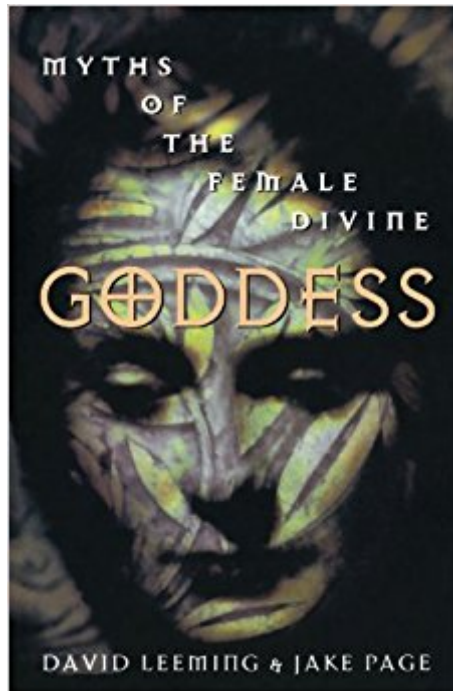




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Goddess: Myths Of The Female Divine (Oxford Paperbacks)



Synopsis

An old woman lives still among the broken slopes of the mountains in the land of the Tarahumara Indians. No one knows exactly where. She is sometimes seen standing along the highway near El Paso, hauling wood near Oaxaca, or even hitching a ride on a semi rig. She is the bone woman, the gatherer, La Loba. She collects bones, especially those of wolves. When she has collected enough bones to make a whole wolf, she sings over the skeleton, and it begins to grow flesh and fur. She sings some more and the wolf becomes strong; then it breathes. La Loba keeps singing and soon the wolf leaps up and runs off while the desert world trembles. And when a ray of the sun, or the moon, strikes it at just the right time and place, it turns into a woman, a laughing woman, who you may see running toward the horizon. In La Loba's cycle of death and rebirth and her metamorphosis from crone to life-giving mother to laughing maiden, we catch just one glimpse of the timeless allure and mystery of the Goddess. From the fertile earth mothers of the ancient world to the modern revival of interest in Wicca, or witchcraft, images and tales of the Female Divine have flourished and waned, intimidated, comforted, and inspired women and men from time immemorial. In *Goddess*, authors David Leeming and Jake Page gather some 75 of the most potent and meaningful of these tales in an extraordinarily rich and readable introduction to this divine figure as she has emerged from prehistory to the present. Told as a biography, we follow Goddess from her first Ice Age appearances as the all-encompassing, all-giving, and all-taking Earth, to her re-emergence as a powerful force in the myths of modern religion, psychology, and science. In tales of the Changing Woman of the Navajos and of Hera, Pandora, Eve, and Lilith, we see her traduced and sublimated by rising, and then, dominant, patriarchal cultures and civilizations, but never totally suppressed. In familiar and unfamiliar myths, Goddess comes alive, pulsing with her own energy, irrepressible behind her many cultural masks. She can be the Universe itself, the source of all being, the holy Virgin, the Earth-Mother nurturer, the madly hysterical destroyer, the femme fatale, or the consort or mother of God. She is presented here not as myth, but as a true archetype, a potential being who exists in all of us, a force who long preceded her male counterpart as an appropriate metaphor for the Great Mystery of existence. As compelling as any novel, *Goddess* is also a journey into the human heart. Observing Goddess over the centuries--worshipped, belittled, denied, rediscovered--we gain new insight into the changing role of women, our continuing development as a species, and our deepest concerns about ourselves, our world, and the human destiny.

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Customer Reviews

Popular and scholarly works on the prevalence of goddess figures and worship throughout history have exploded on the marketplace. These two works approach the existence of the worship of a female divine from different tacks. Both attempt to make comparisons among very different cultures. Biaggi's is an archaeological work, comparing the artifacts and tombs of Malta and the Orkneys and Shetlands. Because Malta is located in the Mediterranean and the Orkneys and Shetlands off the coast of Scotland, it would seem that any comparison would be an enormous leap of conjecture. But Biaggi leaves out the speculation, instead describing the artifacts, grave goods, extant buildings, and other items in great detail, leaving out the speculation. The work is copiously illustrated. Well written with solid scholarship, it is recommended for libraries interested in goddess scholarship and archaeology. Leeming and Page call their study a biography of the goddess. Deliberately, they do not enter into gender politics but trace the change in the perceptions of goddesses by telling stories from various cultures, including African, Indian, Native American, Greek, Celtic, Christian, and the modern Gaia hypothesis. The goddess moves from her beginnings as a powerful earth creatrix to being fertility goddess to being kidnapped and abused to being divinity disguised. The stories are told in an accessible style. This multicultural collection is recommended for libraries interested in stories on goddesses.

Gail Wood, SUNY Coll. of Technology, Alfred
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"Rarely is the generative principle that Goddess represents addressed as comprehensively and with such enjoyable results."--Lewis R. Binford, author of *Bones: Ancient Man and Modern Myths*

A good little book with summaries of many Goddesses of all different cultures. Summaries of archeological information of ancient civilizations who worshipped goddesses. Not extensive coverage but a good overview for people new to history of Goddesses & related cultures, just to get started on the concept.

A must read for those researching psychological roots.

Beautiful story's of the goddess

Great. Easy to understand myths

Had checked out from the local library on 5 occasions, so thought it was time to own a copy. Excellent condition.

Informative and easy to follow. Good reference.

great book

This is a great little book that consists of a sequence of stories about the Goddess figure throughout history. Leeming and Page provide sparse though cogent introductions, occasional pictures, and then transcripts of the various Goddess tales. We are able to witness the transformation of the Goddess myths over time in a way that mere text could not provide. One of the strengths of this book is its brevity, but that is also its chief deficit. Many of the tales are not properly identified, and there are no footnotes or notes of any kind. There is a brief selected bibliography and a short index. Perhaps a little more attention to cater to the needs of people with an academic interest would have made this a much stronger book, although as it stands it is well written, very interesting, and certainly informative. I'd recommend this book to anyone interested in the Goddess mythology, whether you are a beginning student or advanced scholar. Some of my own work has been in the area of early Christian history (see *Jesus Who?* and *Mary Who?* for my historical books on Jesus and Mary Magdalene) and I found new and useful information in Leeming and Page's little book.

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