



Aparna Bhargava Dharwadker is professor of English and Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA, and author of *Theatres of Independence: Drama, Theory, and Urban Performance in India Since 1947* (2005), which won the Joe A. Callaway Prize in 2006.

The urban theatre which emerged under Anglo-European and local influences in colonial metropolises such as Calcutta and Bombay around the mid-nineteenth century marked the beginning of the 'modern period' in Indian theatre, distinct from classical, postclassical, and more proximate precolonial traditions. *A Poetics of Modernity* offers a unique selection of original, theoretically significant writings on theatre by playwrights, directors, actors, designers, activists, and policy-makers, to explore the full range of discursive positions that make these urban practitioners 'modern'. The source-texts represent nine languages, including English, and about one-third of them have been translated into English for the first time; the volume thus retrieves a multilingual archive that so far had remained scattered in print and manuscript sources around the country. A comprehensive introduction by Dharwadker argues for historically precise definitions of theatrical modernity, outlines some of its constitutive features, and connects it to the foundational theoretical principles of urban theatre practice in modern India.

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A POETICS OF MODERNITY

Indian Theatre Theory, 1850 to the Present

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'Modernity . . . is the appropriate inclusive category for designating those colonial and postcolonial formations in urban Indian theatre that are historically unprecedented and culturally transformative, and that bring clearly into view the 'new, really new' theoretical preoccupations, institutional structures, and artistic practices of the post-1850 period.'

-From the 'Introduction'



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