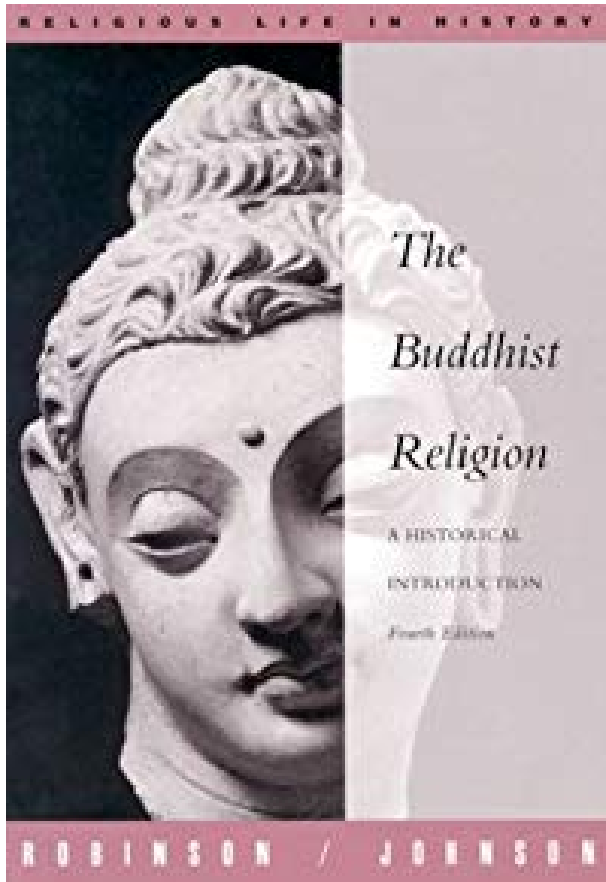


Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction



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The most comprehensive, insightful, and up-to-date introduction to Buddhism available, this text traces the religion of Awakening from its origins to its spread throughout Asia and the world. Combining historical narrative with contextual analysis in a clear and engaging style, the authors present a full and balanced portrait of the Buddhist religion in terms of ritual, devotionalism, institutions, doctrine, and meditation practice. Of special interest are the discussions of women's contributions to the Buddhist tradition and the portraits of current religious life, both lay and monastic, drawn from all the major living Buddhist cultures of Asia. In this Fourth Edition, both Part One (the Indian development of Buddhism) and Part Two (Buddhism beyond India) have been substantially revised. Incorporated throughout the text are findings from the most recent scholarship as well as original research by the authors on Buddhism in its early, Tantric, Southeast Asian, and Western forms. Helpful citations in the text, glossary, and index highlight themes of interest in comparative religion together with cross-cultural developments in such distinctly Buddhist teachings as Karma, emptiness, and the nature of Awakening.