertations, project reports, and electronic resources produced in the field of Sikh Studies until June 2004, making it the most complete and up-to-date reference work in the field today. One of the youngest religions of the world, Sikhism has progressively attracted attention on a global scale in recent decades. An increasing number of scholars is exploring the culture, history, politics, and religion of the Sikhs. The growing interest in Sikh Studies has resulted in an avalanche of literature, which is now for the first time brought together in the International Bibliography of Sikh Studies. This monumental work lists over 10,000 English-language publications under almost 30 subheadings, each representing a subfield in Sikh

Studies. The Bibliography contains sections on a wide variety of subjects, such as Sikh gurus, Sikh philosophy, Sikh politics and Sikh religion. Furthermore, the encyclopedia presents an annotated survey of all major scholarly work on Sikhism, and a selective listing of electronic and web-based resources in the field. Author and subject indices are appended for the reader's convenience.

mahan kosh: *The Oxford Handbook of Sikh Studies* Pashaura Singh, Louis E. Fenech, 2014-03-27 The Oxford Handbook of Sikh Studies innovatively combines the ways in which scholars from fields as diverse as philosophy, psychology, religious studies, literary studies, history, sociology, anthropology, political science, and economics have integrated the study of Sikhism within a wide range of critical and postcolonial perspectives on the nature of religion, violence, gender, ethno-nationalism, and revisionist historiography. A number of essays within this collection also provide a more practical dimension, written by artists and practitioners of the tradition. The handbook is divided into eight thematic sections that explore different 'expressions' of Sikhism. Historical, literary, ideological, institutional, and artistic expressions are considered in turn, followed by discussion of Sikhs in the Diaspora, and of caste and gender in the Panth. Each section begins with an essay by a prominent scholar in the field, providing an overview of the topic. Further essays provide detail and further treat the fluid, multivocal nature of both the Sikh past and the present. The handbook concludes with a section considering future directions in Sikh Studies.

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mahan kosh: *The Guru Granth Sahib* Pashaura Singh, 2003-09-26 This book examines three closely related questions in the process of canon formation in the Sikh tradition: how the text of the Adi Granth came into being, the meaning of gurbani, and how the Adi Granth became the Guru Granth Sahib. The censure of scholarly research on the Adi Granth was closely related to the complex political situation of Punjab and brought the whole issue of academic freedom into sharper focus. This book addresses some of these issues from an academic perspective. The Adi Granth, the sacred scripture of the Sikhs, means 'first religious book' (from the word 'adi' which means 'first' and 'granth' which means 'religious book'). Sikhs normally refer to the Adi Granth as the Guru Granth Sahib to indicate a confession of faith in the scripture as Guru. The contents of the Adi Granth are commonly known as bani (utterance) or gurbani (the utterance of the Guru). The transcendental origin (or ontological status) of the hymns of the Adi Granth is termed dhur ki bani (utterance from the beginning). This particular understanding of revelation is based upon the doctrine of the sabad, or divine word, defined by Guru Nanak and the succeeding Gurus. This book also explores the revelation of the bani and its verbal expression, devotional music in the Sikh tradition, the role of the scripture in Sikh ceremonies, and the hymns of Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan.

mahan kosh: *The A to Z of Sikhism* W. H. McLeod, 2009-07-24 Contrary to popular opinion, there is more to Sikhism than the distinctive dress. First of all, there is the emergence of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, and the long line of his successors. There are the precepts, many related to liberation through the divine name or nam. There is a particularly turbulent history in which the Sikhs have fought to affirm their beliefs and resist external domination that continues to this day. There is also, more recently, the dispersion from the Punjab throughout the rest of India and on to Europe and the Americas. With this emigration Sikhism has become considerably less exotic, but hardly better known to outsiders. This reference is an excellent place to learn more about the religion. It provides a chronology of events, a brief introduction that gives a general overview of the religion, and a dictionary with several hundred entries, which present the gurus and other leaders, trace the rather complex history, expound some of the precepts and concepts, describe many of the rites and rituals, and explain the meaning of numerous related expressions. All this, along with a bibliography, provides readers with an informative and accessible guide toward understanding Sikhism.

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for common ground and boundary-drawing processes. Individual chapters locate sites of these modes and the conditions that engender them, problematizing the truth-claims of unitary markers of identity.

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