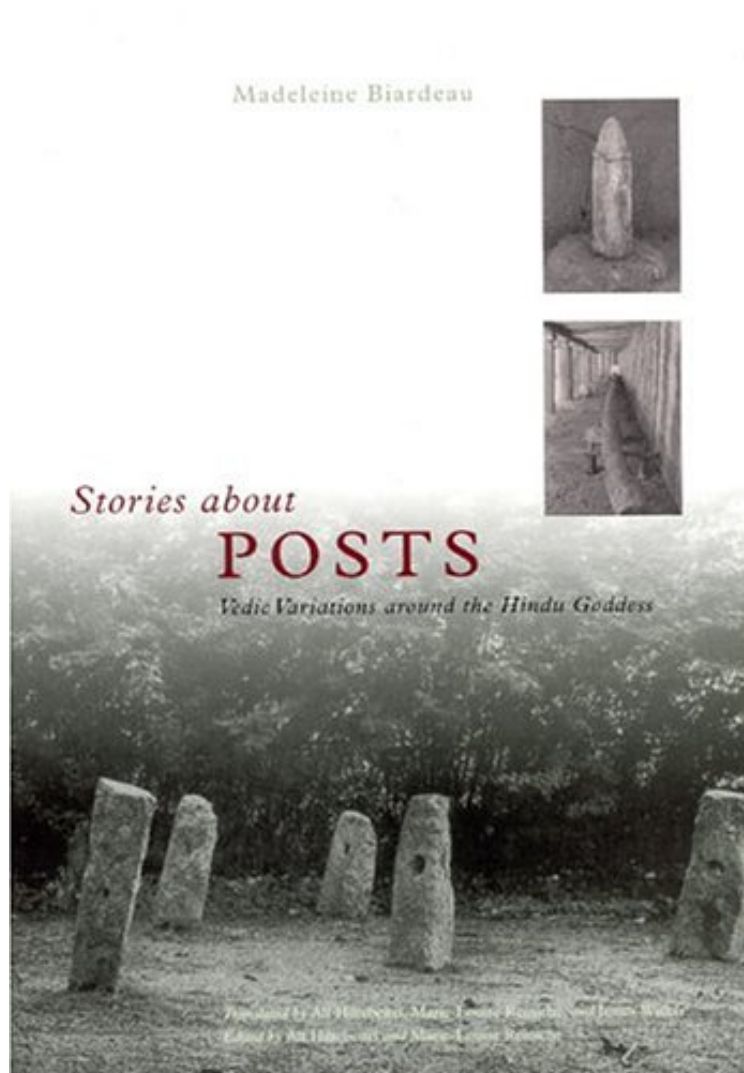


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Stories about Posts: Vedic Variations around the Hindu Goddess

Madeleine Biardeau

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Madeleine Biardeau : Stories about Posts: Vedic Variations around the Hindu Goddess before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stories about Posts: Vedic Variations around the Hindu Goddess:

Stories about Posts is the magnum opus of Madeleine Biardeau, one of the most influential Indologists of the twentieth century. Nearly twenty years in the making, it connects her varied studies on the Sanskrit epics, the Hindu Goddess, Vedic sacrifice, rural India, and the interpretation of Hinduism. After exploring several ethnographic facts that have

escaped the notice of previous observers, Biardeau presents a variety of hunches, hypotheses, and insights building up to the provocative thesis of *Stories about Posts*: that the variations found in the contemporary cult of the Goddess in both her royal and rural village aspects reveal untraced regional histories of the Vedic sacrificial post, the *yupa*. Biardeau's work opens up new ways of thinking about Vedic sacrificial themes and elements as they recur in post-Vedic texts and iconographies. It also connects wayside stones in Maharashtra named after the buffalo to stones, posts, and people named after a so-called Buffalo King in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamilnadu. A work of magnificent scholarship and fieldwork, *Stories about Posts*, in ways no previous work has attempted, much less accomplished, unravels much of the mystery surrounding contemporary Hindu ritual by connecting it to the ancient Sanskrit epics. As such, it will fascinate students of Indology, religious studies, and anthropology for years to come.

"Biardeau should need no introduction for anglophone scholars of Indian religion. Yet this volume serves as just such a showcase. . . . What is on display in this volume is Biardeau's long-standing commitment to linking different aspects of the Indic universe: Sanskrit, Vedic studies, South Indian languages and ritual, ethnography. . . . It is no wonder that this is the volume that she felt best represented her interests and therefore wanted translated for a wider audience."