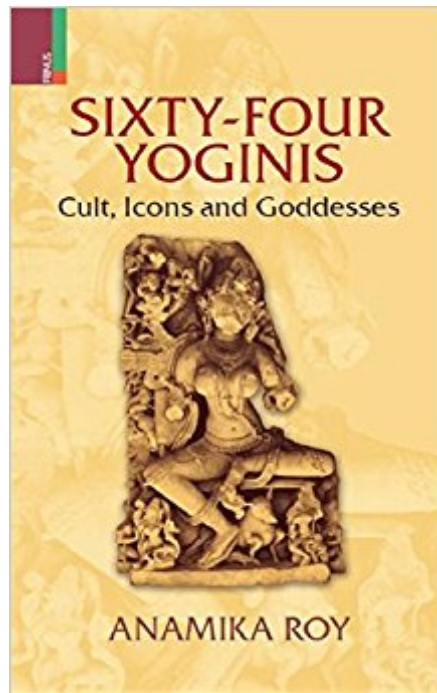




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Sixty-Four Yoginis: Cult, Icons, And Goddesses



Synopsis

The Sixty-Four Yoginis are the lesser known forms of the Goddess Shakti in art and religion. Variouslly portrayed as malevolent goddesses, deities of tantric rituals, and yoginis of flesh and blood, they are seen as the sixty-four forms of the goddess and the sixty four embraces of Shiva and Shakti. Abandoned temples, stretching from Banda in Uttar Pradesh to Bolangir in Odisha, were once witness to the evolution of the mysterious cult of these goddesses. Shrouded in secrecy, knowledge about them is, till date, closely guarded by the tantric Acaryas. Sixty-Four Yoginis: Cult, Icons and Goddesses deciphers the complex forms of the Yoginis by engaging with the subject historically, aesthetically, theologically and anthropologically; identifies the Yoginis of the temple, of the Puranas, of the tantric texts, of folklore and finally of the Yogini Kaula; and examines the different layers of the complex phenomena based on rigorous fieldwork in the hitherto untraversed terrains where the Yoginis have their abode. The book offers valuable insights for researchers in the fields of religion, myth, culture, history and gender studies. The text of this handsomely produced volume is supplemented with a rich collection of photographs.

Book Information

Hardcover: 380 pages

Publisher: Primus Books; 2015 edition (November 10, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 9384082120

ISBN-13: 978-9384082123

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 1 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Anamika Roy is Associate Professor at the Department of Ancient History, Culture and Archaeology, University of Allahabad. Her interest in art and religious history shaped the contours of the present work. Her publications include Amaravati Stupa: A Critical Comparison of Epigraphic, Architectural and Sculptural Evidence and Brahmi Inscriptions of Northern India, and the co-edited volume Perspectives on Comparative Religion.

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