

Parsis In India And The Diaspora: A Rich Tapestry Of History, Culture, And Identity



Parsis in India and the Diaspora (Routledge South Asian Religion Series) by Julius Evola

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Origins and Arrival in India



The Parsis are an ethno-religious community with an ancient heritage, originating in the Persian province of Fars in present-day Iran. Following the Arab conquest of Persia in the 7th century CE, a group of Zoroastrian Persians fled their homeland and sought refuge in India.

According to tradition, they landed at the port of Sanjan in Gujarat around 716 CE, where they were welcomed by the local Hindu ruler, Jadi Rana.

The Parsis were granted permission to settle in India and practice their Zoroastrian faith freely.

Religious Beliefs and Practices



Zoroastrianism, the religion of the Parsis, is one of the oldest monotheistic faiths in the world. Its central tenets revolve around the teachings of the prophet Zarathushtra, who lived in ancient Persia around 1500 BCE.

Zoroastrians believe in a single, all-powerful God called Ahura Mazda, who is the creator of the universe and the source of all goodness. They also believe in the existence of two opposing forces: Spenta Mainyu (the Holy Spirit) and Angra Mainyu (the Evil Spirit).

Fire is considered sacred in Zoroastrianism, and the Parsis maintain sacred fires in their fire temples, known as agiaris. These fires are tended by priests and serve as a symbol of Ahura Mazda's presence.

Settlement and Community Life



Over the centuries, the Parsis established thriving communities in various parts of India, particularly in Mumbai, Surat, and Gujarat. They became

known for their entrepreneurial spirit, social welfare initiatives, and contributions to academia, business, and the arts.

The Parsis maintained their unique identity while assimilating into Indian society. They adopted Gujarati as their primary language and incorporated elements of Indian culture into their traditions. However, they also preserved their Zoroastrian beliefs and customs, fostering a strong sense of community.

The Parsi Diaspora



In the 19th and 20th centuries, some Parsis emigrated from India to various parts of the world, including North America, Europe, and the Middle East.

They established successful communities in cities like London, New York, Toronto, and Hong Kong.

The Parsi diaspora has played a significant role in the global spread of Zoroastrianism and Parsi culture. They have established fire temples, cultural centers, and educational institutions to preserve their heritage in their adopted countries.

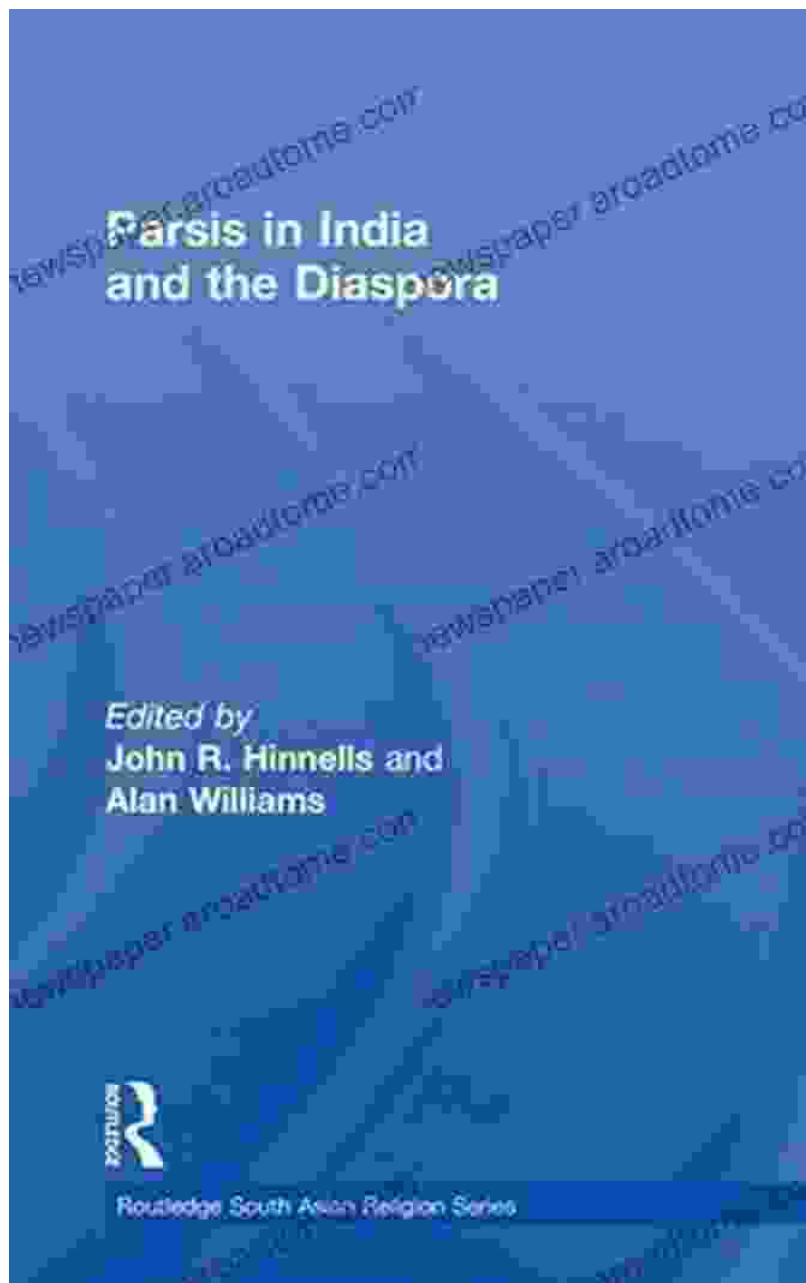
Challenges and Resilience



Like many minority communities, the Parsis have faced challenges over the years, including population decline, assimilation, and the erosion of their cultural traditions. However, they have demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability.

Parsi organizations and individuals are actively involved in efforts to preserve their heritage and promote awareness of their community. They

are working to revive traditional arts, languages, and customs, while also engaging with the broader society to foster understanding and appreciation of Parsi culture.



The Parsis of India and the diaspora are a vibrant and multifaceted community with a rich history, diverse culture, and enduring identity. Their ancient origins, religious beliefs, and global presence make them a

fascinating subject of study and a testament to the resilience of the human spirit.

As the world continues to evolve, the Parsis will undoubtedly continue to contribute to society in significant ways, while preserving their unique heritage and inspiring generations to come.

- Ervad Sheriarji Dadabhai Bharucha, "A Brief History of the Parsis" (1935)
- Dr. Vispi Balaporia, "The Parsis: A Minority Profile" (1981)
- Dr. Firoze Kotwal, "Parsis in India and the Diaspora" (Routledge, 2002)

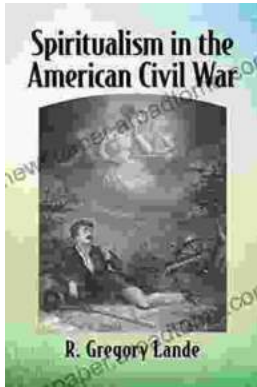


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