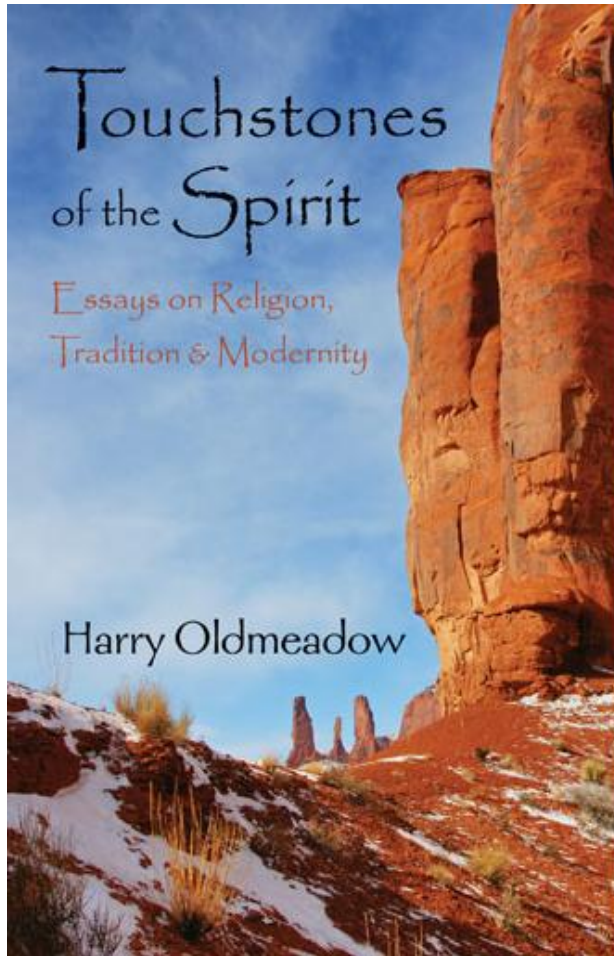


# Touchstones of the Spirit:

## Essays on Religion, Tradition & Modernity

by Harry Oldmeadow



*Touchstones of the Spirit* explores three general themes: the timeless messages of Tradition; the obscuration of this perennial wisdom in the modern world; and the spiritual intercourse between East and West which holds out some hope that we may yet recover something of what we have lost. Amongst this wide-ranging collection are essays on metaphysical and cosmological doctrines of the East, the spiritual heritage of the Australian Aborigines, the reigning ideologies of modernity, and several key figures in the East-West encounter, including Frithjof Schuon, Ananda Coomaraswamy, Abhishiktananda, and Huston Smith.

An excerpt from the book:

“Contrary to much contemporary opinion, thought is generated and organized not by data or information but by ideas. What are ideas? They are images, metaphors, organizing patterns which connect and make meaningful disparate phenomena and areas of experience. They derive from our subjective experiences, from the creative interplay of imagination and memory and feeling as well as from the rational workings of the mind. Creative thought is supple, unpredictable, fluent, mysterious—in

short, not at all computer-like.”

### This Book Features

- ❖ Eighteen chapters on Tradition and Modernity by religion scholar Harry Oldmeadow.
- ❖ A detailed biographical note of the author Harry Oldmeadow.
- ❖ A comprehensive index.

### Publication Details

- ❖ ISBN: 978-1-936597-03-1
- ❖ Pub Date: May 2012
- ❖ Price: \$22.95
- ❖ Trim Size: 6x9
- ❖ Page Count: 298 paperback

## Praise for *Touchstones of the Spirit*

“These penetrating essays by Harry Oldmeadow expose and pierce through the abstractions of the contemporary world and show the enduring power of the teachings of the sages and saints who remain the best representatives of the human spirit. The lucidity of Oldmeadow’s work consists of bringing traditional wisdom to bear upon contemporary culture, often in the most surprising and illuminating ways.”

—**Rodney Blackhirst**, La Trobe University, author of *Primordial Alchemy and Modern Religion*

“This book by Harry Oldmeadow ... reflects the same quality of expression and depth of thinking found in previous books by the same author. It was pleasantly surprising to find a few chapters dealing with subjects usually not touched by Perennialists but which might excite the interest of many readers in the domain of education and spirituality in general, for example, the short but decisive essay on Eckhart Tolle’s *The Power of Now*.”

—**Jean-Pierre Lafouge**, Marquette University, editor of *For God’s Greater Glory: Gems of Jesuit Spirituality*

“Harry Oldmeadow has repeatedly shown himself to be one of the most clear-sighted of the intellectual witnesses of the 20th and 21st centuries. In this new book he takes a hard look at what, fundamentally, is a ‘world without God.’ All of Oldmeadow’s books are an education; they are full of fundamental information not easily accessible elsewhere. In his insightful commentaries, he implacably uncovers the multiple layers of contemporary confusion, and goes a long way to making sense of a seemingly senseless world. This new book is a treasure.”

—**William Stoddart**, author of *Remembering in a World of Forgetting* and *Outline of Sufism*

“We know from Harry Oldmeadow’s other writings that he is no stranger in a strange land when it comes to exploring the perennial truths that run through the major world religions like golden threads in an ancient tapestry. In a clear, lucid style, he identifies the conflicting issues of tradition and modernity that haunt the modern, indeed post-modern, psyche in search of a genuine wisdom that can serve the physical, psychic, and spiritual needs of seekers everywhere in today’s world.”

—**John Herlihy**, author of *Borderlands of the Spirit* and *Wisdom’s Journey*

“Whether discussing traditional doctrines, or modern perspectives on traditional societies, or modernist dogmas, or the ethos that informs our attitudes to life in these challenging times, Harry Oldmeadow reminds us of what is true, good, and beautiful—of those principles that abide through the flux, and that clarify and illumine our lives.”

—**M. Ali Lakhani**, editor of *Sacred Web* and author of *The Timeless Relevance of Traditional Wisdom*

“In *Touchstones of the Spirit* Professor Oldmeadow takes no prisoners in critiquing the errors of the modern and postmodern mindset, yet he also supplies the principles that permit us to move beyond the current impasse. For all those seeking to reclaim the sacred in the midst of the ambiguity and confusion in the present age, *Touchstones of the Spirit* offers an impressive spectrum of pointers to assist in this search.”

—**Samuel Bendeck Sotillos**, *Network Review*

## About the Author

**HARRY OLDMEADOW** was born in Melbourne in 1947. His parents were Christian missionaries in India, where he spent nine years of his childhood and developed an early interest in the civilizations of the East. Harry studied history, politics, and literature at the Australian National University, taking out a First Class Honors degree in history. After further studies at the University of Sydney, he worked as a history tutor at La Trobe University in Melbourne. It was during this period that he discovered the works of René Guénon, Ananda Coomaraswamy, and Frithjof Schuon—works that would alter his own intellectual and spiritual trajectory. In 1980 he enrolled for a Masters degree in Religious Studies at the University of Sydney, where he completed a dissertation on the work of Frithjof Schuon and the other principal Traditionalist writers. This study was awarded the University of Sydney Medal for excellence in research and was eventually published by the Sri Lankan Institute of Traditional Studies under the title *Traditionalism: Religion in the Light of the Perennial Philosophy* (Colombo, 2000). His other publications include *Journeys East* (2004), *A Christian Pilgrim in India* (2008), *Light from the East* (2004), *Betrayal of Tradition* (2005), and *Frithjof Schuon and the Perennial Philosophy* (2010).

