

Contents

List of Figures	ix
Preface	xi
Acknowledgments	xiii
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	xvii
Introduction—A Major Flood Disaster	1
1 An Outline of the diverse Aspects of the Study	7
1.1 <i>Daivy Āpadā</i> —Reflections on Disaster	7
1.1.1 Scope of the Study	13
1.1.2 Structure	16
1.2 Theoretical Framework	18
1.2.1 A Political Ecology Approach	21
1.2.2 Actor-Network Theory, Water and Disaster	23
1.2.3 The Agency of Divinity	26
1.3 ANT in Practice—The Research and an Account of the Different Actors	29
2 The Flood History—Narratives about Floods and the Genesis of a Goddess	37
2.1 A Goddess Born from Floods	39
2.2 The <i>Dhunār</i> , the River People	52
2.3 Contested and Transitory History—Brahmin versus Dalit Narratives	63
2.3.1 On the Question of Mobility—How Mobile are the Gods?.....	65
2.3.2 The 1894 Flood of the Brahmins	72
2.3.3 Detached from Floods—the Brahmin Account of the Goddess's Emergence.....	76
2.3.4 Abolishment of the Sacrifice Practice	80
2.3.5 The Episode of Śrī Naurtu Lal—did the Goddess cross the River at all?	86
2.3.6 Village Disparities and Floods, Summary and Conclusion	93

Contents

2.4	How a Flood History entered the Public Sphere and permeated a Dam Conflict	96
2.4.1	Newspaper Narratives and Expert Opinions— A <i>Śilā</i> (Rock) versus Floods	102
2.4.2	When Imaginations and Narratives about the Place went to Court	113
2.4.3	Past Floods in Public and Institutional Contestation, Summary and Conclusion	116
3	From Rock to <i>Bhūmi</i> to <i>Dhārā</i>— The Protest against the Goddess’s Removal	119
3.1	<i>Aviral Dhārā</i> , Going with the Flow	130
3.2	River Flows and the Right—the most prominent Hindu National Campaigners	138
3.3	Free Flow and Free Floods—Deluges as an Aspect of Flow ..	149
3.4	A Flood Vision for the Ganges and the Scientificality of Spiritual Concerns.....	151
3.5	The Temple Preservers’ Perspective: Summary and Conclusion	157
4	The Flood of 2012: Transitions of a Waterscape—Floods as Agents of Change	159
4.1	Water as a Weapon and the Fundamental Structural Deficiencies of HPPs	160
4.2	The Fabricated Floods	167
4.2.1	The Flood Waves—and suddenly there is a Lake	169
4.2.2	“Denying the Right of Worship” and the Absence of Transcendence	172
4.2.3	Gates wide shut—The Arbitrariness of the Company	176
4.2.4	Altered Relationships of Deity and Community to Floods in 2012, Conclusion	182
5	The Flood of 2013	187
5.1	Stalemate—Before the Flood	188
5.1.1	Śubh Muhūrt—the Long Wait for the Auspicious Moment	188
5.1.2	Old Flood in a New Guise, the Resurgence of Flood Memories one Year Later	190

5.2	Dhārī Devī's Wrath and the Kedarnath Disaster— How Local is a Local Narrative?	199
5.2.1	Disaster and the Media	201
5.2.2	The Narrative of Divine Intervention— a Qualitative Assessment	204
5.2.3	The Mythological Ornamentation	209
5.2.4	A Simulation of the Local	211
5.2.5	A King, Kedarnath and Dhārī Devī— Invented Historicity and Geomantic Axes.....	225
5.2.6	When the Balance is Lost, Comes the Flood	228
5.2.7	The Communal Effervescence—When a Disaster Myth turns Fundamentalist	234
5.2.8	The Flood of 2013, Summary and Conclusion	243
6	The Narrative of the Goddess— Disaster Research and concluding Thoughts	247
6.1	Epilogue	251
	References	255
	Primary Sources	255
	Secondary Sources	269

