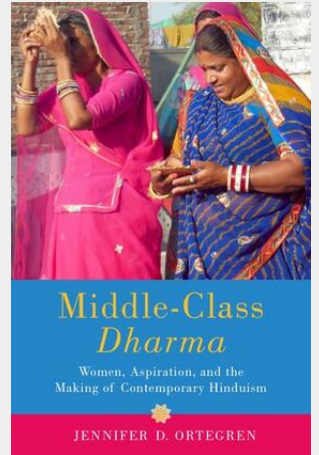


Ortegren

## Middle-Class Dharma

Women, Aspiration, and the Making of Contemporary Hinduism

Middle-Class Dharma is a contemporary ethnography of class mobility among Hindus in Udaipur, Rajasthan, India. Focusing on women in Pulan, an emerging middle-class neighborhood of Udaipur, Jennifer D. Ortegren argues that upward class mobility is not just a socio-economic process, but also a religious one. Central to Hindu women's upward class mobility is negotiating dharma, the moral and ethical groundings of Hindu worlds. As women experiment with middle-class consumer and lifestyle practices, they navigate tensions around what is possible and what is appropriate--that is, what is dharmic--as middle-class Hindu women. Ortegren shows how these women strategically align emerging middle-class desires with more traditional religious obligations in ways that enable them to generate new dharmic boundaries and religious selfhoods in the middle classes. Such transitions can be as joyful as they are difficult and disorienting. Middle-Class Dharma explores how contemporary Hindu women's everyday practices reimagine and reshape Hindu traditions. By developing dharma as an analytical category and class as a dharmic category, Ortegren pushes for expanding definitions of religion in academia, both within and beyond the study of Hinduism in South Asia.



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