



# The Rise of the Goddess in the Hindu Tradition

*Tracy Pintchman*

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## **The Rise of the Goddess in the Hindu Tradition** Tracy Pintchman

This book explores the rise of the Great Goddess by focusing on the development of *saakti* (creative energy), *maya* (objective illusion), and *prakr(materiality)* from Vedic times to the late Puranic period, clarifying how these principles became central to her theology.

"I like very much the way in which Pintchman carefully establishes the interrelationships between *saakti*, *maya*, and *prakrti* concepts that might not at first appear to be closely connected. This book nicely reveals their organic integration, an integration that Hindu culture itself recognized and elaborated only gradually over the centuries. She avoids reading later Sakta or Tantric theological ideas back into the earlier literature, yet she convincingly demonstrates how the later ideas are firmly rooted in the ancient traditions. Thus, the book provides the reader with a sense both of the continuities involved in the development of the Great Goddess concept, as well as the major transformations of tradition that such a development entailed." -- C. Mackenzie Brown

"There are two complementary, arresting features of this book. One is the broad sweep of the author's inquiry into the history of three concepts that are fundamental to the Great Goddess. She follows a thread of continuity that has never been so crisply delineated. The result is kind of a conceptual "adventure story" told in flashbacks: we know what the mature conception is, as it is now common knowledge. Where it came from makes for very interesting reading. The second striking feature is the provocative, suggestive linking of this history to contemporary issues regarding gender and women." -- Thomas B. Coburn

"The author provides a thorough discussion of the main concepts relating to the feminine principle in the intellectual, literary traditions of Hinduism. She shows that goddess worship is not a marginal expression but is central to even the most orthodox elements of Hinduism. She also brings together much far-flung scholarship from India, Europe, and the United States without duplicating any of it." -- Kathleen M. Erndl

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