

The **Shap** working party on World Religions in Education



Dedication

**This Jubilee Celebration compendium is dedicated to the Memory
of**

Professor John Hinnells

**Founder Member and first General Secretary of the Shap Working
Party on World Religions in Education.**





John's research and writings demonstrated both depth of particularity and the breadth of universality. Although there were others in the field, especially Mary Boyce, Zoroastrian and Mithraic Studies benefitted from his promotional energies. His many friends within the Parsi community in both India and the UK reflect their appreciation of the interest he helped generate in their past tradition and its ongoing vitality. His depth of learning is evident here.

Breadth was especially evident in his edited compilations – Dictionary of Religions and Who's Who of Religions - as was his capacity to persuade others to collaborate in such enterprise. That persuasiveness and its accompanying sense of urgency were especially effective during his years at SOAS where he successfully challenged an almost segregated linguistic focus to become one more open to interdisciplinary studies of religion and society.

Brian Gates

Social encounters with John introduced me to the concept of the "Parsi peg," a measure which he embraced with enthusiasm! When my husband, Bruce, and I visited John in his home in Cambridge, I watched with amusement as Bruce accepted a Parsi peg of fine whisky, and knew that I would have to drive us all to lunch!

The last time I saw John was a few years ago, when we went to see him at his bungalow in Oxford, to take him out to a nearby gourmet pub. He was surrounded by books and papers and eager to continue his work on the important Parsi figures of Bombay's past, but was feeling stymied by his physical ailments. However, John's great drive to know more and to share that knowledge, along with his ability to appreciate the good things in life, brought a cheerful, galvanizing dynamic to the occasion, which I will always value.

Jenny Rose

Professor John R Hinnells authored and edited many books on Zoroastrianism, Mithraism and on comparative religions, including; edited 'Comparative Religion in Education. A Collection of Studies' (1970), 'Persian Mythology' (1973, revised 1990) with its beautiful colour photographs, edited 'Mithraic Studies. Proceedings of the First International Congress of Mithraic Studies' (1975), 'Spanning East and West, Man's Religious Quest – The Zoroastrian Quest' (1978), 'Parsis and the British' (1978), 'Zoroastrianism and the Parsis' (1981), edited 'The Penguin Dictionary of Religions' (1984), which subsequently was translated into Portuguese, Japanese, Italian, Russian and Korean, edited 'Who's Who of World Religions' (1991), 'Bhownaggee'(1995) which is one of the very few parliamentary biographies to be published on the second elected Asian and Zoroastrian MP and first Conservative MP, 'Zoroastrians in Britain' (1996), and 'Zoroastrian and Parsi Studies, Selected Works of John R Hinnells' (2000). (Attached is the list of publications from 1969 – 2015.)

ZTFE and the UK Zoroastrian diaspora will truly miss him.

Malcolm Deboo

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My memory of John's address at the first Shap Conference in 1969 was the humility and gentle humour of his lively presentation and its six significant conclusions, and these are also the chief features of the book of the Conference which he edited in 1970 - the first Shap publication. The rich scholarship and the variety of viewpoints held by the speakers he attracted to speak at the Conference (on Comparative Religion in Education) were typical of him even then – and how much more through his subsequent career at Manchester, Liverpool, SOAS and Cambridge. It was only natural, or even inevitable, when a Working Party was set up to continue the ideas generated at the Conference that he should become the first Secretary. Without question, he, together with Ninian Smart and Geoffrey Parrinder, was largely responsible for the creation and development of the Shap Working Party. Without his/their creativity there would have been no Shap. Such was John Hinnells, and consequently such has been the essence of Shap.

Since then his down to earth approach to hard work, his humility and humour – and creativity in abundance have been the marks of his contribution to the Shap Working Party.

Peter Woodward

John will long remain known for the pioneering research, the publications he initiated and the substantial contributions he made to the field of Religious Studies, both nationally and internationally. His life and work will be celebrated and fondly remembered by his family and many friends in Britain and abroad.

We met at many conferences and meetings and we also collaborated in some publication ventures where I contributed essays to books that John had edited. I was particularly grateful for the two contributions John wrote for the Festschrift on Turning Points in Religious Studies (T. & T. Clark, 1990) which I edited for Geoffrey Parrinder's eightieth birthday in 1990. First the opening essay, "A Personal Tribute to an Outstanding Career", and then a thematic essay on "Religion and the Arts" [see Turning Points in Religious Studies. Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Parrinder, republished in 2016 in the Bloomsbury Academic Collections as part of "Religious Studies: Comparative Religion".

Ursula King

I knew John both from his Manchester days and through his many edited books, which have often been updated, and have been staples for scholars and students for many decades. Working with a group of scholars to produce a book is no mean feat and John showed his capacity to liaise with others in this as well as other ways.

Peggy Morgan

For fuller details of Shap tributes see item 13 – 'Tributes to fourteen deceased Shap members'