



The Secret Garland: Antal's Tiruppavai and Nacciyar Tirumoli (AAR Religions in Translation)

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This book offers new translations of the Tiruppavai and Nacciyar Tirumoli, composed by the ninth-century Tamil mystic and poetess Kotai. Two of the most significant compositions by a female mystic, the Tiruppavai and Nacciyar Tirumoli give expression to her powerful experiences through the use of a vibrant and bold sensuality, in which Visnu is her awesome, mesmerizing, and sometimes cruel lover. Kotai's poetry is characterized by a richness of language in which words are imbued with polyvalence and even the most mundane experiences are infused with the spirit of the divine. Her Tiruppavai and Nacciyar Tirumoli are garlands of words, redolent with meanings waiting to be discovered. Today Kotai is revered as a goddess, and as a testament to the enduring relevance of her poetry, her Tiruppavai and Nacciyar Tirumoli continue to be celebrated in South Indian ritual, music, dance, and the visual arts.

This book aims to capture the lyricism, beauty, and power of Kotai's original works. In addition, detailed notes based on traditional commentaries, and discussions of the ritual and performative lives of the Tiruppavai and Nacciyar Tirumoli highlight the importance of this ninth-century poet and her two poems over the past one thousand years.

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