

Rituals, Offerings and Festivals at Sacred Sites in Western Assam: Continuity and Change

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Abstract

This paper explores the evolving landscape of rituals, offerings and festivals associated with sacred sites in Western Assam, focusing on the dynamic interplay between continuity and change. Rooted in centuries-old religious traditions, these sacred practices have long shaped the spiritual and cultural identity of the region. Drawing from field observations, oral histories, and textual sources- including the Kalika Purana, Yogini Tantra, and local Chronicles- the study examines how traditional ritual practices like animal sacrifice, mantra recitation and seasonal festivals such as Ambubachi Mela and Durga Puja have persisted, adapted or diminished over time. It also considers the impact of modern influences such as state policies, religious reform movements, environmental concerns and tourism. The paper highlights how local communities negotiate between preserving sacred customs and responding to socio-religious transformations. In doing so, it provides critical insights into the resilience and flexibility of religious life in Western Assam's sacred geography.

Keywords

Folk Traditions, Religious Practices, Sacred Sites, Western Assam.