PREFACE TO THE 1997 PRINTING

Looking back to my first thoughts about writing a book on Hindu goddesses, I am somewhat amused (but also pleased) that I had the courage to undertake such a daunting task. Ten years ago the project seemed much more feasible than it would today. In the past ten years there have been several excellent, lengthy, detailed studies of individual Hindu goddesses who were not even mentioned in my book, as well as many fine studies of goddesses who were included. New scholarship has indicated the immense number of Hindu goddesses and has greatly enriched our knowledge of prominent ones. Today, writing a comprehensive book on Hindu goddesses would be a much more ambitious undertaking; the result would be much longer and more detailed—and, I suppose, less accessible to the general public.

The history of this book, however, pleases me. It was successful in the way I had hoped it would be. In the past decade, many fine scholars have turned their attention to Hindu goddesses. In many cases, this book was influential in attracting them to the field. It continues to serve as a useful introduction to a large and fascinating area—the divine feminine as expressed in the Hindu tradition—and I hope it will continue to inspire students to take up its subject.

David Kinsley

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