

Project Guidance | March 2020 by Tattva Press
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BEYOND THE BINDI

AN ANTHOLOGY EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES
OF BRITISH HINDU FEMINISM AND
WOMANHOOD



A project curated by
TATTVA
www.tattva.org.uk

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BACKGROUND

An anthology which will seek to contribute to the ongoing narrative around womanhood and feminism in modern Britain through the unique perspective of British Hindu Women.

Beyond the Bindi is a collaboration of authors capturing unvoiced and authentic perspectives through an anthology of female-centric personal narratives.

The basic definition of feminism is “*the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes*”. But what happens when you're living in a country with one predominant culture but your heritage comes from another? How does that effect the way you view yourself as a woman, the women around you, and the place of women in society? How does it affect your experience of being a woman or understanding of what feminism means?

There are also many negative, misunderstood and stereotypical views about Hindu culture, perpetuated by media and popular culture, and many of those that capture public attention are the ones involving women: arranged marriages, goddesses of fertility and death, subservience and docility, saris and bindis, Bollywood dancing queens, dowry. We seemed forced to seek solace in the feminist views espoused by the West, without understanding and appreciating the nuances of the Hindu cultural perspective.

So, what are the real stories and views of British women born into this heritage today? How do they challenge the stereotypes, connect with their Hindu background and deal with the day-to-day identity of being a woman in the 21st Century?

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AIMS

Beyond the Bindi will explore these questions through personal experiences of Hindu culture in the UK. Initiated by a talented and established founding team of authors, **Beyond The Bindi** has attracted over ten UK-based submissions from authors who are keen to share their accounts.

All the featured essays are independently authored. The subjects being explored are wide-ranging and deeply personal, encompassing relationships, sex and sexuality, leadership, social and cultural barriers to political activism, access to education, motherhood, and the physical and emotional strain of practices around menstruation and pregnancy. Not all the authors will necessarily identify as a 'British Hindu woman'; they will, however, provide a unique view on the female-centric experience from the perspective of Hindu philosophy, culture, practices and beliefs. Through essays, this anthology will celebrate the successes of marginalised and unheard sects of our British society curated by a diverse list of writers.

We seek stories of bravery, courage and inspiration, of struggles, non-conformism and achievement. Our goal is to curate a collection of narratives will celebrate Indic values whilst acknowledging the gender inequality in our society; ultimately we want this book to be a reminder that both men and women have a role to play as feminists, giving coming generations of women and girls a fairer shot in life.

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AUTHOR SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We are looking for:

- Primarily narrative, yet critically robust, essays (3,000 – 4,000 words)
- Additional, non-essay contributions: short pieces of poetry, comic strips or graphic design pieces which fit the theme.
- Real experiences
- Interesting interviews
- Novel perspectives
- Responses to how Hindu women have been depicted in the media
- Challenging stereotypes and views within our own community

Deadlines:

- Submit a 300 word proposal or pitch via the 'Submit' page on www.beyondthebindi.com

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GETTING INVOLVED

There are many other ways of getting involved in the project, including as a partner, ambassador and a sponsor for the project.

Please see www.beyondthebindi.com for further details.

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