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Constant and Changing Faces of the Goddess: Goddess Traditions of Asia

Deepak Shimkhada and Phyllis K. Herman

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The Constant and Changing Faces of the Goddess: Goddess Traditions of Asia contains essays written by established scholars in the field that trace the multiplicity of Asian goddesses: their continuities, discontinuities, and importance as symbols of wisdom, power, transformation, compassion, destruction, and creation. The essays demonstrate that while treatments of the goddess may vary regionally, culturally, and historically, it is possible to note some consistencies in the overall picture of the goddess in Asia. The book provides a comprehensive treatment of the goddess, culminating in the selections that draw from research on Indian, Nepali, Chinese, Japanese, and Vietnamese traditions, seldom found in other works of similar subject. The volume will be useful for students in religious studies, gender studies, Asian studies, and women's studies. With the intent of making the volume truly broad in scope, an effort has been made to include works written by art historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and religious studies scholars. Culture cannot be separated from religion; they are intertwined as an organic whole, and variations manifest themselves in the rituals and daily lives of the people. In this sense, all the essays are interconnected: the goddess manifests in many forms and appeals to differing aspects of a particular culture as a paradigm of the divine feminine.

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