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## Bleeding in Kerala: An Embodied Research

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Crouching and with slow steps, I make it back to the bed. As I curl up and replace the hot water bottle on my lower stomach, all of my attention is riveted in this body, in this moment. As I give way to this meditative focus, the exhausting movement and irritability will soon calm into a stillness that makes my agonizing cramps seem less chaotic. I am horizontal, silent, and overwhelmingly steeped in an altered state of consciousness - the menstrual haze - one which descends every month like clockwork, like the moon consistently returning, like ordained ritual. I have spent many, many moons like this.

Alternatively, when the “symptoms” are better, I am drinking hot tea and popping pain medication, conserving every extra word and movement as I push to make it through my work day and not snap at someone or say something inappropriate. On those days I often crash once I get home - roaring at my dog’s imperfect behavior and sobbing as I try unsuccessfully to make a fire in the wood stove. I can feel in my bones the loneliness of not being cared for by someone

when bleeding, and the sacrilege of having to work on the first day or two.

When I bleed I am overcome by a powerful and innate spiritual state. What buried knowledge might be uncovered if the altered state of consciousness which can occur during menstruation were facilitated, even sacralized, rather than denigrated? My tears now released, I recognize this desperate longing I have often felt for menstrual rituals or practices which I have researched in other cultures and could serve to guide this liminal time.

I first encountered Metaformic Theory in 2000, when a *companera* in menstrual activism recommended I read *Blood, Bread and Roses: How Menstruation Created the World* by Judy Grahn. I had seen it before in local bookstores and was intrigued by it. This book riveted me as it offered a genuinely woman-centered cultural theory about menstruation and spoke to my questions of the altered menstrual state. Overwhelmed with the treasure of menstrual knowledge laid at my feet and unsure of how to engage with such a vast theory, I let Metaformic Theory simmer within me. Six years later I found out that Judy Grahn was teaching Metaformic Theory as well as leading a research trip to Kerala, India along with Dianne Jenett to continue their studies of the village Goddess rituals and traditions. My longing for menstrual knowledge still as insistent as ever, I was now ready to honor my body's intuitions and experiences as valid research questions.<sup>i</sup>

Metaformic Theory postulates that ancestral females recognized their menstrual synchrony with each other and the moon, and chose to segregate themselves at this time. They maintained their consciousness of this menstrual-lunar synchrony through creating metaforms. A metaform is “an act or form of instruction that makes a connection between menstruation and a mental principle.”<sup>ii</sup> These blood rituals and cultural forms also communicated their

consciousness to the ancestral males and the men in turn responded and related with their own evolving metaformic consciousness. This initiated an ever-evolving weaving of his- and herstories of blood rituals. These gave rise to binary understandings of power which continuously spark further elaborations of culture. Metaformic Consciousness remembers that the knowledge gained in the seclusion of menstrual rituals is pertinent, that in fact it helps humans orient themselves.

Metaformic Consciousness is embodied as well, meaning the foundational research is centrally grounded in embodied knowledge – that what we experience with our bodies, our bodies' needs, desires, and quirks is acknowledged as an accurate source of information. And so when I am bleeding and all of my instincts insist that I must not talk, I must lie quietly, avoid the public – I can utilize this as gathered data for my research – embodied research. My body becomes a research tool then, and its processes valued – even menstruation, that most loathed and devalued of humans' processes.

In 2006 I joined the research trip and traveled to the state of Kerala on the southwestern tip of India armed with Metaformic Theory as a framework with which I could conduct cross-cultural menstrual research. As I was preparing for this trip, my first to India, I also considered my own androcentric Hindu upbringing in a community of the devotees of an Indian guru here in the U.S.<sup>iii</sup> His teachings offered a gender neutral discourse on one's internal relationship to divinity and many of the traditional Hindu practices, rituals and taboos, especially those which were centered on the particularities of women's' bodies, energetic states, and experiences were excluded. My mother, for example, participated in all spiritual activities in the same way regardless of where she may have been in her menstrual cycle. As a young girl from the global

north I grew up struggling against the devaluation of women in patriarchal culture and I knew that divinity must include intimate knowledge of what life was like for me in a girl's body. Now I was searching for submerged bodies of knowledge that might help me see my female body reflected as an aspect of deity. And as a foreigner, I wanted to know what I would be able to experience bleeding on Mother India.

While visiting Kerala, my body was struck with the illuminating resonance of a deity who represents women's bodies' real experiences. I encountered a goddess whose menstruation is a continual religious act and priority of the temple which houses her.

### **Bleeding with the goddess**

We visited Kerala during a celebratory time which starts just after the harvest and before the monsoon season begins. The reddened land is understood to be Bhumi Devi, the earth mother, in her menstrual cycle.<sup>iv</sup> The goddess is worshiped by most communities in varied forms, beliefs, legends and iconography. Through the ancient honoring of her sacred body, menstruation and the goddess continue to be strongly interrelated.<sup>v</sup>

In central Kerala, we rented a traditional houseboat to travel the backwaters for a day. As we cruised through Bhumi Devi's flow, I myself began to menstruate. I did not inspect the boat's septic system but I imagined my menstrual flow mingled with hers. Effortlessly gliding over the waters in a secluded boat decorated in luxurious adornments, I felt a deep gratitude for the careful attention I was receiving. My feet and calves ached, and I would not have had the strength to walk much that day nor the desire to be out in public. I reflected on this nurturing seclusion which so many of my menstruating ancestors received and the public celebrations

which marked a girl's first menses, yet which have become less common in modern society.

In her research Judy Grahn demonstrated that cross-cultural taboos, or rules dictating what is sacred, are abundantly found in indigenous cultures. These taboos demand, among other things, that the menstruant be secluded as well as not touch the ground due to the powers embodied within her while menstruating. This separation has been enabled by such enduring inventions as veils, elevated platforms, chairs, shoes or by being carried by others. Thus Grahn shows how a prohibition becomes a source of invention. Taboos have influenced our culture in continually evolving variations throughout our history, and through these ways we have mediated our bodies' powers in relation to the earth's.

Boarding the boat we were adorned with garlands of sensuous, fragrant jasmine flowers, a common offering to the goddess in Kerala. As I awoke the next morning to an orange and red sunrise reflected in the waters, I saw a menstrual red world of earth and sky. The western duality-based divisions in my head between goddess, earth, my menstruating foremothers and myself began to blur.

Once I began bleeding my consciousness tunneled deep inside me as it usually does. My outer environment becomes muted and distant. The bridge to cross to the external world is excessively lengthy. Words come slowly in a weakened voice. My feet feel the ground and my arms the air differently. It is as though they are now longer extensions of my being which is located at such a profound depth within my body. Perhaps this is reflected in the way that women often become clumsy with their menses, seemingly less physically sensitive to their surroundings. The outer senses are biologically under-prioritized for the inner work to be done.

The concept of menstruation as a spiritual state is currently entering into Western popular

culture, as can even be seen in the work of the highly successful spiritual author Eckhart Tolle<sup>vi</sup> who broached the subject of menstruation in his writing. He asserts that women are potentially more advantaged in achieving enlightened states than men due to their heightened ability to be present in their bodies, particularly when menstruating.<sup>vii</sup> During this significant energetic charge women are more conscious by observing the changes taking place within their bodies while not succumbing to what he calls the “pain-body,” both personal and collective.

But bleeding in India did not open the spiritual secrets of menstrual wisdom for me. Visiting for such a short amount of time and with so much to do, I did not feel I could take three days off from the itinerary to seclude myself. Economics and modern ever-increasing time demands make it difficult to take time off while bleeding. This is true in India as well as in the United States.<sup>viii</sup>

In an effort to increase general awareness of menstruation, I usually inform others when I am bleeding. Whether someone asks me how I’m doing or it comes up in conversation, I consciously do not censor nor pathologize my menstrual state if it is relevant to me in the conversation or to my social interaction with that person. I had hoped that in Kerala I would be able to discuss menstruation with local Malayalis in hopes of gaining greater perspective on their beliefs. Though once I was there I found that merely a willingness to bring menstruation out of the closet was inadequate for respectful engagement when outside of my Western world. I lacked the knowledge of local menstrual taboos which could inform an appropriate way for me to discuss my menstruation. I was hesitant to tell people I was bleeding not knowing on what ground I stood. How would I know if I was speaking to an individual who might scorn me for polluting him or alternately someone who might thank me for considerately informing him so

that he could adjust his own practices? While waiting outside of the temple at Chengannur could I have mentioned to the men resting near me that I could not enter the temple because it was my menstrual time?

In the U.S. pollution implies dirty, ruined and undesirable - a fall from grace. In Kerala as well, in some communities, though not all, a menstruating woman is considered polluted and to be avoided, while in others she may be considered sacred. Even the terms ‘polluted’ and ‘avoidance’ can have very different meanings in a Kerala context than in an American context. I have looked to the Keralan scholar Savithri de Turreil for deeper explanation of the varied taboos found in the Kerala menarche rituals. Her doctoral dissertation on female-centered rituals in the Nayar context calls attention to the overlooked importance of female auspiciousness evident in menstrual rituals.<sup>ix</sup> She argues, “the whole thrust and texture of menarchal ritual demonstrate that menstrual taboos make sense only as a mechanism for the protection of both the sacred female and non-sacred categories of persons.”<sup>x</sup> In her conclusion de Turreil states, “A connection is made between the menarchal female and concepts of divinity as female. Among Nayars and other groups in Kerala, menarche ritual contains statements which demonstrate this connection.”<sup>xi</sup>

Indigenous, or Dravidian, pre-patriarchal goddess worship survives under layers of sanskritization, a religious influence upon popular religion by upper caste Brahmanic tradition.<sup>xii</sup> Tamil scholar, George L. Hart, states that “Pollution itself, which is one of the most important factors in the working of sanskritization, appears to be a development of the ancient Dravidians’ notion of being infected with immanent sacred power.”<sup>xiii</sup> The dominant religious doctrine that details which substances have strong polluting abilities is related to an ancient understanding of

those substances' power.

The development of the current practice of menstrual separation from temple activity, which is common throughout India, seems to be rooted in the Dravidian belief in the sacred powers of menstruation. In her essay "Menstruating Women/Menstruating Goddesses," Dr. Dianne Jenett states "Tantric rituals associated with *Shakta* (goddess) practice include worship of the female menstrual flow, normally considered an extremely polluting substance by mainstream Sanskrit Hinduism."<sup>xiv</sup> Dr. Jenett's research documents a connection between divinity and menstruation dating back to 100 CE and its continuance within goddess worship today.

The Chengannur Bhagavati temple which I was visiting on that day was significant to my research in that it is one of the temples in which the Dravidian roots are still quite evident. Although I myself could not enter while menstruating, the goddess housed there, which some communities name as Bhuvaneswari<sup>xv</sup>, menstruates herself.<sup>xvi</sup> According to Vaidyanathan in *Temples and Legends of Kerala* there are several stories about powerful goddesses at Chengannur which address why she gets the power of menstruation.<sup>xvii</sup> The *yoni mandala* of the goddess Sati is said to have fallen here, which imbues this place with her *shakti* energy. And the image of the goddess Bhagavati housed inside the temple is said to be the great Kannaki who, after burning the city of Madurai, came here to do penance under a tree and was taken to heaven.<sup>xviii</sup> Also, it is a common belief in Kerala that while traveling through the area the goddess in her aspect as Parvati had her menses here and was then duly immersed in a ritual bath with attendant ceremonies, which is now the location of the temple bathing place.<sup>xix</sup>

The goddess has menstrual practices she must observe just as my ancestors had their menstrual practices. Extensive cross-cultural research on traditional menstrual customs has

illustrated the commonality of a few fundamental practices including separation, seclusion and proscriptions relating to water.<sup>xx</sup> At Chengannur, once it is discovered that the goddess has stained her petticoat (the installed idol in a temple is often dressed with skirts and cloth), she is secluded in a ritual chamber with attendants for three days.<sup>xxi</sup> During this time she is fed differently than usual and *pujas*<sup>xxii</sup> are conducted in another secluded room where a small idol is installed. And just as my ancestors ritually bathed after their menstruation and were welcomed back into the community, on the fourth day the goddess is ceremoniously carried down to the Pampa River for a purifying ritual immersion bath.<sup>xxiii</sup> It is auspicious for devotees to witness this ritual. Her spiritual state has been so purified during her menses that she must be given food to ground her.<sup>xxiv</sup> Afterwards she resumes her usual position in the temple. Dr. Savithri de Turreil states, “It is remarkable that there is nowhere to be detected any hint of “bad” charisma or negative connotations surrounding the goddess’s menses . . . The menstruating goddess is perceived, by all, to be more auspicious, more powerful than when her cycle is not operating.”<sup>xxv</sup>

The celebration of the earth goddess Bhumi Devi’s menstruation was a three day holiday throughout Kerala until a hundred years ago. During this goddess’s menses an important agricultural ritual, *urruval*, occurred in which all work was stopped for three days so that she could rest before beginning the next agricultural year.<sup>xxvi</sup> After the goddess’s menses comes, according to Jenett, is a “time of powerful creative potential.”<sup>xxvii</sup> At Chengannur, women are also advised that it is auspicious to offer special prayers on their own third day of menses in a ritual called *spondidi*.<sup>xxviii</sup> Due to the continued importance of the goddess’s menses to locals, the dates of the goddess’s menstruation is printed in the local newspaper. When we visited her just after our trip through the backwaters, it was the third day of her cycle.

The goddess and I were bleeding together, yet she was secluded in her chamber with her attendants and I was excluded from entering the temple. Wandering around the outside, I pondered the context for our present estrangement. The old goddess temples in Kerala were built in the original *kaavus* which are sacred groves of trees.<sup>xxxix</sup> Opposite the entrance to the Chengannur temple is a solitary old tree which is said to bleed as well. Bricked in on all sides of her roots, the tree hosts a single *naga* (snake) statue at her base and a hive of red ants flowing in and out of the cracks in the white-washed brick wall. Within *kaavus*, certain trees have particular uses or ritual meanings, some of which are associated with goddesses and offerings of blood.<sup>xxx</sup> Before the Brahmanical establishment of temples and their accompanying exclusionary practices, would this tree or I have been found within the bleeding goddess's inner circle?

There is another story of an excluded woman who stands before this tree. The Kurava are an indigenous agricultural tribe from the hills. Every year at the annual bathing festival of the goddess, Kuravas bring an almost life-sized statue of a woman called Kurati.<sup>xxxi</sup> She holds an agricultural sickle in one hand and at her feet rests a red box which is said to house the peoples' origin story written in red on a palm leaf.<sup>xxxii</sup> Temples have been accessible to non-Brahmins only since 1936 when the Temple Entry Proclamation was passed.<sup>xxxiii</sup> The Kuravas historically were denied entry into this temple but they do continue to lead the procession to the river.<sup>xxxiv</sup> The statue of Kurati however remains in front of the bleeding tree as the procession moves on.

What were Kurati and I doing there alone, outside of the temple with the tree and the *naga*? As possessors of *shakti* we seemed bereft of our context. Trees belong in forests, *nagas* are generally found with snake families in their *kaavus* and it is now widely documented that menstruating women synchronize together.<sup>xxxv</sup> If *shakti*, or *ananku*, possessed by goddesses and

women are equivalent at this time, as Jenett explains in “Menstruating Women/Menstruating Goddesses,”<sup>xxxvi</sup> then as a menstruant where was my spiritual community?

### **Bleeding Alone**

After my estrangement from the goddess in the Chengannur temple, I returned to my hotel room and considered my own conflicting relationship with my blood. Since menarche, I have struggled with painful, sometimes excruciating menstrual cramps. For all of my years of holistic menstrual-related research, I had not been able to find or heal the source of my pain. Just before leaving for the trip I had begrudgingly scheduled myself for a laparoscopy to determine if I had a menstrual disorder as the pain had recently become unbearable. In this surgery, the surgeon slices a hole near the belly button and inserts a miniature light and camera into one’s reproductive area to hopefully project onto a TV screen any visible abnormalities.

In search of a less crude and more holistic approach, I sought out a doctor of classical ayurveda while in Kerala. At an ayurveda hospital, I was fortunate to consult with Medical Superintendant Dr. B.<sup>xxxvii</sup> In contrast to western medicine, ayurveda seeks to heal the three elements of body, mind and spirit which together create an individual.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Health concerns, including menstrual, are perceived as the development of a blockage in naturally healthy functioning. According to ayurvedic doctor John Douillard,

There is a general consensus among Ayurvedic physicians . . . as to why the excessive amount of female disorders plague the West and not the East, and it has much to do with honoring the cycle itself . . . Ignoring this cycle is often at the root of the premenstrual syndrome. If there is some desire to rest during menstruation and this is not provided, then symptoms of some sort are sure to come.”<sup>xxxix</sup>

From his Nayar community in Kerala, Dr. B had inherited a rich ayurvedic family

tradition. In our consultation he specified the traditional practices I should follow while menstruating to properly harmonize with my menstrual cycle so that I might best receive its healing powers. Some of the practices are not for a medical purpose obvious to westerners but rather for energetic or vibrational effects. For example he told me that while menstruating I should not wear things of beauty including jewelry but rather should dress simply. Traditionally women would sleep on beds made of natural materials such as hay. They would only drink and eat from earthen pots and would eat very lightly. And menstruating women did not cook at all. One of few acknowledged female experts on ayurveda in the west, Maya Tiwari also advises menstruating women to eat lightly, abstain from cooking as well as bathing and reduce all other activities to as little as possible.<sup>xi</sup>

Dr. B specified the importance that menstruation be a time of rest for women. He explained that traditional Vedic practice encourages others in the extended family to support women during menstruation and assist with the workload by caring for and feeding the families.<sup>xli</sup> Menstruation is traditionally a time of rest or light duty for women.

In Dr. B's matriarchal *taravad* (family unit) he explained that the women observed menstrual seclusion practices until ten or fifteen years ago when his mother began to cook during her menses. Modernization and changes in lifestyle are exerting their toll on families' practices. Recently Dr. B's uncle, the *karnavar*, ceased to continue the family's traditional worship rituals. As isolated nuclear families become more common in Kerala, it is not possible to continue practices which were incorporated into the extended family's lifestyle. Dr. B bemoaned the loss of the health benefits seated within these ancient practices.

As an ancient healing practice which seeks to harmonize body, mind and spirit, I

wondered if classical ayurveda may be able to help translate the previous physical, mental and spiritual aims of menstrual seclusion and its ritual practices. While feminism has often perceived restrictive menstrual practices as a patriarchal subjugation of women, Dr. B countered that some of these practices may originate from ancestral knowledge about the female body's needs.

## **Conclusion**

“Menstrual blood is sacred and powerful in Kerala and was avoided because of its potency,” Jenett has thoroughly documented.<sup>xliii</sup> I have shown that blood through proscribed rituals is considered spiritually powerful, either polluting or creative or both. The goddess bled in the temple but I, physically embodying the *shakti* of the menstrual blood, could not enter the temple.

Daily I asked myself, what is the container then for the menstruant whose spiritual state is considered too potent to seek refuge in a sacred house nor to bless it with her presence? The altered, spiritual state which I experience each month in relation to the rituals associated with menstruation in Kerala has led me to believe that women have a hidden heritage of sacred menstrual rituals. As previously mentioned, temples were built upon the pre-existing sacred places known as *kaavus*. Could menstruants have gathered in the *kaavus* in which *nagas*, an animal synonymous with menstruation in many cultures<sup>xliiii</sup>, are propitiated? And do the legacies of ayurvedic teachings and the bleeding goddess of Chengannur originate from indigenous menstrual practices?

These are historical questions but they arise from my own embodied knowing and yearning to learn from my foremothers how to be in balance with my own *shakti*. For over ten

years now I have done all I could to call in sick, refuse work and isolate myself as much as possible on my first days of bleeding. In this way I am able to research the altered state that menstruation brings, always marveling about what essential knowledge could be uncovered if women were supported to explore this state rather than hide from, avoid and drug it.

In Kerala I received a priceless gift. I experienced a culture which continues to honor and share their menstrual rituals which enabled me as a visitor to learn so much, and even more so to be inspired and healed. Kerala is currently on the forefront of westernization, and while many menstrual rituals have been discarded, I am indebted to the commitment which this culture has maintained to their traditional knowledge despite the costs and outside pressures.

Where do menstruants locate ourselves today in order to harness and honor our inner spiritual power for effective healing of ourselves and our communities? Is it nurturing or impairing our *shakti* to each bleed alone in our nuclear family households while pushing to make it through the work day? Where will I choose to bleed? How will I choose to bleed? The genius of our Metaformic Consciousness offers an infinitely creative range of possibilities.

- i At that time I enrolled in the Women's Spirituality M.A. program (now located at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology) where Metaformic Theory is taught and the trip was offered.
- ii Judy Grahn, *Blood, Bread and Roses: How Menstruation Created the World*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 20.
- iii The modern importation of Hindu teachers and ideas to the West has been called a trend of universalization contributing to Global Hinduism. - Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism, South Asian ed.* (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 273.
- iv Dianne E. Jenett, 'Menstruating Women/Menstruating Goddesses: Sites of Sacred Power in South India,' in *Menstruation: A Cultural History*, ed. Andrew Shail and Gillian Howie (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 180.
- v See the work of Grahn, de Turreil and Caldwell.
- vi Eckhart Tolle's book, *The Power of Now*, was a #1 New York Times bestseller and has been translated into over 30 languages.
- vii Eckhart Tolle, *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment* (Vancouver: Namaste Publishing, 1999), 164-171.
- viii Jenett identifies the isolation of women within nuclear families and secular demands based on a solar calendar with the decline in practice of traditional menarche rituals.
- ix See Frederique Apffel-Marglin for her original work collapsing and expanding the two anthropological dichotomies of auspicious/inauspicious and pure/impure.
- x de Turreil p.96
- xi de Turreil p.254
- xii Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism*, 18.
- xiii George L. Hart, 'Ancient Tamil Literature,' in *Essays on South India*, ed. Burton Stein and Society for South India Studies (Honolulu: Hawaii UP, 1975), 59 quoted in Jenett, 'Menstruating Women/Menstruating Goddesses.'
- xiv Jenett, 180.
- xv Bhuvaneswari is the fourth of the ten Mahavidya goddesses.
- xvi K.R. Vaidyanathan, *Temples and Legends of Kerala*, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vi, n.d.), 45.
- xvii *Ibid.*, 45-49.
- xviii Vaidyanathan, 49.
- xix Savithri Shanker de Turreil, "Nayars in a South Indian Matrix: A Study Based on Female-centred Ritual" (PhD diss., Concordia University, 1995), 131.
- xx Grahn, *Blood, Bread and Roses*.
- xxi *Ibid.* 46-47.
- xxii A puja is a ritual done to pray or show respect.

- xxiii V. Meena, *Temples of South India: A Pilgrim's Guide*, (Kanniyakumari: Hari Kumari Arts, n.d.), 55.
- xxiv Judy Grahn, personal communication, March 8, 2006.
- xxv de Turreil, 136-137.
- xxvi Ibid., 139-140.
- xxvii Jenett, 'Menstruating Women/Menstruating Goddesses,' 182.
- xxviii Judy Grahn, "Are Goddesses Metaformic Constructs?: An Application of Metaformic Theory to Goddess Celebrations and Rituals in Kerala, India" (PhD diss., California Institute of Integral Studies, 1999), 5.
- xxix Jenett, 'Menstruating Women/Menstruating Goddesses,' 43; Yasushi Uchimayada, "The Grove is our Temple.' Contested Representations of Kaavu in Kerala, South India,' in *The Social Life of Trees: Anthropological Perspectives on Tree Symbolism*, ed. Laura Rival (Oxford: Berg, 1998), 193.
- xxx Anthropologist Uchiyamada groups the tetti, pana and chembakam species as goddess/blood trees related to their red colors. They are associated with Yakshis, Bhadrakali and Durga who themselves are all associated with offerings of blood. Uchimayada, 'The Grove,' 194.
- xxxi Judy Grahn, personal communication.
- xxxii Ibid.
- xxxiii Robin Jeffrey, *Politics, Women and Well-Being: How Kerala Became 'A Model.'* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 108.
- xxxiv Judy Grahn, personal communication.
- xxxv Martha K. McClintock, 'Menstrual Synchrony and Suppression,' *Nature* 220, no. 5282 (January 1971); Maya Tiwari, *The Path of Practice: A Woman's Book of Healing with Food, Breath, and Sound*, (NY: Ballantine, 2000), 96-98; Grahn, *Blood, Bread and Roses*, 13-15; Chris Knight, *Blood Relations: Menstruation, and the Origins of Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 213.
- xxxvi Jenett, 'Menstruating Women/Menstruating Goddesses,' 177.
- xxxvii Name has been changed for privacy.
- xxxviii Dr. B, personal communication, March 7, 2006.
- xxxix John Douillard, 'Ayurvedic Specific Condition Review: Premenstrual Syndrome,' *Ayurvedic Insight*, May 8, 2002, <http://www.banyanbotanicals.com/nl/205/html#pms>.
- xl Tiwari, *The Path of Practice*, 100.
- xli Ibid., 104.; Douillard, 'Ayurvedic Specific Condition Review.'
- xlii Jenett, 'Menstruating Women/Menstruating Goddesses,' 179.

xliii Grahn, Blood, Bread and Roses.

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