



Vicissitudes of the Goddess: Reconstructions of the Gramadevata in India's Religious Traditions

Sree Padma

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This book provides a detailed history of Hindu goddess traditions with a special focus on the local goddesses of Andhra Pradesh, past and present. The antiquity and the evolution of these goddess traditions are illustrated and documented with the help of archaeological reports, literary sources, inscriptions and art. Tracing the symbols and images of goddess into the brahmanical (Saiva and Vaisnava), Buddhist, and Jaina religious traditions, the book argues effectively how and with what motivations goddesses and their symbolizations were appropriated and transformed. The book also examines the evolution of popular Hindu goddesses such as Durga and Kali, discussing their tribal and agricultural backgrounds. It also deals extensively with how and in what circumstances women are deified and shows how these deified women cults share characteristics with the village goddesses.

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