



The Origin and Development of Vaisnavism: Vaisnavism from 200 BC to AD 500

By Suvira Jaiswal

Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 2015. Hardcover. Condition: New. Reprinted. 306pp. This edition is revised and enlarged to update the material and impart more depth to authors strikingly original interpretations, especially those relating to Narayana and Vasudeva-Krsna. It questions the general assumption that the sentiment of personal devotion of bhakti formed a basic component of pre-Aryan aboriginal cults from which it was borrowed by later sectarian religions. The author argues that Religious consciousness being an ideological reflex of mans real life process its structure also undergoes changes in conformity with the changing social relations. The adoption of the principle of ahimsa and of vegetarianism in Vaisnavism is explained in its social context. It is shown how Puranic Vaisnavism evolved in the process of revitalizing brahmanism through assimilating a number of orthodox, non-conformist and tribal elements; the absorption of Mother-goddess Sri-Laksmi in the Vaisnava pantheon is a case in point. The revised edition throws fresh light on the Narsimha incarnation of Visnu and the remodelling of some Vaisnava rituals. Finally, it highlights the social role of this religion and indicates the extent of its influence in post-Maurya and Gupta times.



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