

This comprehensive new presentation of the religion of the Ṛgveda is the result of a thorough-going endeavour to extrapolate historical circumstances from the Ṛgveda and present them chiefly from the perspective of this religion's adherents, for whom society, social life, and religion were inextricably bound. This approach provides valuable insights into the meanings of the various Ṛgvedic rites and rituals. The study describes the way of life of the Vedic tribes, which alternated between peaceful settling and predatory raids, pointing to the extensive influence the Ṛgveda had regarding which rituals were to be performed at what times. The 'priests' who officiated, moreover, embodied the gods of the Ṛgvedic pantheon when carrying out the rituals. In telling the story of these rituals, Thomas Oberlies highlights particular connections—such as the association of the war god Indra with the priest who recites the hymns which invite the gods—that help us solve many of the riddles which the text of the Ṛgveda still poses to this day. *The Religion of the Ṛgveda* includes a wealth of quotations from primary sources which form the basis of this approach to a religion that would later become Hinduism. A comprehensive index of subjects makes the book eminently accessible for use in further studies.

THOMAS OBERLIES has been Professor of Indology and Tibetan Studies at the University of Goettingen, Germany since 2002, and a full member of the Goettingen Academy of Sciences since 2009, before which he was Professor of Indology at Wuerzburg University (1991-1998), and at Freiburg University (1998-2002). He was awarded the prestigious Heisenberg professorship for his work about the structure of Soma hymns of the Ṛgveda, published as Volume II of his *Die Religion des Ṛgveda* (1999).