

# Performers and Their Arts

## Performers and their Arts

Folk, Popular and Classical Genres  
in a Changing India



Edited by  
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出版者:London ; New York : Routledge ; New Delhi

出版时间:2006

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9780415401135

Are the performing arts, both elaborate and simple forms, still alive in India today? Is it still a land of musicians and magicians, of singing actors and dancers, and of lives of gods and heroes as belonging to one's own social world? And if it is, are the performers maintaining these continuities from the past? Can older traditions survive, even perhaps continue to develop into the future? Or, have altogether new things overtaken the performing life of the people? These are the questions that this book seeks to answer. Its focus is on the performers as people, and their arts, rather than on their range of genres. No book can do justice to the extraordinary variety that exists in this country, but with detailed examples from one state - Andhra Pradesh - it offers a rounded perspective on this very remarkable range. Part one of the book examines Performance and Caste, focusing on hereditary occupations. Part two takes the discussion into a wider field, looking at the performers and their talent outside their caste. Part three concludes the book with examples of classical dance forms and shows how these are integral to the performing arts as a whole. The contributors conclude that the subcontinental cultural scale, backed by values that accommodate diversity, has allowed India to build a performing memory bank of great depth and range, and their continued flourishing in fast-changing contexts is no small matter.

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