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## **Banana Republics and V.I. Degrees: Rethinking Indian Folklore in a Postcolonial World**

### **Abstract**

In the history of scholarship on folklore in India, little attention has been directed towards the relationship between folklore and social change. This paper reviews British-based folklore studies in India, identifying a paradigm of self-contained peasant authenticity that viewed references to changing social realities as adulterations that must be edited out. It then contrasts such suppressions of change with the conscious revamping of folklore materials to disseminate nationalist, Marxist, feminist, and development ideologies. Next, it turns to contemporary examples of creative change in folklore, with a focus on urban joke cycles that are largely ignored by folklorists. Finally, it ends with suggestions for theoretical reorientations breaking down the rigid distinction between “us” as metropolitan analysts, and “them” as the folk enmeshed in tradition.

**Key words:** India — history of folklore — social change — colonialism — joke cycles — positioned subjects

IN their introduction to the landmark volume, *Another Harmony: New Essays on the Folklore of India* (1986), Stuart BLACKBURN and A. K. RAMANUJAN surveyed the history of folklore studies in India and suggested avenues for future research. Among the promising areas for research they listed was folklore's relation to social change. They wrote, "If . . . folklore must be studied in all its forms, we should not neglect the most contemporary. How does it respond to the urbanization, mechanization, and cash economy that are reshaping Indian society (or at least large segments of it?)" (27). Scanning the available literature on folklore in India, one finds sparse evidence to answer their question. Most collectors since the nineteenth century have simply edited out references to social change in published folklore materials.<sup>1</sup> Apart from scattered examples (APPADURAI 1991, DEVA 1956, FLUECKIGER 1991, JUNGHARE 1983, VATUK 1969), few scholars have confronted the issue at any length. The result is a lamentable gap in our understanding of how folklore is revamped to speak to changing social realities in India.

This essay brings together scattered evidence to build a unified framework for conceptualizing colonial and postcolonial forms of social change and cultural mixing in Indian folklore, and, by extension, the folklore of other Third World countries. On one hand, I address attitudes prevalent in scholarship since colonial times which equate the "folk" with villagers and "folk-lore" with bounded, authentic, unchanging materials. On the other, I examine actual folklore texts that have crept into the written record, as well as ones that I have gathered both as a trained collector and as a member of various Indian folk groups. As Alan DUNDES has forcefully argued, the "folk" are "any group whatsoever that shares at least one common factor" (1965, 2). The point that English-speaking schoolchildren, the apartment-dwelling urban elite, and immigrant academics may just as much constitute Indian "folk" as village women, tribal groups, and pilgrims has largely been lost on scholars interested in Indian folklore.

So as to immediately locate this discussion in tangible specifics, I begin by presenting two unusual folklore texts. The first is a riddle joke. I learned this from an Indian professor who had traveled from Delhi to New York in September 1989, shortly before the Indian elections were held. My "informant" had heard this at a party in Delhi, and it was transmitted to me in Madison, Wisconsin, over the telephone.

*Why is India now a banana republic?*

—*Because Rajiv Gandhi is always saying "Hamein yah banāna hai, hamein vah banāna hai" [We've got to make (banāna) this, we've got to make that].*

Let us postpone interpretation for the moment and turn to a contrasting text. Here is a wedding song (*suhāg*) I heard in 1982 from Swarna Devi,<sup>2</sup> a village woman of the carpenter caste from Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. Hearing of my interests, she had dropped in one afternoon to drink tea and sing before my recorder. *Dupaṭṭā* scarf looped over her head, her face lined from raising five children and working in the fields, she had sung this lilting melody with solemn absorption.

<i>hamāri o betī chandara rekhā chandara rekhā vara mangadī</i>	Our daughter is like a moonbeam, a moonbeam, she requests a groom.
<i>Hay M. A. aur F. A., V. I. aur V. P.</i>	Oh my! M. A. and F. A., V. I. and V. P.
<i>Itnī jamati kuḍī vara mangadī</i>	She requests a groom with all these degrees!
<i>Tusān kajo ronde kuḍīye de boā Karma likhi aise ho chukiya</i>	Why do you weep, girl's father? What fate has written is what will occur.

What do these two texts, one heard from an expatriate academic, one from a peasant, have in common? Though they differ in genre, language, assumed stocks of knowledge, and the social location of the performers, they share one important trait: both are contemporary items of Indian folklore that confound our received notions of what Indian folklore should be. Instead of pointing toward timeless, self-contained village traditions, elements like "banana republic" and higher degrees reach outward, away from exotic India, and toward the cross-cutting cultural flows of the postcolonial present (cf. APPADURAI 1991).

The riddle joke was shared informally between two bilingual English and Hindi speakers whose conceptual universes spanned Rajiv Gandhi's national development rhetoric, the Western equation of banana republics with island dictatorships, and the self-conscious colonial nostalgia of American-based Banana Republic Travel and Safari Clothing Company stores. *Banānā*, as the Hindi "to make," looks ahead to the industrial growth and consumer boom Rajiv Gandhi's policies as Prime Minister have brought; "banana," as the fictitious republic of the travel store, looks backward towards colonialism and the regalia of European expeditions to "savage" countries. Standing at the intersection of orientations and cultures, my friend and I laughed, joining many other urban Indians who shared the joke in 1989, both through face-to-face interaction and by reading it in the popular *Time*-magazine clone, *India Today*.<sup>3</sup>

The folk song, on the other hand, mixed several languages: the mountain dialect Pahari; the language of the adjoining state, Punjabi; the North Indian lingua franca, Hindi, and the language of the colonizers, English. The wedding song was collected in the artificial context of an interview in a village setting. Transcribing it soon after Swarna Devi had gone home, I wondered whether she had chosen this song for me, then a graduate student entangled in the world of higher degrees. When I had asked Swarna Devi what the F. A., V. I., and V. P. were, she shrugged. "I don't know," she said, speaking Hindi, "they're *your* English degrees. I haven't studied anything." I subsequently learned that an F. A. is a now-obsolete intermediate degree, leading to the joke, "No, no, I am not an F. A., I have two more letters to my degree: F.A.I.L." The V. I. and V. P. are apparently not degrees at all, but, as the son of the local schoolmaster interpreted it, were probably the illiterate woman's scrambling of V.I.P. The degrees seemed to symbolize the groom's status and prestige gained through education, much as in other *suhāg* he is depicted as a deity or a prince (NARAYAN 1986).

The overwhelming impulse upon confronting such items of folklore is to laugh. Even liberal anthropologists or folklorists who agree that traditions are constantly invented and reinvented (HOBBSAWM and RANGER 1983; WAGNER 1981) might find a village woman in the Himalayan foothills singing of college degrees as droll as the New Guinea highlander in the film *First Contact* who sports a sardine tin on his headdress! To see elements from "our" taken-for-granted reality relocated in the Other's imaginative world certainly makes for a humor-inducing epistemological defamiliarization, whether "we," as scholars, are associated with the Indian elite or with the West. But to dismiss

such occurrences as nothing more than amusing anecdotes is to miss what they might actually be saying about changing sensibilities and worldviews in Indian society.

Another impulse is to equate such references with resistance. Especially in cases where a villager speaks out about Western institutions, there is a strong temptation to view this as promising evidence of a critical subaltern perspective. This is the framework adopted by both Indra DEVA (1956) and Ved Prakash VATUK (1969), who highlight the role of folklore in critiquing British rule and the city-based Indian elite. Yet such a view overlooks the fact that the Indian elite is also a variety of folk, and that the imbedded references may also constitute a complicity with hegemonic values. Without viewing folklore in terms of the particular situated subjects who use it, casting it as resistance may be an imposition of our own progressive aspirations onto the materials at hand.

In order to clarify why scholars find it so difficult to recognize such elements of the present in Indian folklore texts, I first turn to the past, reviewing British-based folklore studies in India and identifying the paradigm of self-contained, unchanging, peasant authenticity shared by the British and Indian scholars who have appropriated folklore texts for their own ends. Next, I discuss how folklore has been reworked from demarcated political platforms in order to disseminate nationalist, Marxist, feminist, and development ideologies. I argue that it is partly the political potential of “Western” or “modern” elements that has led to the suppression or emphasis of these elements by different groups of scholars. Third, I present evidence from contemporary India to demonstrate that although certain genres of folklore are constantly being updated in everyday contexts, they remain ignored in scholarship because of the preexisting paradigm of what constitutes authentic folklore. The paper ends with suggestions for how such elements that confound notions of “the Indian tradition” might be analytically conceptualized. “Indian folklore,” I argue, is too unwieldy a category to theorize about effectively: we can achieve far more by distinguishing the various genres, folk groups, and material-updating strategies. The political impact of folklore cannot be considered just through texts, but must involve a careful consideration of the social location and subjectivities of its performers.

In highlighting the presence of elements in Indian folklore that appeared after colonial contact—whether objects, roles, practices, or institutions—I am holding in abeyance a discussion of three crucially important larger settings. The first is the multiplicity, intertextuality, and crossing-over that have always been present within Indian tradi-

tions themselves (RAMANUJAN 1989): the processes highlighted here in regard to the “foreign” elements brought with British colonialism also occurred with exposure to Islamic culture, and through time have been taking place within the subcontinent’s regional, classical, and counter-cultural traditions. The second setting involves the history of folklore studies in Europe, which is interconnected with the discipline as practiced in India and other colonized countries (DORSON 1968). The third setting involves developments in American folklore studies that have influenced my own thinking, particularly the democratic conception of the “folk” and the emphasis on situated performance (ABRAHAMS 1977; BAUMAN 1977; BEN-AMOS 1982; BEN-AMOS and GOLDSTEIN 1975; DUNDES 1980) which is being extended to sophisticated understandings of the power relations evident within and between folk groups (ABU-LUGHOD 1986; BASSO 1979; COPLAN 1985; LIMON 1989; WEBBER 1991). Keeping this complexity in mind, then, let us turn back to the British colonial setting, in which folklore as a nineteenth-century Western discipline was first introduced to India.

#### COLONIAL COLLECTORS: BRITISH AND “NATIVE” FOLKLORISTS

Those who set about systematically collecting folklore materials in the nineteenth century were a varied crew: administrators, missionaries, and the women attached through their husbands or fathers to the colonial enterprise. Indeed, the first collection of folk narratives directly from the oral tradition was undertaken by the Governor of Bombay’s daughter, Mary FRERE, when she was bored and lonely on an administrative tour. She asked her sole female companion, a nursemaid (*āyāh*) called Anna Liberata de Souza, to tell her stories. Anna was a Lingayat convert to Christianity, but the tales she told were mostly Hindu ones she had learned from her grandmother. She used an often ungrammatical English which Mary Frere faithfully reproduced in “The Narrator’s Narrative.” For the stories themselves, though, Frere intervened with literary rewordings. The book first appeared in 1868 as *Old Deccan Days, or Hindoo Fairy Legends Current in Southern India* and went through several printings in London. In his introduction, Sir Bartle Frere, her father, stated that it was important for “Government servants, . . . missionaries, and others residing in the country,” to undertake such collections as a means of understanding “the popular, non-Brahminical superstitions of the lower orders” (1898, xiii).

There was clearly a preexisting notion brought over from Europe of who the folk were: they were not Brahman pandits of the sort that Orientalists were consulting about Sanskrit texts, nor were they British-

educated Indians. Rather, they were the "lower classes" steeped in tradition. Yet the fact that her teller of tales was also Christian and English-speaking did not worry Frere in 1868. When the Folk-Lore Society was founded in London in 1878, however, more stringent standards of authenticity and scholarship were applied. The journal *Folk-Lore* in England became, through the use of praise and censure, an important forum for monitoring folklore contributions within the British Isles and the colonies. Consider the civil servant and eminent folklorist William CROOKE's scathing review of Alice DRACOTT's *Simla Village Tales* in the 1906 issue of *Folk-Lore*.

Unfortunately the authoress seems to be unacquainted with the work done by other collectors in India. If she had studied other . . . well-known books . . . she would have avoided the risk of repeating tales already familiar. In fact, she seems hardly to have tapped the vein of *really indigenous* folk-lore, and some of the tales which she prints appear to have been obviously derived from the Plains, where they have been affected by *literary contamination* . . . considerable portions of the tales suggest *foreign influence* . . . at this stage of her career as a collector she would be well advised to undertake a systematic study of the printed materials. She would thus be enabled to make a more careful selection from the stores at her command, to detect the *traces of foreign contamination* of the indigenous folk-lore, and so to make her next book more novel and interesting to serious students of the subject. (1906: 502-503, emphases are mine)

Admittedly, *Simla Village Tales* is not a dazzling book, and compared to Frere's collection it is decidedly limp. Dracott describes her informants in the broadest of terms; her retellings lack flavor. Yet in criticizing Dracott's book for what it is not, Crooke also reveals the changed assumptions of what acceptable scholarship in India should be. First, it should be scholarly, part of a "fellowship of discourse" (FOUCAULT 1972) that—despite the presence of collectors like Mary Frere, Maive Stokes, Alice Dracott, Flora Annie Steel, and Georgiana Kingscote—became increasingly dominated, especially in its theoretical aspects, by men. Second, it should present hitherto unrecorded materials, adding to the existing pool of knowledge about the "natives." Third, it should not be tainted by "foreign" or "literary" influences. In contrast to Mary Frere's frank acknowledgement of her storyteller's Christian identity, the authors of another influential collection, *Wide-Awake Stories* (1884), assured their readers of their own native as-

sistant's "ignorance of all matters connected with European life and notions" and the "genuineness of their Collection . . . procured at first hand from the lips of purely village children, who have never been inside a school" (STEEL and TEMPLE 1884, viii).

Yet despite the growing concern with "really indigenous" folklore associated with "authentic" folk, none of these collectors of folk narratives had the least qualms about doctoring their materials for a European audience (RAMANUJAN 1987, xiii-xiv). There is an alluring charm to most of these translations: they make easy reading as English stories and so allow for a sympathetic entry into fictional Indian worlds. However, with names like "Sir Bumble," "Prince Lionheart," and "Princess Aubergine," the protagonists in these stories are more like familiar European characters relocated in an exotic setting, an experience paralleling that of the stories' translators. Consider the very first lines spoken by a character in *Wide-Awake Stories*: "Mother . . . give me four shillings and I will go seek my fortune in the wide world." Is this really India? Furthermore, as Verrier ELWIN complained in 1944, most British collectors who had preceded him systematically edited out raunchy passages (1944, xv-xix). To deride foreign influence on a text yet simultaneously ignore the foreign collector's own role in eliciting, translating, editing, and popularizing indicates a blind spot in the paradigm of scientific objectivity.

European-based folklore study in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was believed useful for furthering colonial administration and missionary efforts through increased knowledge of subject peoples, and for testing evolutionary (and devolutionary) theories of the day with evidence collected from "backward" peoples elsewhere (DORSON 1968: 333). It is not surprising that colonial administrators like Sir Bartle Frere and William Crooke in different parts of the world were interested in collecting unadulterated cultural materials that bequeathed knowledge and power even as they demonstrated the collectors' difference from "the natives." In India, the increased emphasis on unchanging tradition that emerged in the late nineteenth century might also have stemmed from the realignment in British views that occurred after the 1857 revolt. The new outlook emphasized an exaggerated image of Indian conservatism that Thomas METCALF (using "folklore" as a historian might) called "a kind of imperial folklore . . . used as evidence to support the theory of Oriental stagnation" (1964, 325-26).

William Crooke, the man who so chastised Alice Dracott, also edited a journal himself, *North Indian Notes and Queries*, which ran from 1891 until 1896.<sup>4</sup> The introduction to the first issue states the journal's intent of providing a forum for "residents of this country and in par-

ticular the large official class" to share materials they have collected but have lacked the time to write up into lengthy articles. As Crooke observes in the maiden issue of the journal, "There are very few men of culture who do not record in their notebooks the numerous facts of interest which come under their notice during tours in the camping season and in the course of their daily intercourse with the people." In short, like the journal *Indian Antiquary*, this was to be a place for British administrators to pool their knowledge of the natives, derived both from their travels during the winter ("the camping season") and from the vantage point of their settlements. Ironically, as one looks through the succeeding issues of the journal one finds that it was predominantly Indians who sent in their notes. To be recognized as holding valued knowledge seems to have unleashed energies of the sort known to students whose teachers have inverted the conventional balance of power and expertise by eliciting information from their classes. Names like Chaina Mall, Ghulam Husain, Pandit Kashi Nath, Azizudin Ahmed, Pandit Natesa Sastri recur in issue after issue of this journal. Some items are presented as generalized overviews, others are attributed to named compatriots. Though Indians write, it is never "us" but always "them"—"the Hindoos," "the Panjabis," "the Mussalmans"—who engage in such practices.

Why should Indian folklorists so readily distance themselves from their fellows? The explanation may be that though the self-conscious collection of Indian folklore was a nineteenth-century, British-inspired enterprise, folklore materials had been co-opted from Vedic times by the elite. The *Panchatantra*, the *Kathāsaritāsāgara*, and other story collections are examples of the way folk narratives were transformed into literary texts. The Sanskritic distinction made between *mārga* and *deshī* levels of culture betrays an elite bias: while *mārga* is the classical, pan-Indian, righteous way (the "highway" as COOMARASWAMY [1956] put it), *deshī* indicates the vulgar and provincial "by-way."<sup>5</sup> It is possibly because the category *deshī* corresponded to European notions of folk culture that the Indian elite so readily adopted this framework in their own collection. Yet by adopting this approach, the fluid interchange between categories that had been recognized for centuries became conceptually frozen.<sup>6</sup> If folklore at a *deshī* level was to be authentic, it had to be sealed off from contact with developments in metropolitan centers.

For Indian folklorists, as for the British, the folk were people enmeshed in traditions and untouched by change. They were villagers, they were women, and occasionally they were even associated with the folklorist as a vestige of the days before he had assumed a more Anglicized urban identity. For example, when Richard Temple,

another prominent colonial administrator and folklorist, suggested to the Bengali novelist and Christian convert Lal Behari Day that he make a collection of unwritten women's stories, Day obliged with *Folktales of Bengal* (1883). In the preface, Day explains that though he had heard thousands of fairy tales from an old woman in his childhood, these were now all scrambled in his memory; he had moved, it would seem, out of the "folk" category and thus had to start collecting afresh. He assures the reader that none of his informants knew English, and that he had rejected any tales with "spurious additions." His collection is introduced as "a genuine sample of old stories told by old Bengali women from age to age through a hundred generations" (1883, ii). Here we have a classic view of the Indian tradition: village bound, authentic, a carrying forward of the past, and strengthened by the conservatism of women.

Yet despite the emphasis on authenticity, Indian collectors—like most of their British counterparts—felt free to edit as they pleased. So when the same Richard Temple trained scribes (*munshīs*) to record the poems of bards in Punjab, he found that these literate scribes who used the Persian script were contemptuous of the vernacular language, and insisted on doctoring the texts they wrote down. It was with great difficulty that Temple convinced them to record the texts without intervention, to read them back to the bards, and to then go over the transliteration and translation into Roman characters (TEMPLE 1884–1900, 1, xi). The resulting three-volume *Legends of the Panjab* stands out as a landmark for its careful attention to the actual performed text.

Having demonstrated the dominant conservative vision of folklore, let us now examine situations in which texts were self-consciously manipulated so that messages emphasizing change could be imbedded in them.

#### IMBEDDING POLITICAL MESSAGES IN FOLKLORE

With the rise of nationalism in urban centers, and particularly Bengal, the potential of folklore for reclaiming an un-Westernized Indian identity was recognized (KOROM 1989). Rabindranath Tagore is the most widely celebrated among nationalist folklorists. He founded the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad (Literary Society of Bengal) in 1893, and the following year began publishing its quarterly that brought together folklore from various regions in Bengal. He explained his mission to a gathering of students with a rhetoric reminiscent of European nationalists seeking the "soul" or "spirit" of the people in folklore.<sup>7</sup>

In the Sahitya Parishad, we are trying to know our country. The

Parishad is searching for the spirit of the country in the epics, songs, rhymes, doggerels, legends, ritual tales, manuscripts, in the village festivals, in the ruins of ancient temples and in the huts of the hamlets . . . if you prefer the silent blessings of your mother [land] to the left-overs from the dinner of a queen [Victoria] then please stand beside these volunteers, and fulfil your patriotism by working day after day for this cause, which may not bring you money, reward, or fame. (HAQUE 1981, 35)

Tagore modeled some of his literary creations on folklore. His nationalist songs were derived from Bengali Baul compositions. Also, he drew on folk narratives from regional traditions beyond Bengal for literary retellings as well as for fiction that reworked folklore motifs. Ironically, his knowledge of these other regional traditions was acquired through British collections, for example James TOD's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* (1920) and Harry Arbuthnot ACWORTH's *Ballads of the Marathas* (1894) (HAQUE 1981, 68, 75-79). Although Tagore and his compatriots' elite appropriation of folk materials was part of a dynamic process that had been going on for centuries, this time it was associated with a conscious sense of the power these materials bore in asserting a collaborative Self separate from a dominating Other. As Jawaharlal HANDOO writes of this period, "Folklore began to be studied from the *Indian* point of view. Collectors and analysts began identifying themselves with the native lore and the cultural context . . ." (1989, 140). In short, with a change in the political climate, attitudes towards folklore texts also shifted.

Folk performers in many parts of India also incorporated nationalist themes into traditional texts. In Maharashtra, for example, *kathā* storytelling performances served as a nationalist platform through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, so that mythological confrontations between deities and demons were used "to pinpoint the misdeeds of the British; to spread discontent among the audience, and to goad them to suitable action" (DAMLE 1960, 68). Many storytellers were in fact arrested (DAMLE 1955, 18). Similarly, Bhojpuri folksongs incorporated elements critical of British colonialism (GAUTAM 1973). In the twentieth century Gandhi began appearing in folk traditions, his actions compared to those of heroic deities: for example, using the *Rāmāyana* framework, he might be referred to as Rāma who fought for Sītā (India) who had been imprisoned by Rāvaṇa (the British). Or, playing on the first part of his name "Mohan," which is also a name for Krishna, his stints in jail were compared to Krishna's birth in prison (VATUK 1969, 10). Older tale types and motifs proving supernatural powers

were updated to include Gandhi; these were viewed as grassroots manifestations of support and reproduced in the nationalist press (AMIN 1984).

All these examples show that, by inserting elements from contemporary realities, folklore was used as a conscious political instrument. It is clear why this would seem threatening to colonial scholars, who wished folklore to be self-contained, revealing past-oriented tradition but not present-oriented politics. Yet when the capacity of folklore to sway people could serve in the colonial interest, such scholarly squeamishness appears to have been ignored by administrators. Itinerant preachers (*bhajnopadeshaks*) and folk drama performers (*sāngī*) were employed by the British to encourage enlistment in the army during both World Wars (VATUK 1979, 145, 160; 1969, 9). Here is such a song:

Enlist in the army!  
 Recruiters are standing at your door!  
 Here you wear ordinary, mediocre clothes,  
 Whatever you can get, torn, and old.  
 There you will get a good suit and boots. (VATUK 1969, 9)

Applied folklore of this sort carried over from colonial interests to post-Independence attempts to seed development through preexisting channels of transmission. Other *bhajnopadeshak* preachers interviewed by VATUK in the 1960s argued for social reforms such as the abolition of untouchability, the equality of the sexes, and the distribution of land to the landless (1979, 137–60). DAMLE, writing about Maharashtrian *kathā* performances in the 1950s, reports, “None should be surprised if mention is made of the Five Year Plan, Development, National Savings Campaign, Literacy Campaign . . .” (1955, 19). Similarly, Milton SINGER found that a Tamil *harikathā* performer was planning to incorporate propaganda for the Five Year Plan (1972, 170). John GUMPERZ describes an Arya Samaj singer employed by the Community Development Block who sang *bhajans* about public health and the Japanese method of rice cultivation (1964, 95–96). The value of embedding messages for development in traditional forms of folklore to make them more palatable has also been discussed by communications specialists (PARMAR 1975; RANGANATH 1980). Indeed, on Indian television these days one sees short educational clips based on folk performances. Watching television in Kangra in the winter of 1988, I saw a skit in which Rajasthani puppets were used to demonstrate how dirt (a fearsome witch) brought disease to a village, but was ousted by cleanliness

(an upright young boy).

While folklore can be assimilated for development goals advocated by the Indian government, it can also be used to critique and contest the centralized political order. Since Independence, Marxists in many parts of India have employed folk media as a means of highlighting class inequities: adopting traditional forms and learning the performative techniques, they have sought to inject revolutionary contents. For example, the Telugu folk singer, Gaddar, used folksongs to spread Marxist-Leninist messages before large audiences in Andhra Pradesh.<sup>8</sup> Street theater has been another popular mode of communication, as practiced, for example, by Safdar Hashmi, who was later brutally murdered. Contemporary Indian feminists have recast traditional tales and folk songs. The group *Astha*, for example, made tapes of revised traditional stories told through song and dialogue, then played these tapes to groups of slum women in Bombay as a means of stimulating reflection, discussion, and collective mobilization across communal boundaries.<sup>9</sup> In 1990, following widespread rioting by students to protest the affirmative action policies for lower castes introduced by Prime Minister V. P. Singh, folk-art effigies of the demon king Rāvaṇa prepared for burning during the Dasserā festival were made in striking likeness to Singh. That year, in many parts of the country, Rāvaṇa wore black spectacles, had a clipped moustache, and wore an upturned collar on his suit.

Following the colonial precedent, Indian folklorists have largely tended to ignore such contemporary references in folklore texts. As Indra DEVA observed in an overview of folklore scholarship in India, "The collectors sometimes deliberately leave out awkward pieces and make 'improvements' to make the material more presentable" (1972, 214). For example, having collected several variants of Swarna Devi's song, all mentioning B.A.s, M.A.s, or other educational qualifications, I came across a book of Kangri folk songs compiled by a local folklorist, Dr. Gautham "Vyathit." VYATHIT's version had cut out all mention of degrees and smoothed out the stray Punjabi, Hindi, and English words to reclaim a pure Pahari text (1973, 64). Here, not only is social change denied, but also mixing between languages and dialects. Indeed, in post-Independence India, there has been a tendency to arrange folklore along the borders of the states redrawn on the basis of linguistic identity (SAKTHIWEL 1976; VIDYARTHI 1978). Looking at English publications alone, the Publication Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the National Book Trust, and Sterling Publishers all publish nonacademic volumes of Indian folklore arranged by state. In making the state the bounded unit of enquiry,

migration and cultural interaction across regions is downplayed, creating a new standard for regional authenticity. In this way, the quest for a national identity through folklore has been transmuted into the assertion of authentic regional identities negotiated through the Indian government.

One way in which the government has sought to manage diverse regional cultures while also upholding the ideal of national unity is through the sponsorship of national folklore festivals in which various regional states are represented. Examples are the Festival of India, which traveled abroad, and various *Apnā Utsav* ("our festival") performed in urban centers. Selecting participants to perform in staged settings for a fee, these festivals extricate performances from lived contexts even as they uphold an ideal of regional authenticity in which hybrid or invented traditions have no consciously recognized place: "folklore" turns into what BAUSINGER (1990) would describe as "folklorismus." Furthermore, the bearers of folklore continue to be conceptualized as "them"—villagers or at least a lower social class—who will perform for metropolitan audiences. Such cultural productions are clearly marked by a vested interest in maintaining the exotic for cross-regional domestic as well as foreign consumption. Here then, "the folk" is a restricted category for whom lived experience at the crossroads of regional and global cultural currents is denied. They are muffled and frozen in a pristine past that becomes increasingly commodified.

#### FOLKLORE IN EVERYDAY CONTEXTS

Apart from this self-conscious encoding of political messages from demarcated performance platforms, there is the more muted but nonetheless powerful politics of people in everyday contexts creatively assimilating and speaking out on the technological forces and relations of power that have transformed their lives (cf. BAUSINGER 1990). For example, many Hindi songs reproduced by DEVA talk about love and separation, using the railway train as a symbol (1956, 50–52). Here is one Avadhi women's song, disarming in its poignancy, that was published in Hindi by Devendra Satyarthi in 1948, the year after Indian Independence.

From the east came the railway train,  
 From the west came the steamer.  
 The train has become my co-wife,  
 She has taken away my husband.  
 The train is not my enemy, the steamer is not my enemy

My enemy is money which makes him wander from land to land.  
(SATYARTHI 1948, 140, cited in DEVA 1956, 51)

Trains, steamers, money! William Crooke would certainly have barred such a contaminated song from the pages of his journal. In this folklore text, the supposedly pristine folk reveal themselves to be squarely involved in larger systems linking them by land within the country and by sea to other countries; systems that are breaking down the village *jajmāni* network of reciprocal services, drawing individuals into a market economy, forcing men to seek employment through migration. The song reflects on the changes colonization has accentuated, but rather than using "experience distant" (GEERTZ 1983) words like "capitalism," "world system," or "exploitation," the impact of these forces is painfully localized in lived experience (cf. VATUK 1969, 14; DEVA 1972, 211-14).

All social change mentioned in folklore is not, however, phrased in such negative terms. At times it may reflect the upward mobility sought through Westernization (SRINIVAS 1962). For example, in a corpus of wedding songs taped by the American ethnomusicologist Bonnie WADE in three villages and a town in the vicinity of Delhi during the 1960s, many songs pointed towards changes in the people's sociocultural context. An old one, still sung, depicted "a twelve year old girl who does not want to be married but wishes to join the Congress party and work for Independence" (1973: 63). It is to Wade's credit that she did not switch off her tape recorder when the women gathered at a wedding started in such songs:

Obviously . . . recent is a text from Singola about the bride being educated and fashionable; also from Singola, "*Dān ke no so lai hey hey*" relates how the bride's father gave as dowry gifts, a plane to the groom, and a car to herself, and "*Indira Gandhi baiṭhi raj*" reflects the point of view of the men in the village that the education of women is bad. . . . Also in Gurgaon, "*Ham ko bhī biṭālo banna*" depicts the bride asking the groom for a ride in his automobile and "*Bijlī kā pankhā ghūm rahā banne ke hamare men*" pictures the groom's family gathered in a room, waiting to send him off to the bride's village for the wedding, but being cooled by an electric fan in the meantime. (1973: 60-61)

Unfortunately, Wade does not provide enough background on the singers or the positions adopted in the songs for us to be quite sure what they mean. When village women sing about men thinking that the

education of women is bad, is this an endorsement of the men's view or a way of showing it up as ridiculous? Or since the song appears to feature Indira Gandhi, an educated woman who was Prime Minister at the time, does it actually have a political bias? When the groom's family is depicted in the presence of an electric fan, is this a way of boasting that they are rich and worthy affines or people who, so to speak, sport superior airs? Are these songs funny or serious, or both at the same time? Could the women have emphasized such songs specifically for the sake of their foreign visitor? Without notes on the performers and informed interpretation, there is no way we can answer these questions.

WADE makes the interesting observation that references to social change in folk songs cannot simply be understood in terms of urban exposure. As she writes, "the interplay of traditional and modern references in song texts is fairly equally dispersed," a finding that applied to all three of the quite different locales where she taped: a town, an isolated village, and a "progressive" village near Delhi (1973, 61). Change in folklore, Wade reminds us, occurs in villages, towns, and cities alike.

In Kangra villages, where I have worked on Pahari women's folk-songs, the distribution of "modern" elements in the songs varied among cohorts of performers and across genres. For the genre of *suhāg* wedding songs for the bride, women both old and young followed the poetic convention of referring to palace homes, palanquins with silver spokes, in-laws on the high slopes, and ivory stools bedecked with pearls. However, it was exclusively the younger women who sang of buses bearing away the bride, of tarred roads, and of "lip-istick" in the bride's trousseau (NARAYAN 1986, 65–66). Ballads called *pakharu* about married women's suffering, on the other hand, tended to be of clearly older origin and in a purer dialect form. Dance songs (*nāch gīt*) stood at the other end of the spectrum, with a comic, exuberant embracing of elements of the present (NARAYAN, forthcoming). While some dance songs were group renditions of the solos from Hindi film songs piped in over the radio, others were oral compositions which tended to mix the local dialect with Punjabi, Hindi, and English. Consider one dance song, mostly Punjabi, performed by an uproarious group of women prancing about in costume at a birthday celebration in September 1990:

<p><i>jamāne dīyā hāñiyān hoyā kam kasūtā sūrkhī lāndī, paḍar lāndī lamā lāndī ṭīka</i></p>	<p>Oh comrades of the times, mis- deeds are on the increase! Women put on nail-polish and powder and a long mark on the</p>
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	forehead.
<i>sire chī do do guta kardī kame jo</i>	They make two braids and throw
<i>mārdī jūtā</i>	the shoe at work.
<i>andar sas nuh laḍnā lagiyā</i>	Inside the mother-in-law and
	daughter-in-law have started to
	squabble,
<i>bāhar putar sutā</i>	Outside, the son sleeps,
<i>panch sat mukkān nue mareyān</i>	The daughter-in-law hits five or
	seven blows
<i>putare chukiyā jūtā</i>	with a shoe picked up from the
	son.

In this song, women play on a well-entrenched theme of conflict between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and playfully invert the image of the ideal, modest, hard-working and submissive daughter-in-law. The song suggests that the daughter-in-law is a shameless user of cosmetics, adorning herself with nail-polish, facial powder, and fashionably long marks on the forehead, none of which are traditional in village India. She “throws the shoe” at serving others, i.e., her tyrannical mother-in-law, apparently with the complicity of her lazy husband. A song such as this, parodying the idea that excessive modernity corrupts women and expressing local anxieties that an increasing value is being put on conjugal over filial bonds (*miān bibī ke raj*), appeared to be deeply entertaining both to performers and to the audience.

Turning to the cities, an increasingly popular folklore form is the joke (cf. BECK et al. 1987, xxix). Many jokes are short narratives with a punch line, but the single-question-and-answer format of the riddle-joke is spreading fast. These riddle-jokes tend to arrange themselves into joke cycles that erupt around political or socioeconomic trends. Many of these jokes are in English, and, as with the “banana republic” joke, derive much of their humor from bilingual puns or regional accents. They appear to be a way for the Indian elite to both celebrate and alleviate their anxiety about being simultaneously Indian and Westernized, simultaneously Indian nationals and members of particular ethnic groups. Yet while these jokes might appear in the humor section of an illustrated weekly or circulate in joke-books, they have rarely been acknowledged as *folklore* by scholars. They clearly are a folklore form, though, displaying multiple existence and variation, and association with particular folk groups. For example, after V. V. Giri became President in 1969 a spate of jokes circulating among the children in my Bombay school played on his name and his Tamilian (South Indian) accent. Simultaneously, they parodied general-knowledge quizzes

of the sort to which we were accustomed.

*“What is President Giri’s favorite color?”—“Gir-een”* (possibly a reference to the agricultural “Green Revolution” being promulgated in the 1960s, with high-yield seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers).

*“Favorite country?” “Gir-eesee”* (Greece) OR *“Gir-eenland”* (these countries appear to have been highlighted through their link to Giri’s name rather than any particular focus in foreign policy).

*“Favorite game?”—“Giri-gut”* (cricket—a British game that continues to be popular in previously colonized societies like India).

*“Favorite actor?” “Giri-giri (Gregory) Peck”* (displaying the popularity of Hollywood films among the joke-tellers).

*“What do his grandchildren call him?” “Dādā Giri”* (“Dada” means paternal grandfather, while Dadagiri implies heavyweight bullying of the sort associated with politicians or hoodlums).

Many joke cycles target ethnic groups, continuing well-entrenched traditions of caste and ethnic stereotypes in Indian folklore. Perhaps the best known are the infamous Sikh jokes, which fall into a worldwide category of ethnic jokes highlighting stupidity (DAVIES 1990, 64–65). (In light of the Sikh separatist movement these jokes have in recent years taken a different slant as “Khalistan” jokes, named after the homeland sought by Sikhs.) While the Sikh jokes have been remarked on in scholarship, jokes about other ethnic groups have rarely been recorded. I will dwell on two cycles of jokes to demonstrate that Sikhs are by no means alone.

Sindhis—from Sind, now in Pakistan—mostly bear surnames ending in “ani.” As refugees who were resettled after 1947, yet have done extremely well in business both in India and abroad, they have attracted an underlying resentment that occasionally surfaces in humor. The Sindhi joke cycle prevalent in the 1970s punned in English on recognizable Sindhi names by asking questions like, *“What do you call a Communist Sindhi?”—“Lal[red]vani,” “A mathematical Sindhi?”—“Ad[d]vani,” “A falling Sindhi?”—“Thad[thud]ani,” “A handicapped Sindhi?” “Kripal[cripple]ani,”* and so on. While these jokes play on a diversity of capabilities and attributes constituting Sindhi identity, as ethnic slurs go they are fairly harmless. Neither stupidity nor canininess (two imputed characteristics highlighted by DAVIES [1990] in his cross-cultural study of ethnic jokes) is focused on.

Another well-known cycle prevalent through the late ’70s and early ’80s plays on an imputed stupidity about Western traditions in a group traditionally construed as canny: Gujaratis, or natives of

Gujarat (DAVIES 1990, 16). In these jokes, "Gujus" (Gujaratis) are generally presented as lower-middle-class entrepreneurs or nouveau riche "Ghatkopar Yankees" (Ghatkopar is an unfashionable suburb of Bombay) aiming for upward mobility while lacking Westernized cultural skills. Most of these jokes hinge on a Gujarati accent that has not been smoothed out with an upper-class, English education. The people who circulate such jokes, Gujaratis and non-Gujaratis alike, appear to be accentuating the difference between themselves and those whom they describe; they laugh partly out of relief that *they* would not make such mistakes in their pronunciation or understanding of cosmopolitan tastes. Here are a few examples:

"*Why did the Guju go to Rome?*"—"To hear Pop[e] music."

(The travelling Gujarati, striving to be cosmopolitan, mistakes the Pope for the hip pop music he cultivates an interest in.)

"*Why did the Guju go to London?*"—"To see the Big Ben [sister]."

(The Gujarati does not understand that Big Ben is a tourist attraction, and not his *ben* or sister.)

"*Why did the wedding guests leave the Guju wedding at the Oberoi Hotel?*"—"Because they heard that snakes [snacks] would be served."

(The Gujaratis have held an ostentatious wedding at a five-star hotel, but lack the sophistication to pronounce "snacks" correctly, thus alarming the guests who fear that they will be expected to eat "snakes," suggesting savage (*jungli*) customs.)

"*Why did the Guju medical student walk around with a mango on his head?*"—"Because he had heard of Carry [*kairi* 'mango'] on Doctor."

(Aiming to enter a class of respected professionals, the Gujarati medical student mistakes the name of a film featuring a successful doctor with an exhortation for him to put a mango [*ka-iri*] on his head.)

"*Why did the Guju bring perfume bottles to the exam?*"—"Because he wanted to get [s]cent per [s]cent [full marks]."

(The Gujarati student, hoping for success, mistakes the word "cent," from "percent," for "scent"—pronounced to rhyme with "paint"—and so engages in sympathetic magic by bringing along expensive perfume to the examination hall.)

With the Gujarati jokes, foreign travel, conspicuous consumption, and higher education of the sort associated with the urbanized upper classes are parodied. This joke cycle, based on puns and accents, is clearly of Indian invention. Other joke cycles, however, are clearly derivative from American or British ones, while inserting Indian con-

tent. So among the “height” jokes of the 1960s there also appeared a parody of Indian patriotism and family-planning programs through the irreverent juxtaposition of Gandhi’s acclaimed experiments in celibacy and his advocacy of spinning: “*What is the height of patriotism?*” “*Gandhiji using a khādī Nirodh [homespun cloth condom of a government brand].*” A revamping of the lightbulb joke popular in the late 1980s that commented on the separatist movements and escalating violence of the times was: “*How many Sikh terrorists does it take to screw in a lightbulb?*” “*Five: one to hold the lightbulb, four to shoot the bystanders.*” Clearly, these jokes are not just light and funny. They address conflicts and concerns experienced by particular social groups, and attention to them can provide clues to the emerging identities of modern India. As Alan DUNDES cautions in his introduction to a book of essays on American joke cycles, “Remember, people joke about only what is most serious” (1987, viii).

I have elaborated on these examples to illustrate the widespread presence of folklore that speaks to contemporary realities, in villages and cities alike. Yet much Indian folklore study continues to hold to a framework emphasizing authenticity in past-oriented, village-based traditions. The impetus comes both from the quest for identity within India and from trends in foreign scholarship, where until quite recently the documentation of fast-vanishing traditions (“salvage ethnography”) has eclipsed interest in their transformations (CLIFFORD 1989). There is no doubt that with every generation certain folklore forms are disappearing as state-based literacy, the mass-media, and a cash economy transform the rhythms of living and the sensibilities of performers and audiences (FLUECKIGER 1991, JUNGHARE 1983, NARAYAN forthcoming). The collection of folklore that has been marginalized remains important and timely. Yet it is also important that we extend our attention to the innovations blossoming in folklore genres all over the Indian subcontinent.

#### CONCLUSIONS

This article has attempted to open up Indian folklore studies on two interlinked fronts, first by extending the notion of “folk” from villagers supposedly enmeshed in self-contained, past-oriented, authentic traditions, and second by arguing that folklore containing elements of present-oriented lived realities is also worthy of collection. My presentational form, in which I have acted as informant as well as scholar, is tied into my argument for the need to break down the rigid distinction between the observed Other as authentic folk, and the observing Self as objective collector. Though they may move in different circles,

draw on different genres, and preoccupy themselves with different life concerns, all Indians—as all people everywhere—belong to various overlapping folk groups demarcated by age, profession, ethnicity, region, and so on. Having reviewed why elements that connect India to her contemporary realities and the outside world have been suppressed in scholarship, I would like to end with a further agenda for how such elements, once they are allowed into scholarship, might be interpreted.

“Indian folklore”—spanning riddle-jokes and wedding songs, epics and proverbs, folk dance and counting-out rhymes—must at this point be set aside as being, quite frankly, too unwieldy a category to work with. It is more useful to view particular folklore forms in situated contexts, used by particular individuals who perform and interpret them. As Richard Handler, following Lionel TRILLING (1971) has argued, a concern with authenticity is tied to Western notions of individuality: an authentic culture is conceptualized as a discrete, bounded unit (HANDLER 1986). Similarly, authentic folklore is associated with an authentic folk, which acts as a collective subject. Yet though folklore is by definition shared, this by no means entails that “the folk” who share the lore and the experiences that have grouped them in the first place are all clones. To assert, say, that Maharashtrian folklore speaks for all Maharashtrians is to objectify the category Maharashtrian, to blur regional, class, caste, gender, and age differences; it is, in effect, to deny the people who perpetuate folklore forms their individuality.

Problematizing the blanket category “Indian folklore,” then, is to invite inquiry on several fronts.

1. *Variation by genre.* While some genres are more open to the influence of changing contemporary realities, others are more moored in alternative, self-contained worlds. We need to understand why some genres are more susceptible to improvization than others. As we have seen, urban Indian joke cycles are closely tied to political or socio-cultural trends. Yet this is not true for all genres. The large corpus of Kannada women’s folktales collected by A. K. Ramanujan, for example, has not a single reference of this sort. The question we need to ask is *why* a particular genre does not exhibit change: is it because of its role in a certain arena of people’s lives, the domestic or public setting of its transmission, its association with more-or-less conservative folk groups, or the status of its performers? Does fixity render a genre vulnerable to extinction?

2. *Variation in links between past and present.* We also need to understand the mechanisms through which a folklore form is aligned to the present. Are new elements inserted into preexisting slots, as when,

in a folktale told by the Swamiji central to my book (NARAYAN 1989), Shiva and Parvati touring the heavens were put into an "aeroplane" that unproblematically represented a contemporary manifestation of the mythological flying chariot or *vimān*? Or is a new content given to an older form, a content that can only be understood in terms of previous tradition, as when Gandhi is celebrated as "Mohan" in jail? Or is an old form relocated in its setting, as when school children perform Kangra folk songs at official state functions. Or has transmission changed, as when folklore exists in printed vernacular texts that also display multiple existence and variation (WADLEY 1983)? Is the link between past and present made through digressions that involve stepping briefly outside the folklore frame to invite reflection (BASGÖZ 1986)? Or is a new form one previously unknown, as with urban riddle-jokes? With each folklore form there are bound to be different conventions tied to both genre and sociocultural setting.

3. *Variation among the folk.* As APPADURAI writes in the afterword of a richly edited collection of essays on Indian folklore, "The idea of the 'folk' in South Asia creates an illusion not just of synchronic homogeneity, but also of historical and geographic fixity" (1991, 469). While he is dubious of the term "folk" itself, I believe that it is useful when suitably clarified. Who performed? Who listened? What was the wider setting? Speaking of the "folk" as a corporate group first of all underplays power relations along such lines as caste, class, and gender. It also undercuts the impress on folklore materials made by the performer, each of whom brings a positioned stock of knowledge and aesthetic sensibilities to bear on what is being transmitted. Furthermore, elements of the present inserted into folklore texts may not mean the same thing to everyone concerned, and so it is important to gauge interpretation, either through direct elicitation or through indirect contextualization. What appears in performance cannot directly be understood as a reflection of practice. We must also keep the collector's influence in view. Swarna Devi, for example, who sang of degrees to her educated visitor, soon after married her daughter to a carpenter who didn't possess a single one. What is needed, basically, is attention to the subjectivities of those who share folklore, so that it can be understood within the shifting systems of meaning deriving from the social location and life-experience of those who perform it.

4. *Variation in political intention.* In an academic context in which the subaltern has been highlighted, it is indeed tempting to view all folklore elements that encompass changing social realities as a form of resistance. As a carrying-forward of familiar traditions so that they encircle unfamiliar life circumstances, folklore is indeed a powerful

form of “domestication” (TODOROV 1984, 74), “incorporation” (NĠŪGĠ 1986, 23), and “encompassment” (ROLAND 1988, 174, 253–54) that absorbs social change and domination into a system of existing beliefs. To represent something or someone in folklore is, in a sense, to assert symbolic control over it (BASSO 1979; WEBBER 1991). Furthermore, given the power of performance to create and sustain compelling alternative worlds, it is in performance that “the capacity for change may be highlighted and made manifest to the community” (BAUMAN 1977, 45), an insight that in India has been set to use by nationalists, Marxists, feminists, and development experts committed to social reform. Yet we cannot forget David Coplan’s injunction that “any treatment of performing arts as an aspect of adaptation to specific conditions must also describe the power relations within which cultural change occurs” (COPLAN 1985, 240). This is why we need to look more closely at *who* the performers are as situated subjects and actors, and what interests they represent. While the symbolic encompassment of changing experience may well be a form of resistance to Western values and neocolonialism in some contexts, it may present a complicity with such values in others. To unproblematically associate “the folk” with “resistance” is to deny the ambiguity and complexity of actual people and situations.

In summary, we need to rethink the heritage of past scholarship in Indian folklore so as to overcome the paradigm of authentic Indian folk traditions as village-based, bounded, untainted by outside influence, and unchanging. We must pay closer attention to the subject positions associated with particular forms of folklore, whether in the village, the town, or the city. In each case, we need to rethink the political consequences of traditions that address the present. Only by breaking down the rigid distinction between “us,” the metropolitan collectors and analysts, and “them,” the folk entangled in traditions, will we be able to genuinely accept that elements from “our” taken-for-granted global realities can exist in “their” localized folklore texts. All this will help us better understand India as a *banānā* republic in the sense of a country experiencing the dynamic “making” and remaking of its folklore in response to changing life conditions.

#### NOTES

The materials on which this article is based derive from both informal interaction and guided fieldwork. I have been visiting Kangra since 1974, but only focused on wedding songs (*suhāg*) between June and September 1982 and engaged in formal fieldwork for ten months between September 1990 and September 1992. Similarly, I

began informally collecting the folk narratives of a holy man in 1980 but only devoted myself to this as a scholarly enterprise between June and August 1983 and July and October 1985. I am grateful for a National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship, two U. C. Berkeley Graduate Humanities Research Grants, Robert H. Lowie funds, a Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship, an American Institute of Indian Studies Senior Fellowship, and a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship. The University of Wisconsin Graduate School Research Funds allowed me to begin historical readings in 1989 and 1990. Preliminary versions of this paper were presented at the 1989 American Folklore Society Meetings in Philadelphia, the Center for South and South East Asian Studies at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, and the 1990 Asian Studies Association Meetings in Chicago. My greatest debt is to Professor Alan Dundes, whose influence pervades these pages. I am also grateful to İlhan Başgöz, Amrita Basu, Regina Bendix, Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger, Peter Claus, Peter Knecht, Frank Korom, Sabina Magliocco, Margaret Mills, A. K. Ramanujan, and Narayana Rao for their extremely perceptive comments on earlier presentations and written versions.

1. An important exception is BECK et al. (1987, 203–204, 247).
2. This is a pseudonym.
3. In a short article entitled “Humour: Indiana Jokes,” RAJGHATTA and TRIPATHI argue that “slowly but surely Indians are beginning to make fun of themselves” (1989). This assertion overlooks the ancient traditions of humor in India (cf. SIEGEL 1987).
4. This journal actually succeeded the less well known *Panjab Notes and Queries* (1883–87), edited by Richard Temple.
5. The *mārga/deshī* distinction is also perceptively discussed in terms of “Great” and “Little” traditions by RAMANUJAN (1973, 22–25).
6. I am grateful to my generous colleague, Narayana Rao, for this insight.
7. For more on the European association of national identity and folklore, see HERZFELD 1982; OINAS 1978; WILSON 1976, and the *Journal of the Folklore Institute* (1975).
8. Narayana Rao, personal communication. Also described in HALARNKAR 1990.
9. Jyotsna Kapur, personal communication.

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