Performative Politics and the Cultures of Hinduism
Public Uses of Religion in Western India
John D. Rosenberg

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Description
A study of the variety and cultures of contemporary Hinduism and their complex histories.

“This work contains much of valuable interest particularly regarding the very recent patterns of the Ganapati utsava.’ — Frank F. Conlon

Performative Politics and the Cultures of Hinduism focuses on one of the major festivals of western India, the Ganapati Utsava, dedicated to the elephant-headed god. Raminder Kaur uses this occasion as the central anthropological and historiographical site within which to examine the dynamic relationship between spectacle, religion and nationalist politics.

Readership: An important text for students of Indian politics, cultural history and anthropology.

Contents
List of Illustrations and Maps, Preface; 1. The Promise of Performative Politics: Mobilised Efficacy; Festive Moments; The Public Field; A Multifaceted Festival; Slippery Performers; 2. ‘Seething with Sedition’: Recasting Tilak’s Interventions; Martial Murti; Fire in the Belly of the Gods; A Festival in Ferment; A Whirlpool of Movements; 3. The Spectacle of Drama and the Drama of Spectacle: Creative Patriotism; A Long Train of Etceteras; Fractured Publics, Moving Scenes; Mandap Types; Spectacular Politics; 4. Ganesh Chaturthi: Festival as Praxis: ‘An Antidote to Vague Despair’; Engaging with Mandap Tableaux; Synaesthesia, Pleasure-Principles; Society of Spectator; Vitality; The Immersion Procession; The ‘Saffronisation’ of Public Space; 5. Mandal, Media, and the Market: Gods and Goods; The Business of Religion; Marking the Event; Overviewing of the Three Rounds; Assessing the Competition; 6. Open Secrets: Contemporary Political Culture in Maharashtra; The Eye of the Tiger; Street Poetics; Sainik Spectacles; An Art of Stage-Craft or State-Craft?; Variant Versionings of the Nation; Spectacles and Spectators; 7. Nuclear Reactions: Bombs and the Nation; Gods, Bombs and the Social Imaginary; Explosive Scenes; The Destroyer of Worlds; 8. A Nation Magic Mirrors: National or Natural?; Envisaging the Nation; Heroic Figures; Iconic Events; Space and Territory; Gendered Tropes of the Nation, Perceptions of the Other; Future Horizons; Modern Totems and Metaphors; Homing In; 9. An Imperfect Osmosis; Glossary and Abbreviations; Bibliography; Index

About the Author
Raminder Kaur is a Lecturer at the University of Manchester. She completed her PhD at SOAS, University of London, in 1998. She is also co-editor of Travel Worlds: Journeys in Contemporary Cultural Politics (Zed Books, 1999), and co-author of Liquid Notions: Critical Reflections on Diaspora and Hybridity (Sage, forthcoming).