



SARIS ON SCOOTERS

How Microcredit Is Changing Village India

SHEILA MCLEOD ARNOPOULOS



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by Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos

Renowned author and journalist Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos uses her talent for investigative reporting to take us deep into the poorest villages in India. Yet, far from being passive victims of their circumstances, the women who live there have joined forces and are making astute use of microcredit to break the cycle of poverty.

Microcredit was made famous by Bangladeshi economist Muhammad Yunus and consists of very small loans made primarily to women for the production of essential commodities or to start small businesses. Based on a number of trips to India between 2001 and 2008, Arnopoulos shows her sense of solidarity and desire for authenticity by sharing the daily life of these villagers. This first-person account of her extensive travels focuses primarily on these women's inspiring success stories. After witnessing many such situations first-hand, she believes these villages have a potential strength equal to that of the modern, high-tech cities in India.

Sheila McLeod Arnopoulos is the author of a novel and two other non-fiction books, shared a Governor General's Literary Award for *The English Fact in Quebec*, and has earned several journalism prizes for exposés about marginalized women and minorities. A former journalism professor, she spent 21 months in India meeting grassroots women using microcredit to launch businesses and achieve social change. She lives in Montreal.