

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. This description of Vedantam Satyanarayana Sarma is from a documentary film, *Kuchipudi Dance: Ancient & Modern*, Part II, produced by the India Films Division, 1973.

2. In 2014, the Telugu-speaking state of Andhra Pradesh was divided into two separate states—Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Telugu is the primary language in both states. My fieldwork was conducted in the village of Kuchipudi, located in Andhra Pradesh, and in Hyderabad, which is now located in Telangana. I use the term “Telugu-speaking South India” (alt., “Telugu South India”) to designate a linguistic region that encompasses both the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Although the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh create a unified conception of Telugu-speaking South India in the contemporary period, it is important to note that the Telugu language has extended across South India from the premodern period onwards. For a discussion of the polyglossia of South India, see Narayana Rao 2016, 28–30. For a broader discussion of the development of Telugu literary traditions, see Narayana Rao and Shulman 2002.

3. As Sharon Marcus (2005, 213) notes, “Straight men in queer theory are straw men, with the ironic result that male heterosexuality maintains its status as universal, normal, homogeneous, predictable, and hence immune from investigation. There could be no more powerful extension of queer theory than detailed research into straight men’s desires, fantasies, attractions, and gender identifications—research unafraid to probe the differences between sexual ideology and sexual practices.”

4. See also Pandey 2013, 4.

5. In a similar vein, Raka Ray (2018) makes the case for bringing colonialism in conversation with the sociology of gender.

6. For example, in her study of Syrian Christians, Thomas (2018, 9–10) critiques the interpretation of caste as solely a Hindu concept.

7. I thank Laurie L. Patton for suggesting this translation of *māyā*.

8. When joined with the roots $\sqrt{kṛi}$ or $\bar{a}\sqrt{sthā}$, *veṣa* can mean “to assume a dress” (Monier-Williams [1899] 1960, 1019).

9. Another Sanskrit term used by my interlocutors, particularly Ajay Kumar, to describe impersonation is *rūpānurūpam*. This term appears to draw on *Nāṭyaśāstra* XXXV.31–2. See Ghosh’s (1961) translation of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, vol. 2, 217.

10. Telugu belongs to the Dravidian language family, along with Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam. Sanskrit, by contrast, is the earliest Indo-European language. Although Telugu is not part of the Indo-European language family, about 80 percent of Telugu is composed of Sanskrit loan words. Given this overlap, my interlocutors would frequently use the term *strī-vēṣam* (*strī* is the Sanskrit term for woman), as opposed to the more regional variant of *āḍa-vēṣam*. For a discussion of the relationship between Sanskrit and Telugu, see Narayana Rao and Shulman 2002. For a broader discussion of the relationship between Sanskrit and the cosmopolitan vernacular, see Pollock 2006.

11. For a full discussion of impersonation in South Asia, refer to the forthcoming edited volume *Mimetic Desires: Impersonation and Guising Across South Asia*, co-edited by Harshita Mruthinti Kamath and Pamela Lothspeich. The volume brings together the work of fifteen scholars on the subject of impersonation/guising/embodyment in South Asia, spanning the early modern and contemporary periods. The broader definition of the term “impersonation” cited here is from the introduction to the volume.

12. For uses of the term “impersonation” and/or “impersonator,” see Pani 1977; Satyanarayana Sarma 1996; Kalakrishna 1996; Hansen 1998; Kapur 2004; Gopalakrishnan 2006; Nagabhushana Sarma 2012; Kaur 2013; Mukherjee and Chatterjee 2016; Multani 2017.

13. Indian feminist scholars have broadened the scope of impersonation to interpret tropes of mimicry in colonial subject formation (Roy 1998) and trace discourses on aspiration and emplacement in contemporary India (Mankekar 2015).

14. For a discussion of gender ambiguity in South Asia, see, among others, Pani 1977; Doniger 1982, 1995, 2000; Goldman 1993; Vanita and Kidwai 2001; Vanita 2002; Chatterjee 2012; Flueckiger 2013. Indian conceptions of personhood and the porousness of the body also frame the ways that practices of gender guising and impersonation appear in the South Asian context (Marriott 1976; Daniel 1984; Nabokov 2000; Smith 2006). See my recent essay in the edited volume *Refiguring the Body* (2016) for a discussion of Indian personhood in relation to Kuchipudi performance.

15. For example, in Hanne M. de Bruin’s (2006) study of the South Indian theatrical style of Kattaikkuttu, *vēṣam* extends beyond outer appearance: “It represents the dramatic character’s physical appearance and his or her personality, which are realized in performance through the actor’s body and voice” (107).

16. I have chosen to transliterate the terms *hijrā* and *koṭhū* according to standardized Hindi spelling.

17. Carole-Anne Tyler (2003, 2) suggests that all gender can be viewed as a socially mandated form of impersonation.

18. For Butler ([1990] 2008, xxv), “drag is an example that is meant to establish that ‘reality’ is not as fixed as we generally assume it to be. The purpose of the example is to expose the tenuousness of gender ‘reality’ in order to counter the violence performed by gender norms.”

19. C. Riley Snorton (2017, 57) makes a case for reading cross-dressing as a form of *fungibility*, a practice that became a critical performance for blacks in the antebellum period.

For a discussion of cross-dressing and fetishism in the context of British imperialism, see also McClintock 1995, chap. 3.

20. As examples of scholars who use the terms “transvestism” and/or “theatrical transvestism,” see Garber 1992; Senelick 2000; Hansen 1999, 2002; Suthrell 2004; Kaur 2013.

21. For a discussion of the plural term masculinities, see also De Soudy 2015, 8–9; Thangaraj 2015, 16.

22. For a summary and critique of Connell’s theorizations on hegemonic masculinity, see Inhorn 2012, 41–48. See also *Gender Reckonings: New Social Theory and Research* (2018), edited by James W. Messerschmidt et al., which substantively engages Connell’s work.

23. As Marcia C. Inhorn (2012, 45) notes in her study of emergent masculinities of Arab men, masculinity should not be pigeonholed into a static binary between hegemonic and subordinated.

24. According to Halberstam (1998, 241): “[I]t is crucial to recognize that masculinity does not belong to men, has not been produced only by men, and does not properly express male heterosexuality . . . what we call ‘masculinity’ has also been produced by masculine women, gender deviants, and often lesbians.” See also Lucinda Ramberg’s (2014, 199–211) discussion of the masculinity of *jōgatis*, women who are ritually dedicated to the goddess Yellamma. Ramberg also discusses *jōgappas*, who are people sexed as men and transformed into sacred women by the goddess Yellamma (200–201).

25. Important works on South Asian masculinities include Mrinalini Sinha’s *Colonial Masculinities* (1995), Sikata Banerjee’s *Make Me a Man!* (2005), Caroline Osella and Filippo Osella’s *Men and Masculinities in South India* (2006), Jarrod L. Whitaker’s *Strong Arms and Drinking Strength* (2011), as well as the essays in the edited volumes *Sexual Sites, Seminal Attitudes* (Srivastava 2004) and *South Asian Masculinities: Context of Change, Sites of Continuity* (Chopra, Osella, and Osella 2004). Psychoanalytic and psychological studies of South Asian men and/or masculinities include Sudhir Kakar’s *The Inner World* ([1978] 2012), Ashis Nandy’s *The Intimate Enemy* ([1983] 2009), and Stanley Kurtz’s *All the Mothers Are One* (1992), among others. More recent scholarship that discusses South Asian masculinities includes the works of Heather Streets-Salter (2010), Craig Jeffrey (2010), Chandrima Chakraborty (2011), Joseph Alter (1992, 2011), Amanullah De Soudy (2015), Charu Gupta (2016), as well as the edited volumes *Popular Masculine Cultures in India* (Dasgupta and Baker 2013), *Masculinity and Its Challenges in India* (Dasgupta and Gokulsing 2014), *Gender and Masculinities* (Doron and Broom 2014), and *Mapping South Asian Masculinities* (Chakraborty 2015). Gayatri Gopinath’s *Impossible Desires* (2005), Jasbir Puar’s *Terrorist Assemblages* (2007), Junaid Rana’s *Terrifying Muslims* (2011), Stanley I. Thangaraj’s *Desi Hoop Dreams* (2015), and the edited volume *Asian American Sporting Culture* (2016) all provide compelling analyses of South Asian American and diasporic masculinities. Gyanendra Pandey (2013) examines black and Dalit struggles for rights in the United States and India, with a specific focus on caste, race, and masculinity (28). Lucinda Ramberg (2014, 196–200) expands discussions of masculinity to encompass kinships relations of *jōgatis*, women who are dedicated to the goddess Yellamma and sometimes serve as sons or fathers in their natal families, thus troubling normative kinship arrangements. While not focusing on masculinity directly, Sumathi Ramaswamy’s *The Goddess and the Nation* (2010, 180) situates male homosociality alongside constructions of nationhood and the cartographed figure of Bharat Mata.

26. Inhorn notes a similar undertheorization of Arab masculinity in the introduction to *The New Arab Man* (2012).

27. The earliest mention of the brahmin in relation to caste hierarchy arises in *R̥g Veda* 10.90 (*Puruṣa-sūkta*). Jarrod L. Whitaker (2011) provides an extensive discussion of the construction of masculinity in the context of the poetic hymns of the *R̥g Veda*. In particular, he analyzes the masculinity of Vedic poet-priests in relation to the deities Indra, Soma, and Agni. For a discussion of *varṇa* and *jāti* in medieval Andhra, see also Talbot 2001, 50–55.

28. In the colonial context, Ashis Nandy ([1983] 2009, 10) posits two contrasting notions of masculinity: “The Brāhmaṇ in his cerebral, self-denying asceticism was the traditional masculine counterpoint to the more violent, ‘virile,’ active Kṣatriya [warrior].” Also discussing colonial conceptions of masculinity, Mrinalini Sinha (1995, 2) describes the opposition between the so-called “manly Englishman” and the “effeminate *babu*,” the latter being a pejorative term used to characterize elite, upper-caste Bengali men in the late colonial period. Drawing on the work of nineteenth-century Bengali writer Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya (aka Bankim), Chandrima Chakraborty (2011, 56) posits the category of ascetic nationalist martiality that brings together the Hindu masculine archetypes of the brahmin (priest) and Kshatriya (warrior). Ronojoy Sen’s *Nation at Play* (2015) briefly discusses brahmins in sport. According to one calculation, since 1970 more than a third of Indian cricket players have been brahmin (Sen 2015, 229). C.J. Fuller and Haripriya Narasimhan’s (2014) longitudinal study of Tamil brahmins provides further analysis of brahmin communities in South India. Although not focusing on brahmin masculinity specifically, Mary Hancock’s *Womanhood in the Making* (1999), Leela Prasad’s *Poetics of Conduct* (2007), and David Knipe’s *Vedic Voices* (2015) are important notable studies of contemporary South Indian brahmin communities. See also Uma Chakravarti (2003) for a discussion of brahminical patriarchy and Sonja Thomas’s (2018, chap. 3) extensive discussion of Namboodiri brahmins in relation to Syrian Christians in Kerala.

29. For a discussion of the thread ceremony and other life-cycle rites, see Singer 1980, 90–99. See also Olson 1977; B. Smith 1986; F. Smith 2006; Knipe 2015.

30. See also chapter 4, “Becoming a Veda,” in David Knipe’s *Vedic Voices* (2015).

31. Osella and Osella (2006) question whether the status of brahminhood is achieved solely by rites of initiation. For example, they note that brahmin women are treated as brahmin, despite the fact that they do not undergo initiation in a similar manner to their male counterparts. The authors conclude that “Brahmin men continue to hold to their esoteric and gender-specific knowledge and claim initiation rites as essential to man-making, while allowing that actually the rite is ineffective in the absence of many other things—biological sex, correct caste birth status, continual performance and so on” (36–37).

32. William J. Jackson’s *Tyāgarāja and the Renewal of Tradition* (1994, 207–30) and Hancock’s *Womanhood in the Making* (1999, 39–72) provide lengthy discussions of Smarta identity. Jackson (1994, 218) characterizes Smartas as renewers of tradition who are beyond sectarian affiliation: “They are thought of as stable tradition-bearers, yet they were innovators who popularized *brāhmaṇic* teachings and ideals among lower twice-born castes, women and *śūdras*, and they promoted Vedic ideas among Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva worshippers.” Peterson and Soneji (2008, 321n1) define Smartas as “a prominent Brahmin group in south India. Traditionally linked to Sanskrit orthodoxy, temples, and monasteries, Smartas today are key players in the area of cultural production, education, and business.” When defining Smarta brahmins, Prasad (2007, 12) notes that they take their name from their “adherence to *smṛti* (‘remembered’) tradition that mainly comprises the Dharmashastras and

the Dharmasutras.” For discussions of Smarta brahmins in South India, see also Younger 1995, 42n30; Rudisill 2007; Fisher 2017.

33. Hancock is particularly critical of Milton Singer’s ([1972] 1980) reliance on the work of Sanskritist and Smarta brahmin V. Raghavan: “Raghavan’s engagement with Singer’s project was consistent with already established Smārta interventions in cultural debates in India. I argue that scholarly paradigms should be seen as by-products of Smārta cultural history rather than the products of Euro-Western paradigms” (Hancock 1999, 67).

34. In 1996, Madras was renamed Chennai in line with a nationwide trend of renaming the English spellings of Indian cities in accordance with vernacular spellings in Indian languages. In this book, I use Madras to refer to the city prior to 1996 and Chennai to refer to the city after 1996. For a discussion of the renaming of Madras state to Tamil Nadu, see Ramaswamy 1997, 154–61.

35. See also Soneji 2012, 223–25.

36. According to Rudisill (2007, 62, 77), the Chennai *sabha* offers both “high-brow” culture through the performance of classical dance and Karnatak music, as well as “middle-brow” entertainment through comedy plays, also referred to as *sabha* theatre. In the case of the former, “high-brow” performances go hand in hand with the nationalist agenda to create classical performing arts, namely Bharatanatyam, the major “classical” dance form of South India. See also Rudisill (2012) for a discussion of the Chennai *sabha* and brahmin humor.

37. While some published scholarship refers to Vaidiki as Vaidika (Fuller and Narasimhan 2014, 216–17), my interlocutors colloquially referred to the group as Vaidiki. I follow the lexicon of my interlocutors, as well as the work of Jackson (1994) and Narayana Rao (2007), and refer to the group as Vaidiki. Vaidiki and Niyogi are two dominant brahmin *jātis* in Telugu South India. Vaidiki (lit., “knowing the *Veda*”) brahmins are known to perform priestly rituals, while Niyogi brahmins are traditionally considered to occupy “secular” professions, spanning from Telugu poets to village accountants (Jackson 1994, 207). For a discussion of the distinction between Vaidiki and Niyogi brahmins, particularly in comparison to Tamil brahmins, see Fuller and Narasimhan 2014, 31, 56, 216–17. For an example of the contestation between Niyogis and Vaidikis, see Velcheru Narayana Rao’s afterword to his translation of Gurajada Apparaō’s play *Kanyāśūlkam* (2007, 159–89). For a discussion of Vaidiki pundits in the Godavari delta in Telugu South India, see Knipe 2015.

38. Fuller and Narasimhan (2014) trace the transformation of Tamil brahmins from a traditional, rural elite caste in the colonial period to a modern, urban middle-class social group in the contemporary context. Once residing in an *agrahāram*, or brahmin village in which brahmins exclusively occupy a designated street or quarter, the Tamil brahmin community has, for the most part, left rural South India and now primarily resides in urban cities in India and the United States (30–31). In this transition from rural *agrahāram* to modern cosmopolitan space, Tamil brahmins have shifted into professional and administrative employment, enabling them to occupy a new middle-class urban caste identity, colloquially referred to as “Tam Brams” (228–29).

39. The Kuchipudi *agrahāram* (brahmin quarters) is akin to the *agrahārams* described by Knipe (2015, 23–27) in the Godavari delta of Telugu South India. For a discussion of the Sringeri *agrahāram*, see Prasad 2007, 44–47.

40. Vedantam Venkata Naga Chalapathi Rao now resides in Canada with his family and returns to the Kuchipudi village to visit his mother who still lives there.

41. The fact that Kuchipudi brahmin men dance, rather than conduct rituals, raises the possibility that this performance community is an example of a *jāti* group that sought to elevate their status by identifying with a higher *varṇa* (Kinsley 1993, 156).

42. In a chapter titled “Crossing ‘Lines’ of Subjectivity: Transnational Movements and Gay Identifications,” Gayatri Reddy (2005) discusses transnational discourses on non-normative sexuality in relation to the *hijrā* communities that she studies in Telugu South India.

43. See Jyoti Puri’s *Women, Body, Desire in Post-Colonial India* (1999, 8) for a discussion of how sociocultural understandings of gender reinforce mandatory heterosexuality for middle- and upper-class Indian women.

44. A palpable anxiety of being read as effeminate arose in the brahmins’ responses to this question, mirroring in interesting ways the discourses of masculinity and perceived effeminacy described by Sinha 1995, Krishnaswamy 2011, and Thangaraj 2015. For a discussion of effeminate gestures, see also Khubchandani 2016, 76–79. For an alternative discussion of masculinity and effeminacy in the context of Dalits, see Gupta 2016.

45. The status given to impersonators in the Kuchipudi village counters Morcom’s (2013, 172) suggestion that narratives of reform and modernization resulted in a “growing sense that female impersonators represented a ‘backward’ and also awkward aspect of Indian performing arts (an idea that is still very much alive today).”

46. For a detailed history of Kuchipudi, see also Nagabhushana Sarma 2016. Notably, Kuchipudi must be situated in relation to other regional performance traditions, including *yakṣagāna* (Jonnalagadda 1996b; Nagabhushana Sarma 2009), Turpu Bhagavatam (Nagabhushana Sarma 1995), and Bhagavata Mela Natakam (Jones 1963; Kothari 1977; Arudra 1986; Kothari and Pasricha 2001; Inoue 2008; Soneji 2012).

47. I have chosen to transliterate the term *devadāsī* in accordance with published scholarship (e.g., Soneji 2012) and in accordance with Sanskrit transliteration.

48. For an additional discussion of Kuchipudi and film, see Thota 2016.

49. A copy of the document is found in Jonnalagadda 1996b, appendix 1. According to poet-scholar Arudra (1994, 30), the 1763 document is “a settlement deed specifying the allocation of shares of the village between the then existing 15 dance families. The document was an agreement of mutual trust and it mentions that the grants, sanuds [land grant document], and such conferential [documents] of the land were lost, but the village had been an agraḥaram belonging to the original families.” Putcha (2015, 5) also discusses this 1763 property document.

50. Brahmin families with the surnames Chinta, Hemadri, Pennamudi, Tadeipalli, and Somayajulu also live in the village’s *agrahāram*. Since these surnames were not listed on the 1763 property document, they appear to have migrated to the village at a later date. The surname Chinta is particularly prominent in the Kuchipudi village today and is also considered to be part of the list of hereditary Kuchipudi brahmin families.

51. This map is based on the observations of Pasumarti Mrutyumjaya in March 2014 and does not reflect the owners of specific households based on an assessment of property deeds or other official documentation. It also does not reflect any recent changes in households since March 2014. The purpose of the map is to give a general overview of the Kuchipudi *agrahāram*.

52. See chapter 4 in Prasad’s *Poetics of Conduct* (2007), which discusses the term *sāmpradāyam* in the context of the pilgrimage town of Sringeri.

53. For a discussion of the tripartite typology of *yakṣagāna*, *kalāpam*, and *vēṣam*, see also Soneji 2012, 268n13; Putcha 2015, 9–10.

54. Similar responses are recorded by Philip Zarrilli (2000, 70) in his study of the all-male dance/theatrical form of Kathakali. For an alternative discussion of the reasons behind gender exclusion in Indian dance, see Subramaniam 1995.

55. Because of his skills in impersonation, Ajay is increasingly performing the role of Satyabhama in *Bhāmākalāpam* in urban centers such as Vijayawada. As an example, see the following review of Kumar's 2014 performance in *The Hindu*: www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/male-dancer-floors-connoisseurs-with-bhama-kalapam/articles871830.ece (accessed August 15, 2018). Such performances are staged separately from those performed by hereditary brahmin performers such as Vedantam Venkata Naga Chalapati Rao. Another example of a nonbrahmin impersonator is Hyderabad-based dancer Haleem Khan, who is exceptional in his skills in donning the *strī-vēṣam*.

56. See also the work of Sitara Thobani (2017) on the transnational scope of Indian classical dance, particularly in the UK.

57. The Sangeet Natak Akademi, the central government-operated arts organization in India, gives its annual prestigious SNA Award to one recipient from each of the following eight regional dance forms: Chhau, Sattriya, Odissi, Kuchipudi, Manipuri, Kathakali, Kathak, and Bharatanatyam (www.sangeetnatak.gov.in/sna/ich.php, accessed August 13, 2017). These eight dance forms are commonly referred to by the appellation “classical.”

58. Notably, there is an expansive body of scholarship on Indian dance, particularly the ostensible “revival” of *devadāsī* dance into Bharatanatyam. Important scholarship on *devadāsīs* includes, among others, Frédérique Apffel-Marglin 1985; Saskia Kersenboom 1987; Anne-Marie Gaston 1992, 1996; Leslie Orr 2000; Indira Viswanathan Peterson and Daves Soneji 2008; Hari Krishnan 2008; Daves Soneji 2010, 2012; Amrit Srinivasan 1985, 2010; Lucinda Ramberg 2014; Anjali Arondekar 2012, 2018. Important works on the classicization of Bharatanatyam in the mid-twentieth century include, among others, those of Avanthi Meduri 1988, 1996, 2004, 2008; Matthew Harp Allen 1997, 2008; Uttara Asha Coorlawala 2004; Janet O'Shea 2007, 2008; Daves Soneji 2010. Other important contributions to broader scholarship on Indian dance include Purnima Shah 1998, 2002; Phillip Zarrilli 2000; Ketu Katrak 2001, 2004, 2011; Pallabi Chakravorty 2008, 2017; Arthi Devarajan 2010, 2011; Priya Srinivasan 2012; Ahalya Satkunaratnam 2012, 2013; Anna Morcom 2013; Katherine Zubko 2006, 2014a, 2014b; Anusha Kedhar 2014; Margaret Walker 2016; Sitara Thobani 2017; Arya Madhavan 2017; Sreenath Nair 2017; Ruth Vanita 2018.

59. In her work on the *devadāsī* diaspora through the charitable institution Gomantak Maratha Samaj, Anjali Arondekar (2018, 111) notes: “Devadasi is a compound noun, coupling deva or god with dasi or female slave; a pan-Indian term (falsely) interchangeable with courtesan, dancing girl, prostitute and sex worker. Members of this diaspora, also referred to as kalavants (literally carriers of kala/art), shuttled between Portuguese and British colonial India for over two hundred years.” For a definition of the term *devadāsī*, see also Arondekar 2012, 244.

60. For a discussion of *jōgatis* who are women who marry the goddess Yellamma and become her priests or caretakers, see Ramberg 2014. According to Ramberg, *jōgatis* are called and call themselves *devadāsīs* (3).

61. Janet O'Shea (2007, 29) defines *sadir* as “the solo, female dance form associated with the literary and musical traditions of southern India, ... performed by devadasis, courtesans

and ritual officiants dedicated to temple and court service.” For a discussion of the nomenclature of *sadir* and Bharatanatyam, see Arudra 1986/87.

62. A parallel revival occurred in the context of Karnatak music. As Amanda Weidman (2006, 5) notes, “This ‘revival’ depended on the selection, from a number of heterogeneous musical traditions, of particular sounds, performance conventions, and repertoire that would come to be identified with indigenous ‘classical’ music traditions of South India.” In short, both music and dance were transformed to represent “classical” South Indian arts by appealing to an imagined tradition of the past. For a discussion of the classicization of Karnatak music, see Weidman 2006, 2008; Peterson and Soneji 2008; Subramanian 2006, 2008; Allen 2008.

63. See also Schwartz 2004, 19–20.

64. As an example of this tension, see Meduri’s (1988) discussion of brahmin Rukmini Devi Arundale and *devadāsī* dancer T. Balasaraswati.

65. According to Vissa Appa Rao (1958, 12), a mid-twentieth-century proponent of Telugu literature and dance, “By constant observation of the different techniques of the deva-dasis, Kuchipudi artists had adapted, in turn, many forms from them but interpreted them in their own tradition.” See also Soneji 2012, 267n11.

66. For a list of dance items based on Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry’s teaching manual, see Putcha 2015, fig. 8. As Putcha notes, “With the exception of *Bhāmākalāpam*, all of these pieces belonged to female dance traditions, and most characterized a solo female character” (18).

67. See also Jonnalagadda (2016, 1062–63), who states, “the APSNA has played a decisive role in the development of dance, drama, music and cinema.”

68. Putcha (2013, 101) interprets the presence of Kanchanamala as reflective of a broader trend in Kuchipudi regarding the place of the female dancer: “Kanchanamala was sent to New Delhi specifically because she represented a history of Kuchipudi and of classical dance that was yet to be written: the institutionalization of a local tradition in order to impart it to middle-to-upper-class/caste girls from Telugu families. Bharatanatyam and Kathak were among the first genres to formulate this marker of classicism, and Kuchipudi, represented by women like Kanchanamala, followed suit in short order.”

69. In her article on the Kuchipudi seminar controversy, Putcha (2013, 96) reexamines the contestation in the 1958 national seminar and the subsequent “correction” in the 1959 APSNA seminar to interrogate the underlying Telugu anxieties regarding Kuchipudi’s place in the minds of Tamil elite. With the hope of mirroring the female solo repertoire of Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi proponents attempted to prove its rich tradition of female dance culture by including performances by the aforementioned female dancer Kanchanamala in the 1958 national seminar, and Vaidehi and Induvadana (both performers from hereditary *devadāsī* families) in the 1959 APSNA seminar. Putcha argues that although Kuchipudi is traditionally considered an exclusively upper-caste male dance form, its attainment of classical status paradoxically rests on the female dancing body (106). For a discussion of these two seminars, see also Bhikshu 2006, 252; Jonnalagadda 2016, 1063.

70. According to Jonnalagadda (2016, 1063), this tour was appreciated by well-known Tamil scholars and artists, including V. Raghavan, E. Krishna Iyer, Rukmini Devi Arundale, Indrani Rehman, and Ramayya Pillai.

71. The academy also organized several festivals of Andhra dance forms, including Kuchipudi and *devadāsī* dance traditions, as well as the printed publication, *Natyakala*, featuring articles on dance, drama, music, and literature (Jonnalagadda 2006, 272; 2016, 1064–65).

72. The division of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in 2014 and the establishment of Andhra Pradesh's new state capital in Amaravati, which is regionally proximate to Kuchipudi, will undoubtedly continue to shape the importance of the Kuchipudi village.

73. There are many scholars of Indian dance and music who are also trained in performance, including Matthew Harp Allen, Hanne M. de Bruin, Pallabi Chakravorty, Arthi Devarajan, Anuradha Jonnalagadda, Anusha Kedhar, Saskia Kersenboom, Hari Krishnan, Arya Madhavan, Avanthi Meduri, Rumya Putcha, Zoe Sherinian, Daves Soneji, Priya Srinivasan, Sitara Thobani, Amanda Weidman, and Katherine Zubko, among others.

74. See Alter 1992; Sklar 1994; Weidman 2006; Srinivasan 2012; Sherinian 2014; Zubko 2014a; Kedhar 2014; Thangaraj 2015.

75. I returned to India for follow-up research in January 2011, August 2012, March 2014, December 2015, December 2017, and July 2018.

76. As a point of comparison, see Pallabi Chakravorty's multisited ethnographic study *This Is How We Dance Now!* (2017).

77. Turpu Bhagavatam is the performance tradition of a goldsmith community from eastern Andhra Pradesh (see Nagabhushana Sarma 1995).

78. For a discussion of the contestation between Niyogis and Vaidikis, see Narayana Rao 2007; Fuller and Narasimhan 2014.

79. Even as recently as 2018, my caste became a point of discussion during a conversation with an extended family member of a deceased dancer I had previously interviewed in 2010. "Is she one of us?" the family member asked. "Yes, of course, she's Vaidiki!" responded one of my elder brahmin male interlocutors.

80. For a discussion of the insider/outsider dichotomy, particularly related to brahminical caste status, see Sarma 2001. For a discussion of coming to know one's brahmin caste affiliation in the context of ethnographic fieldwork, see Srinivas 2018, 18–24.

81. See also Dia Da Costa's (2018) essay critiquing caste innocence and caste terror by *savarna* academics. Thanks to Sailaja Krishnamurti for pointing me to the work of Chaudhry 2017 and Da Costa 2018.

1. TAKING CENTER STAGE: THE POET-SAINT AND THE IMPERSONATOR OF KUCHIPUDI DANCE HISTORY

1. Anuradha Jonnalagadda (1996b, 44) cites dates from Indian scholars, including Banda Kanakalingeshwara Rao and P.S.R. Appa Rao, who suggest that Siddhendra belongs to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; Sistla Ramakrishna Sastry and Balantrapu Rajanikanta Rao, who place him in the fifteenth century; and Vissa Appa Rao and Mohan Khokar, who place him in the seventeenth century.

2. In using the term "brahmin impersonator," I imply a hereditary Kuchipudi brahmin man who dons the *strī-vēṣam*, not a performer who impersonates brahmins.

3. For a discussion of the Tanjavur Quartet, see Weidman 2006, 62.

4. For a discussion of the term "gynemimesis," see Krishnan 2009, 386–87n1.

5. For a discussion of Iyer in *vēṣam*, see also Meduri 1996, 160; O'Shea 2007, 35; Katrak 2011, 29.

6. See also Ramberg 2014, 23–24.

7. Soneji (2012, 267n11) notes: “South Indian Brahmin men were involved in the production of courtesan dance as composers, scholar-teachers, and interpreters. Brahmin men were also involved as the scholarly collaborators of *devadāsīs* and *naṭṭuvāṇārs* in some parts of South India.”

8. Later in his career, Shankar interacted with Kuchipudi guru Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry (Putcha 2015, 13–15).

9. According to the official website for Jacob's Pillow, Denishawn “changed the course of dance history; most of today's modern dancers trace their ancestry to Denishawn.” See www.jacobspillow.org/about/pillow-history/ted-shawn/ (accessed July 29, 2018). Modern dancers who were once members of Denishawn include Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, Pauline Lawrence, and Jane Sherman (Srinivasan 2012, 104).

10. For a discussion of the influential role of Ananda Coomaraswamy's (1918) essay “The Dance of Shiva,” see Allen 1997, 83–85.

11. Additional references to Ram Gopal include his autobiography, *Rhythm in the Heavens* (1957), and a special edition of the journal *Nartanam*, including a photo-essay arranged by Modali Nagabhushana Sarma (2003).

12. In addition, Mohan Khokar's (1976) short article on male dancers covers a range of traditions, ranging from Bhagavatam Mela Natakam to Kathakali.

13. In a thought-provoking essay titled “Lingering Questions and Some Fashionable Fallacies,” Arudra (1994, 29) asks, “Is Siddhendra Yogi, who supposedly originated/revived Kuchipudi, a historical personage or a legendary figure?” Arudra suggests that there is only a single *Bhāmākalāpam* text that contains a *daruvu* (metrical song) with Siddhendra's poetic signature (*mudra*). In 1990, Arudra found a *mudra* in a manuscript of the *mandulapaṭṭu*, a section of *Bhāmākalāpam* concerning love potions and charms, which apparently contains Siddhendra's *mudra*. On this basis, Arudra concludes that “with this singular piece of evidence, the historicity of Siddhendra Swami, if not that of a Yogi, is undoubtedly established; but his date and his connection with Divi-Kuchipudi are still unanswered questions” (29). Kuchipudi dance scholar Anuradha Jonnalagadda (1996b, 44) counters Arudra by noting that most *Bhāmākalāpam* manuscripts include a verse stating that the text was written by Siddhendra. Jonnalagadda concludes, “Though it is difficult in view of the paucity of authentic source materials to fix the date of Siddhendra Yogi, since the oral tradition is rather strong in this regard, it may be concluded that he must have existed in reality” (45).

14. I have surveyed the following palm-leaf manuscripts or printed texts of palm-leaf manuscripts: *Bhāmākalāpamu* R. 429, a palm-leaf manuscript from the Tirupati Oriental Research Library (ca. late nineteenth or early twentieth century); *Āṭabhāgavatam Satyabhāmā-vēṣakatha* printed by the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library Chennai (ca. late nineteenth or early twentieth century); and *Bhāmākalāpamu* R. 1924L, a text printed by the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library Chennai (ca. late nineteenth or early twentieth century). Siddhendra's name is mentioned in one palm-leaf 11b of *Bhāmākalāpamu* R. 429 and on p. 79 of the printed text of *Bhāmākalāpamu* R. 1924L. It is not mentioned in *Āṭabhāgavatam Satyabhāmā-vēṣakatha*. See Kamath 2012.

15. I am greatly indebted to Velcheru Narayana Rao, who read through the entire manuscript with me in the summer of 2011. I am also indebted to Geeta Madhuri and Anuradha Jonnalagadda for sharing the entire scanned copy of the original palm-leaf manuscript in January 2010. For a discussion of *Bhāmākālāpam* textual history, see Jonnalagadda 1996a.

16. As an example, see the first chapter of Allasani Peddana's sixteenth-century Telugu *prabandha Manucaritramu* (*The Story of Manu*, trans. Narayana Rao and Shulman, 2015) in which the poet describes the exact instances that prompted the king Krishnadevaraya to commission the text. Another example includes the first chapter of Muddupalani's *Rādhikāsāntvanamu* (*The Appeasement of Radhika: Radhika Santawanam*, trans. Mulchandani, 2011), in which the poet, who is also a courtesan performer, describes her family lineage in detail.

17. A well-known example is the performance of *Navajanārdana Pārijātam* in the town of Pithapuram, in which nine *devadāsī* troupes would perform *Bhāmākālāpam* for nine consecutive nights at the local Kuntimadhava temple. See Nataraja Ramakrishna's (1984) publication *Navajanārdanam*. See also Soneji 2012, 268n16; Putcha 2015, 11.

18. For example, when reading *Bhāmākālāpamu* R. 429 with Telugu scholar Velcheru Narayana Rao, we concluded that this palm-leaf likely belonged to Telugu courtesans (*kalāvantulu*) rather than the brahmins of the Kuchipudi village.

19. It is possible that multiple authors composed variations of *Bhāmākālāpam* for their respective performance communities. For example, Soneji (2012, 268n15) notes that "the famous poet of the Godavari delta, Gaddam Subbarayudu Sastri (d. 1940) composed individual *Bhāmākālāpam* librettos for fourteen *kalāvantulu* in the East Godavari region, including the famed Maddula Lakshminarayana and Maddula Venkataratnam."

20. In her summary of Siddhendra's hagiography, Kapila Vatsyayan ([1980] 2007, 57) states that Siddhendra was a disciple of Tirtha Narayana Yogi from Melattur. Judith Lynne Hanna (1983, 65) replicates this summary, although she notes that Siddhendra was the devotee of Tirtha Narayana Yati. See also Arudra 1994, 29.

21. According to the hagiography, Siddhendra was betrothed to a girl from a neighboring village as an infant. In his youth, the elders of the village urged Siddhendra to fulfill these vows and bring his bride back to his village (see Acharya and Sarabhai 1992, 8).

22. The summary of Siddhendra's hagiography is based on the following sources: Khokar 1957; Kanakalingeshwara Rao 1966; Kothari 1977; Rama Rao 1992; Acharya and Sarabhai 1992; Usha Gayatri 2016.

23. This practice of "vocal masquerade," as it has been called, is also present in some Sufi poetry in South Asia (Petievich 2008; Kugle 2013, 2016).

24. A.K. Ramanujan (1989b, 10) identifies vocal guising as inherent to the *bhakti* movement: "In such a *bhakti* tradition, to be male is not to be specially privileged. This may be simply a variation of the idea that in the eyes of god, the last shall be the first. Or it may spring from the idea that being male, like other kinds of privilege, is an obstacle in spiritual awareness, in attaining true inwardness."

25. Later publications on Kuchipudi dance mirror Appa Rao's language; for example, Indian dance critic and scholar Sunil Kothari (1977, 290–91) writes, "Siddhendra turned an ascetic and is considered to have established the Bhama-cult, which is later known as Madhura-Bhakti. Satyabhama, the consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa, loved him passionately. Her ambition was to keep him exclusively in her embrace. The devotee worships the Lord with

such intense passion and wishes to merge with the Lord. This yearning for union with paramatma—the supersoul on part of the atma underlined this intense devotion. And it has become the governing principle of Bhakti in general.” For a philosophical interpretation of *Bhāmākalāpam* through the lens of *jīvātma/paramātma*, see also Naidu 1975, 10.

26. See, among others, Kothari 1977; Vatsyayan [1980] 2007; Hanna 1983; Acharya and Sarabhai 1992; Shah 2002.

27. For a discussion of elite Smarta brahmins and the turn to *bhakti*-influenced styles, see Hancock 1999, 57.

28. Arudra (1994, 29) overtly criticizes the accounts of Banda Kankalingeshwara Rao (1966), Acharya and Sarabhai (1992), Vatsyayan ([1980] 2007), and others, characterizing them as “unauthenticated” and reliant on “unsubstantiated opinion.”

29. Similarly, Vedantam Radheshyam stated: “*Bhāmākalāpam* is the struggle of the *jīvātma* becoming *paramātma*” (interview with author, Kuchipudi, March 6, 2010). Yelleswarapu Srinivas suggested: “Siddhendra Yogi saw [Kuchipudi practitioners] dance and became happy. He thought about how he can bring [*jīvātma*] into *paramātma*, and that’s how he brought the true reality of Krishna, and *jīvātma* and the *paramātma*. He introduced Madhavi as a friend to join *jīvātma* to *paramātma*” (interview with author, Kuchipudi, February 17, 2010).

30. See, among others, Kanakalingeshwara Rao 1966; Naidu 1975; Kothari 1977; Rama Rao 1992; Acharya and Sarabhai 1992; Usha Gayatri 2016.

31. Related to this section, see my discussions of Kshetrappa and Siddhendra in a forthcoming *Journal of Hindu Studies* article, “Two *Bhaktas*, One District: Re-visioning Hagiographic Imagery in Telugu Performing Arts” (edited by Karen Pechilis and Amy-Ruth Holt). I also focus on the figure of Kshetrappa in a forthcoming *Indian Economic and Social History Review* article, “Kṣētrappa: The Making of a Telugu Poet” (edited by Velcheru Narayana Rao).

32. Appa Rao (1958, 8) also discusses Kshetrappa in his address on Kuchipudi in the 1958 Dance Seminar in Delhi.

33. See also Khokar 1957; Kanakalingeshwara Rao 1966; Naidu 1975; Kothari 1977.

34. Amanda Weidman (2006, 100) finds a similar trend in mid-twentieth-century English translations of Telugu compositions by the nineteenth-century poet Tyagaraja, in which the theological message was more important than the lyrics themselves: “In representing Tyagaraja as a saint, these hagiographic accounts endow him with an almost miraculous ability to rise above his circumstances.” See also William J. Jackson’s study of Tyagaraja (1991, 1994).

35. I thank Amy-Ruth Holt for pointing me to this image of Siddhendra at Tank Bund in Hyderabad. This image is found in my forthcoming article, “Two *Bhaktas*, One District: Re-visioning Hagiographic Imagery in Telugu Performing Arts” (edited by Karen Pechilis and Amy-Ruth Holt).

36. The Siddhendra Yogi Mahotsav in honor of Kuchipudi’s founding saint is usually held annually in March. The festival was held as recently as March 2016: www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/siddhendra-yogi-mahotsav-to-begin-on-march-20/article8344955.ece (accessed August 18, 2017).

37. Hawley (2015, 25) describes Raghavan as follows: “Impeccably educated, famously liberal, deeply southern, and patently Brahmin, Raghavan was perfectly suited to the task of

putting forth a narrative of Hinduism from the ground up, Hinduism in a bhakti mode—Hinduism, in fact, beyond Hinduism.”

38. According to Kathryn Hansen, a move away from stylization toward realism affected the practice of impersonation in Indian theatre (pers. comm., October 22, 2016). For a discussion of Bombay versus Calcutta theatre and the decline of impersonation, see also Hansen 2002, 168, 179n16.

39. This contrasts with Calcutta theatre in which actresses replaced impersonators onstage (Hansen 2002, 168; Bhattacharya 2008, 120).

40. See Hansen’s studies on impersonators published in 1998, 1999, 2002, 2004b, and 2015. In addition, her monograph, *Stages of Life: Indian Theatre Autobiographies* (2013), also includes excerpts from Jayshankar Sundari’s autobiography.

41. Stage actress Nirmala Gogate, for example, lauded his beauty in a woman’s guise: “[Gogate] speaks of his exquisite and soft complexion—fair with a golden tinge—which was radiant, his large eloquent eyes, his expressive hands, his delicate movements despite a slightly plump but well-proportioned body, and a dignified appearance like that of a well-born woman. All of this, she claims, brought people a new awareness and appreciation of feminine beauty” (Kosambi 2015, 269). When discussing one of Bal Gandharva’s earlier performances as the character of Bhamini in the play *Manapaman*, Shanta Gokhale (2000, 36–37) writes: “Bal Gandharva had, by this time, come to embody the object of male fantasy—the woman who hid her fire under deliciously modest coquetry.”

42. Barleen Kaur (2013, 196) counters Hansen’s claims to suggest that although women may have attempted to emulate Bal Gandharva, “There was also a sizeable number of women in Maharashtra who were repulsed by Bal Gandharva’s portrayal of ‘femininity’. The women who objected to such a portrayal did so because they found his projection of femininity rather vulgar. In this sense, Bal Gandharva’s impersonation also had the potential to generate a counter-structure to the model of sexuality that he was attempting to propagate.”

43. Gandharva’s and Sundari’s Sangeet Natak Akademi awards are listed on the SNA website: www.sangeetnatak.gov.in/sna/Awardees.php?section=aa (accessed November 28, 2016).

44. See also Narayana Rao 2007, 196.

45. Sthanam also received national approbation for his impersonation; in 1956, he was awarded the national honor of Padma Shri and, in 1961, he was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi award. Sthanam’s Sangeet Natak Akademi award is listed on the SNA website: www.sangeetnatak.gov.in/sna/Awardees.php?section=aa (accessed November 28, 2016).

46. Sumathi Ramaswamy (1997, 122) notes that the Orientalist imaginary posits a dichotomy between “the natural and inherent superiority of the rational, secular, industrious, progressive (masculine) West . . . over the irrational, spiritual, passive unchanging (feminine) East.” See also Sarkar (2001, 251) and Kellen Hoxworth’s (2018) fascinating discussion of Dave Carson’s enactment of “The Bengalee Baboo” in the context of blackface minstrelsy in the late nineteenth century.

47. The refiguring of indigenous masculinity in the wake of the colonial encounter is not limited to the Indian context but is also documented by Afsaneh Najmabadi (2005) in her discussion of Iranian perceptions of beauty and masculinity.

48. Perhaps most famously, Gandhi overturned the colonial stereotype of the effeminate *bābu* through his own ascetic bodily practices and understandings of gender (Chakraborty

2011, 122). Related to themes of Gandhi, gender, and nationhood, see also Nandy [1983] 2009; Howard 2013; Valiana 2014. Sumathi Ramaswamy counters the perceived effeminacy of Gandhi in her *The Goddess and the Nation* (2010, 198–99).

49. For a discussion of Richard Burton's writings, see also Arondekar 2009, chap. 1.

50. Kathryn Hansen, pers. comm., October 22, 2016. Similar critiques arose in the case of Bharatanatyam dance, as previously discussed (Krishnan 2009).

51. Little is known about Vempati Venkatanarayana's practices of impersonation beyond his sobriquet *Abhinava Satyabhama* (Jonnalagadda 1993, 165; Usha Gayatri 2016, 186). According to Kuchipudi practitioners, Venkatanarayana is popularly known as one of three primary figures of Kuchipudi dance, along with Chinta Venkataramayya (1860–1949) and Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry (1886–1956) (Nagabhushana Sarma 2016, 49). While Venkataramayya popularized the genre of *yakṣagāna* in the Kuchipudi village and Lakshminarayana Sastry expanded the repertoire of solo items, Venkatanarayana is credited for propagating its *kalāpa* repertoire, including *Bhāmākalāpam* (Jonnalagadda 1993, 165–66; Nagabhushana Sarma 2016, 77–88). Few historical records of Venkatanarayana are available, aside for the reported accounts of scholars such as Sista Ramakrishna Sastry and Jala-sutram Rukmininadha Sastry (Nagabhushana Sarma 2016, 84–87).

52. For a discussion of APSNA and their activities to promote Kuchipudi, including the 1959 APSNA seminar, see Putcha 2013; Jonnalagadda 2016.

53. Paralleling impersonation in Kuchipudi is the context of Andhra Natyam, a revival of courtesan dance promoted by Nataraja Ramakrishna and his student Kalakrishna beginning in 1970. Ramakrishna, a nonbrahmin trained by *kalāvāntula* dancers, sought to promote and reinvigorate Telugu courtesan performance practices in the mid-twentieth century. Most notably, Ramakrishna learned *Navajanārdana Pārijātam* (a courtesan version of *Bhāmākalāpam*) from Pendela Satyabhama, a well-known *kalāvāntula* performer in Pithapuram, a town in the east Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. To promote and preserve Telugu courtesan performance, Ramakrishna rechristened their dance form as Andhra Natyam (lit., “Dance of Andhra”) in 1970. For further discussion of Andhra Natyam, see Ramakrishna 1959, 1984; Arudra 1990; Aslesha 1994; Kalakrishna 1996; Suvarchala Devi 1997; Soneji 2012.

2. “I AM SATYABHAMA”: CONSTRUCTING HEGEMONIC BRAHMIN MASCULINITY IN THE KUCHIPUDI VILLAGE

1. See Pollock (2016, 47) for the dating of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* and Zarrilli (2000, 90) for the dating of Nandikeshvara's *Abhinayadarpaṇa*.

2. For a discussion of *abhinaya* in the *Abhinayadarpaṇa*, see also *The Mirror of Gesture* [1917] 1997, 17.

3. Coorlawala (2004, 55) goes on to argue that Rukmini Arundale not only Sanskritized the dance form, but also the dancing body: “In sanskritized dance, the body is the central object and the words ‘pure’ and ‘refinement or *samskr̥iti*’ serve as the ultimate arbiters applied to interpretation of emotions, selection of appropriate themes, authenticity of repertory, classicism in technique, and costumes.”

4. As evidence of the Sanskritization of Kuchipudi, Banda Kanakalingeshwara Rao (1966, 30), an avid proponent of Kuchipudi, asks: “What is a classical dance? A style of

dance which has the sanctity of an authoritative ancient treatise. The earliest available treatise on dance and drama is Bharata's *Natya Sastra* . . . The Kuchipudi style of dance-drama form which is strictly based on the principles of Bharata's *Natya Sastra*, is definitely a classical style."

5. Hansen (2015, 266) notes that Sundari shifts between third- and first-person voice in his autobiography, indicating a transition from external gaze to interior exploration. For a discussion of this excerpt from Sundari's biography, see also Hansen 1999, 134–35.

6. For a discussion of the use of the term *habitus*, see Mahmood 2001, 15–16.

7. Hanne M. de Bruin (2006) outlines a comparable transformation process in the guising practices of the Tamil theatrical form of Kattaikkuttu (or Terukkuttu). Bruin notes that during the pre-performance phase, "the actor initiates the first part of the gradual transformation process from the *social* self to the dramatic *other* by applying makeup and putting on the *kaṭṭai* ornaments and a conventional costume" (109). As another example, male dancer Ram Gopal (1957, 34) describes in his autobiography that during daily practices, his teacher, Kunju Kurup, used to tell him: "You shall be the beautiful maiden Damyanti [*sic*] and I shall be your handsome prince Nala, and I want you to convince by every look, gesture and expression that you are truly, deeply in love with me." Also cited in Sinha 2017.

8. *Kuchipudi Dance: Ancient & Modern*, Part II, documentary produced by the India Films Division, 1973. In a similar vein, Nagabhushana Sarma (2012, 22) likens Satyanarayana Sarma's donning of the *strī-vēṣam* to an operation: "The three-hours of making-up, each time [Satyanarayana Sarma] did a female role was like an operation; peeling out the external demeanour and grafting a new soul into it."

9. This series of photographs of Vedantam Satyanarayana Sarma is replicated in Venkataraman and Pasricha (2005, 132–33). A similar series of photographs can be found of *kabuki* artist Nakamura Senjaku applying makeup for a young princess in Senelick's *The Changing Room* (2000, 80).

10. For a more detailed discussion of Satyabhama's braid, see Kapaleswara Rao 1996; Kamath 2012, 170–75. For a broader discussion of hair in South Asia, see Hildebeitel 1998; Olivelle 1998.

11. The Kuchipudi female dance costume is similar to the tailored costumes of Bharatanatyam with the exception of the length of the fan between the legs. Kuchipudi fans are longer than Bharatanatyam fans; otherwise, the costumes of Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam are virtually identical. Notably, the introduction of tailored costumes appears in the mid- to late twentieth century; pictures and videos of Vedantam Satyanarayana Sarma at the height of his career in the 1960s feature a silken sari wrapped around the body and not a tailored costume. For further discussion on the labor of the tailored costumes of Bharatanatyam, see Srinivasan 2012, chap. 7.

12. For further discussion of Andhra Natyam, see Ramakrishna 1959, 1984; Arudra 1990; Aslesha 1994; Kalakrishna 1996; Suvarchala Devi 1997; Soneji 2012.

13. Similarly, Zarrilli (2000, 70) quotes Gopi Asan, a senior Kathakali artist, as to how he was selected as a student of the Kalamandalam, the premiere Kathakali dance institute, in 1951: "Every applicant in acting was asked to put on make-up and costume in order to know whether their physical features, especially the face, was suitable for an actor. In my case, it so happened that at first sight, [senior guru] Mahakavi Vallathol commented that this boy's physical features befitted an actor and hence there was no need for me to audition!"

14. The orchestra can also include other musicians, such as those playing violin, flute, and *vīna*, who are often hired from outside the village. The composition of the orchestra for Kuchipudi dance is undoubtedly a reflection of the broader shifts in the classicization of Karnatak music (see Weidman 2006).

15. The delivery of dialogues is absent from many contemporary Kuchipudi performances enacted by nonhereditary dancers. This is due to changes implemented by Kuchipudi guru Vempati Chinna Satyam. See chapter 4 for further discussion of this change.

16. This may be because female Kuchipudi dancers are influenced by the postcolonial sanitization of *devadāsī* performance into South Indian “classical” dance (described in the introduction), and often downplay overtly erotic gestures, even when the lyrics of the songs may necessitate such suggestive movements.

17. Meera Kosambi (2015, 271) notes that after the age of forty, Marathi impersonator Bal Gandharva resorted to more exaggerated movements to compensate for his age: “Gone was the softness in his acting, now replaced by ‘an excess of provocative gestures,’ ‘little skips and jumps, neck movements, provocative smiles.’”

18. According to the *New York Times*, Satyanarayana Sarma performed in New York on March 6, 1986 (Dunning 1986). According to the *Los Angeles Times*, he performed in San Diego on March 26, 1986 (Sondak 1986). He also represented Kuchipudi at the “Congress on the Female Role as Represented on the Stage in Various Cultures” held in Denmark in September 1986, as coordinated by the International School of Theater Anthropology (ISTA) (Barba 1986, 171).

19. Satyanarayana Sarma’s legacy of impersonation is also evident in scholarly accounts of his career. Hyderabad-based dancer and scholar Anuradha Jonnalagadda (1993, 132) characterizes Satyanarayana Sarma as “perhaps the greatest female impersonator of the present century.” Jayant Kastuar, Kathak exponent and former secretary of the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi (the national arts organization of India), describes Satyanarayana Sarma as “one of the most outstanding dancers of our time; he has achieved rare eminence in the art of female impersonation.” Jayant Kastuar’s remarks are found in *Nritya Nidhi Utsav*, “Treasures of Indian Dance” (2005) in the Sangeet Natak Akademi archives.

20. While Satyanarayana Sarma does not use a Telugu equivalent for “passing,” the stories he tells clearly suggest that he takes pride in his reported ability to convince his audiences as to the authenticity of his performance of gender. This resonates with Drouin’s (2008, 32) claim that “the aim of passing is for the illusion [of gender] to signify as real in the public sphere. Through its investment in realness, passing is the quotidian street equivalent of theatrical cross-dressing.” See also C. Riley Snorton’s (2017) discussion of cross-dressing, passing, and fungibility for blacks in the antebellum period.

21. A similar account of passing is found in the Javanese tradition of impersonation *tandhak ludruk* (Sunardi 2015, 77–78). See also Hansen’s (1999, 137) mention of Bal Gandharva passing as a married woman undetected by the Maharani of Baroda Palace.

22. Male *nācā* actors are expected to wear a sari when enacting female roles, an expectation that Devial did not fulfill (Flueckiger 1988, 164).

23. Kosambi (2015, 271–72) also notes the effects of age on Bal Gandharva’s ability to impersonate.

24. For example, in the 2006 Siddhendra Mahotsav, an annual festival staged in the Kuchipudi village, Satyanarayana Sarma performed the lead character of Satyabhama at the age of seventy, alongside his twenty-two-year-old disciple Chinta Ravi Balakrishna playing the role of Madhavi.

25. See also Messerschmidt 2016, 10.

26. See also Inhorn 2012, 47; Messerschmidt and Messner 2018, 40.

27. For a discussion of the turbaned Sikh man and his place within heteronormative frameworks and the queer diaspora, see Puar 2007, chap. 4.

28. This contrasts with the men of Kimberley Kay Hoang's 2015 study, *Dealing in Desire*, in which men exhibit multiple masculinities that are constructed on the global frame: "These masculinities were not simply based on men's individual subjectivity; instead, men constructed and asserted their masculinities according to their desire for a world order modeled on older tropes of Western global power or the rising prominence of non-Western nations in East and Southeast Asia" (60).

29. For her foundational discussion of intersectionality, see also Crenshaw 1989.

3. CONSTRUCTING ARTIFICE, INTERROGATING IMPERSONATION: MADHAVI AS VIDŪṢAKA IN VILLAGE BHĀMĀKALĀPAM PERFORMANCE

1. The *sūtradhāra*'s opening speech quoted here is based on Banda Kanakalingeshwara Rao's *Siddhendra-yōgi-kṛta Bhāmākalāpamu* (1967) and the handwritten script of *Bhāmākalāpam* by Vempati Chinna Satyam (ca. 1970).

2. See *Nāṭyaśāstra* XXXV.66–74 for prescribed characteristics of the *sūtradhāra*.

3. In an attempt to provide historical reasoning for this trend, Modali Nagabhushana Sarma characterizes the *sūtradhāra* as the "other," or miscellaneous, character. According to Nagabhushana Sarma, the triangulation of *sūtradhāra*/Madhavi/Madhava was introduced in the period when performances of Kuchipudi shifted from a single-person dance drama to one including more performers. As a result, the *sūtradhāra* was able to portray several roles at once and therefore functions as the "other" character (interview with author, Hyderabad, November 9, 2009).

4. *Bhāmākalāpam*, Siddhendra Mahotsav (Kuchipudi, Andhra Pradesh: March 2006, VCD). This video is courtesy of Kuchipudi resident Pasumarti Haranadh.

5. Sastry Garu is an honorific title given to any learned scholar, particularly belonging to a brahmin family. In this case, the *sūtradhāra* is referencing a supporting orchestra member when using this title.

6. Pasumarti, Bhagavatula, and Darbha are the names for hereditary brahmin families from the village of Kuchipudi. For a discussion of hereditary brahmin families of the Kuchipudi village, see the introduction.

7. Robert Cohen (2016) defines two types of direct address in Shakespearean theatre: (1) that given by the actor to the audience representing himself and/or his company of fellow actors (74–75); and (2) that given as an epilogue "by actors who retain their character identities, but who, for this concluding speech, step out of the 'play' to represent their acting company" (77). In the case of *Bhāmākalāpam*, the direct addresses of the *sūtradhāra* appear to be closer to Cohen's first designation of direct address.

8. *Bhāmākalāpam*, International Symposium on *Kalāpa* Traditions, VCD. The ellipses indicate portions of the dialogue I have edited out.

9. This character can also be referred to as Madhavudu, the Telugu form of the Sanskrit name Madhava.

10. P.V.G. Krishna Sarma also states, “Madhavi is instigating Satyabhama’s character . . . Madhavi creates humor. It might not be proper etiquette, but you have to do something to create humor in audiences” (interview with author, Kuchipudi, February 9, 2010).

11. Teun Goudriaan (1978, 3) suggests that *māyā* expresses three possible meanings in the Vedic textual tradition: “In the Veda the word *māyā* can stand for various aspects of the process involved: the power which creates a new appearance, the creation of that appearance as an abstract performance, and the result of the process, i.e. the created form itself. The power, its manifestation and its result are not distinguished by name; nor does it matter if the result is real or illusory.” See also Gonda 1959, 119–94; Pintchman 1994, 89.

12. The most influential Vedanta thinker is undoubtedly Shankara, the ninth-century philosopher who expounds upon the concept of Advaita Vedanta, or nondual reality, by arguing that the created world is not distinct from Brahman, or the ultimate real. For Shankara, *māyā* expresses both creative and delusive powers: “*māyā* is both creative in the sense that it brings into being the relative world and delusive, in the sense that what *māyā* creates is essentially a kind of delusion” (Pintchman 1994, 93–94). *Māyā*’s role in concealing the true nature of reality likens it to ignorance, *avidyā*, as opposed to *vidyā*, or knowledge. Tracy Pintchman (1994, 89–90) notes *māyā*’s relationship to two other important Sanskrit categories: *prakṛtī*, the principle of materiality, and *śaktī*, the cosmological principle of power. In the *Upaniṣads*, *māyā* is conflated with *prakṛtī* (see *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 4.10), while in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the concept of *prakṛtī* is subsumed under the creative powers of *māyā* (see *Bhagavad Gītā* 7.14). While *prakṛtī* represents the result of creation, in the language of Goudriaan, *śaktī* is comparable to the power of the creative process; *māyā* ultimately encompasses both of these terms (Pintchman 1994, 90). There are many other interpretations of *māyā* beyond the Vedic and Vedantic usages of the term, particularly in relation to the concepts of *prakṛtī* in *sāṅkhya* philosophy and *śūnya* (emptiness) in Nagarjuna’s articulations on Buddhist thought (Reyna 1962, 8–11, 15–22).

13. For further discussion of *rām-līlā* performances in Ramnagar/Varanasi and in the environs of Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, see Lothspeich 2018.

14. This was confirmed to me in a follow-up discussion with Pasumarti Rattayya Sarma in January 2011. While they may not have been familiar with the specific philosophical nuances of *māyā*, it is notable that these performers selectively invoked this term, and no other, to analyze the characters of *sūtradhāra*/Madhavi/Madhava.

15. I thank Laurie L. Patton for suggesting this translation of *māyā*.

16. For a discussion of the gender of names in predominantly English-speaking societies, see Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003, 15–16.

17. While I have chosen not to add diacritics to proper names in this text, I have used them in this paragraph to illustrate the length of the vowels as indicative of gendered names.

18. I thank Petra Shenk for her insights on this shift in grammatical voice.

19. The importance of speech is even more apparent when examining the content of the dialogues themselves; Madhavi’s playful demands for Satyabhama’s jewels and nose ring, for example, delineate her gender and class status.

20. The importance of speech in the *Bhāmākalāpam* dance drama resonates with the articulations of J.L. Austin, a British philosopher of language who proposes the idea that words have performative power. In *How to Do Things with Words* (1975), a series of lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1955, Austin makes an important linguistic distinction between a constative statement and a performative utterance. In the first lecture of this series, Austin suggests that a constative statement describes the state of affairs and can be verifiable as either true or false (2–3). Rather than simply describing a state of affairs, Austin states that speech has the power to act through the performative utterance (6–7). A concrete example that Austin provides of the performative utterance is the vows of marriage: “when I say, before the registrar or altar, &c., ‘I do,’ I am not reporting on a marriage: I am indulging in it” (6). The very act of saying “I do” *performs* marriage, rather than simply reporting on it. The performative capacity of speech is also taken up by Butler in her discussions of gender and discourse. While Butler directly engages with Austin’s theory of performative speech in *Excitable Speech* (1997), it is only in her earlier work *Bodies That Matter* ([1993] 2011) that she examines the connections between discourse, gender, and power. In *Bodies That Matter*, Butler links performativity and discourse by suggesting that “performativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate ‘act,’ but, rather, as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names” (xii). Here, Butler draws on Jacques Derrida’s reading of Austin, which suggests that all performative utterances are citations in that they repeat a particular term. Butler applies Derrida’s notion of citationality to her discussion of gender by suggesting that gender has the same citational structure as language: gender norms must be cited repeatedly in order to have an effect (177). For further discussion of the relationship between Austin, Derrida, and Butler, see Parker and Sedgwick 2016.

21. See also Kuiper 1979, 201.

22. See Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman’s translation of *Vikramorvaṣīya*, titled *How Ūrvashi Was Won* by Kālidāsa (2009), and Diwakar Acharya’s translation of *Mṛcchakaṭikā*, titled *The Little Clay Cart* by Śūdraka (2009). Both translations are published by the Clay Sanskrit Library. Sanskrit plays that exclude the *vidūṣaka* are relatively few in number, and F.B.J. Kuiper (1979, 211–12) notes a short list of such works, including the Rama- and Krishna-focused plays of Bhasa and the dramas of Bhavabhūti. Kuiper notes that dramas categorized in the genre of *prakaraṇa* contain the character of the *vidūṣaka*, but dramas categorized as *nāṭaka* do not usually include the *vidūṣaka* (211).

23. Translated by Ghosh 1951, 224. Makeup and attire, as David Shulman (1985, 156) notes, serve to heighten this grotesque affect, and the *vidūṣaka* can appear onstage in a comic three-cornered hat and messily tied *dhōti*. For a discussion of this description of the *vidūṣaka* in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, see Siegel 1987, 19.

24. For example, in the Sanskrit play *Priyadarśikā* (ca. seventh century CE), the brahmin *vidūṣaka* Vasantaka tells King Udayana of the many learned brahmins in the king’s palace: “brahmins who know four Vedas, five Vedas, even six Vedas!” (Siegel 1987, 206). Udayana laughs at Vasantaka’s ignorance as there are only four texts in the Vedic canon. The king wryly remarks that the quality of a brahmin is known by the number of Vedic texts he is versed in. In this exchange, the king outsmarts the brahmin clown in his own brahminhood (206).

25. As Shulman (1985, 160) outlines in his extensive work on the clown in Sanskrit and vernacular texts in India, the *vidūṣaka*’s primary role in Sanskrit drama serves as a comedic

foil to the *nāyaka*, and, taken together, the *vidūṣaka* and the *nāyaka* create the composite image of the royal hero.

26. The *vidūṣaka* also extends to other South Indian vernacular dramatic performance traditions, such as the previously mentioned buffoon of Tamil Special Drama (Seizer 2005), the *konaṅki* of Bhagavatamela, and the *kaṭṭiyakkāraṇ* of *kuṛavañci* (Shulman 1985, 210–11).

27. Shulman (1985, 165) describes the Brahmapandhu as a “low” Brahmin, excluded from ritual, especially sacrificial performance.” Shulman is careful to note that the *vidūṣaka* is not necessarily excluded from ritual, but just characterized in this way through the epithet (165n52). For a discussion of Brahmapandhu, see also Sarma 2001.

28. See also Novetzke (2016, chap. 4) for a discussion of brahminical authority in the thirteenth-century Marathi text, *Līlācaritra*.

29. For example, Sunil Kothari and Avinash Pasricha’s popular book *Kuchipudi: Indian Classical Dance Art* (2001), which profiles major contemporary Kuchipudi artists and includes a glossy spread of Satyanarayana Sarma in *vēṣam*, provides a brief two-sentence description on Rattayya Sarma: “Another gifted female impersonator from Pasumarti branch is Rattayya, trained by Chinta Krishnamurti. He has performed in several dance-dramas of Venkatarama Natya Mandali” (166).

30. Refer to Messerschmidt and Messner’s (2018, 41–43) discussion of various forms of masculinities, including dominant, dominating, and positive masculinities.

4. BHĀMĀKALĀPAM BEYOND THE VILLAGE: TRANSGRESSING NORMS OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN URBAN AND TRANSNATIONAL KUCHIPUDI DANCE

1. As stated in the notes to the introduction, Madras was renamed Chennai in 1996 in line with a nationwide trend of renaming the English spellings of Indian cities in accordance with vernacular spellings in Indian languages. In this book, I use Madras to refer to the city prior to 1996 and Chennai to refer to the city after 1996. For a discussion of the renaming of Madras state to Tamil Nadu, see Ramaswamy 1997, 154–61.

2. In her dissertation, Anuradha Jonnalagadda (1996b, 137–40) examines Chinna Satyam’s experiments with *Bhāmākalāpam*, including a paragraph discussion of his alterations to Madhavi’s character. Chinna Satyam also includes a short discussion of *Bhāmākalāpam* in his article “My Experiments with Kuchipudi” (2012, 41). Notably, he focuses on his choreography of Satyabhama and does not discuss Madhavi.

3. Aware of the complexities of adapting wholesale Euro-American terminology to South Asian contexts, particularly as articulated by Gayatri Reddy (2005) and Mrinalini Sinha (2012), I use the term “gender-variant” as opposed to “transgender” or “third gender” to describe Madhavi.

4. For a discussion of Chinna Satyam’s early career in film and the ways in which film movement vocabulary shapes Kuchipudi’s inscription onto the female body, see Putcha 2011, chap. 4. For a discussion of the classical and cinematic elements of Chinna Satyam’s “Madras Kuchipudi,” see Thota 2016, chap. 4.

5. After this, in 1962, Chinna Satyam began teaching Shanta Rao, a female performer accomplished in the classical styles of Bharatanatyam and Mohiniattam. Shanta Rao financially backed Chinna Satyam to help him start the Kuchipudi Dance Academy (a precursor

to KAA). However, when she began to insist that he teach her and no one else, Chinna Satyam abandoned the efforts (Pattabhi Raman 1988/89, 47–48).

6. There is a similar heteroglossia in the context of Parsi theatre (see Hansen 2004a).

7. The narrative of Krishna's theft of the *pārijāta* tree from Indra's garden was first introduced into classical Telugu literature in Nandi Timmana's sixteenth-century *Pārijātāpaharaṇamu* (*Theft of a Tree*). For a full discussion of this narrative, see the introduction to the forthcoming translation by the Murthy Classical Library of India, which I co-translated with Velcheru Narayana Rao.

8. Another of Chinna Satyam's early dance dramas is *Ksheera Sagara Madhanam* ("Churning of the Milk Ocean"), choreographed in 1962. As Jonnalagadda (1996b, 136) states: "The first of the innovative dance dramas, [*Ksheera Sagara Madhanam*] was the first dance drama written and composed exclusively to suit the needs of Kuchipudi. It did away with the regular dialogues and was set entirely to lyrics. The earlier elaborate *Poorvaranga* [consecration of the stage] was set aside. In the stage decor, suggestive sets were introduced. Thus started the era of innovations in Kuchipudi dance with new themes, structure and performance."

9. For a discussion of the Chennai *sabha* in relation to "Brahmin taste," see Rudisill 2007, 2012.

10. In the article "My Experiments with Kuchipudi," Chinna Satyam (1996, 96) dates his experiments with *Bhāmākālāpam* as immediately following his dance drama *Padmavati Srinivasa Kalyanam*, choreographed in 1977. However, according to Chinna Satyam's son, Vempati Ravi Shankar, his father rechoreographed *Bhāmākālāpam* in the early 1970s (Vempati Ravi Shankar, pers. comm., June 13, 2011).

11. I am greatly indebted to P. Venugopala Rao for providing me a copy of Chinna Satyam's handwritten *Bhāmākālāpam* script and to G.M. Sarma for allowing me access to the 1981 recording. In the 1981 recording, a prominent nonbrahmin female performer, Sobha Naidu, played Satyabhama; a well-known male stage actor, Dharmaraj, enacted Madhavi; and a brahmin Kuchipudi dancer and cinema actress, Manju Bhargavi, enacted Krishna. In the 2011 performance in Atlanta, Sasikala Penumarthi, a longtime brahmin female student of Chinna Satyam, played Satyabhama; Vedantam Raghava, a brahmin male from the Kuchipudi village, performed Madhavi; and I enacted Krishna.

12. More recently, Vempati Ravi Shankar also passed away in 2018 due to unexpected complications from a kidney transplant, so I am indebted to have his perspectives inform my research.

13. Regarding this point, Kothari and Pasricha (2001, 205) write: "With the establishment of Kuchipudi Art Academy, Vempati Chinna Satyam ushered in a new era in Kuchipudi, training a large number of female students with a well designed repertoire for solo exposition. A bevy of thoroughly groomed young dancers appeared on the metropolitan stage of Madras and other major cities, making Kuchipudi an extremely lively dance scene."

14. When describing Sobha Naidu, Kothari and Pasricha (2001, 205) write: "A sensational discovery of the terpsichorean world Sobha Naidu sprang on the dance scene in 1969, after a thorough grounding in Kuchipudi under the watchful eye and care of Vempati Chinna Satyam for more than seven years. The prize pupil of Vempati, Sobha with her innate talent and abundant natural gifts, reed-like tall, vivacious frame and figure, with a pair of large expressive eyes, succeeded in imbibing the quintessential quality of Kuchipudi in a remarkable

manner. She became synonymous with Vempati's style." While Kothari and Pasricha seem to suggest that Naidu began training with Chinna Satyam seven years prior to 1969, an article in *Sruti* magazine suggests that she began her training at the age of fourteen, in 1969 (see Iyenger 1989). See also Naidu 2012.

15. Sobha Naidu, email correspondence, November 7, 2009. See also Naidu 2012, 68.

16. Sobha Naidu, email correspondence, November 7, 2009.

17. For a discussion of the *jaḍa vṛtāntam*, see also Kamath 2012.

18. The Vaishnava style of wrapping the sari is found in the 1981 recording of *Bhāmākalāpam*.

19. Sudha Gopalakrishnan (2006, 141) notes a similar shift in costuming in the case of Kutiyattam, specifically in the drama *Toranayuddhanka* in which the character Ravana describes a quarrel between Shiva and Parvati: "In this scene, the actor in the guise of Ravana has to have great dexterity while changing roles in quick succession as Siva and Parvati. The change into a woman is indicated merely by taking the end of the lower garment and fastening it on the waist, but the transformation of the facial expression and demeanor from the masculine to the feminine is subtle yet powerful."

20. After distinguishing between these three contingent dimensions, Butler ([1990] 2008, 187) goes on to lay the groundwork for her theory of gender performativity: "If the anatomy of the performer is already distinct from the gender of the performer, and both of those are distinct from the gender of the performance, then the performance suggests a dissonance not only between sex and performance, but sex and gender, and gender and performance. As much as drag creates a unified picture of 'woman'...it also reveals the distinctness of those aspects of gendered experience which are falsely naturalized as a unity through the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence. *In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself—as well as its contingency*" [emphasis in original].

21. Anuradha Jonnalagadda, in discussion with author, Hyderabad, fall 2009. For a discussion of various types of gender-variant characters, see *Nāṭyaśāstra* XXXIV.70–81. Also see *Vikramorvaṣiya* 3.1, in *How Ūrvashi Was Won* by Kālidāsa (2009, 89), for an example of the *kañcukī* as the guardian of women's domestic space in Sanskrit drama. For a survey of gender-variant roles in early South Asian texts, see also Reddy 2005, 18–22.

22. For a discussion of the term *hijrā* and the *koṭhī-hijrā* spectrum, see Reddy 2005; Morcom 2013; Dutta and Roy 2014.

23. See Reddy's discussion of the *hijrā* sex/gender system, particularly the penetrative/penetrated model of sexual practice in the third chapter of *With Respect to Sex* (2005, 44–77).

24. Drawing on the discourse of his grandmother, Johnson (2001, 2) uses the term "quare" as the black vernacular for queer.

25. Regarding these practices, Johnson (2001, 13) notes: "Performance practices such as voguing, snapping, 'throwing shade,' and 'reading' attest to the ways in which black gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people devise technologies of self-assertion and summon the agency to resist."

26. For a critique of Livingston's film *Paris Is Burning*, see hooks 1992, chap. 9.

27. See introduction for a full discussion of South Indian Smarta brahmins.

28. Notably, my interlocutors did not frequently use the Telugu vernacular *maga-vēṣam* or the more Sanskritized *puruṣa-vēṣam*. Rather, they usually referred to the character (i.e., donning Krishna's role, Shiva's role, etc.). This contrasts with *strī-vēṣam*, which was employed more frequently.

29. One important exception to this claim is Vempati Ravi Shankar's performance of the dual-gendered role of Ardhanarishvara in the KAA production *Ardhanareeswaram*, first staged in 1998. In the end of the dance drama, Ravi Shankar, who enacts the lead character of Shiva up to this point, appears as Ardhanarishvara in a costume that distinguishes his body as half female (Parvati) and half male (Shiva), divided by a long dark veil. For a discussion of this dance drama, see Jonnalagadda 2012, 52–53. Another notable exception is Venku, who under Chinna Satyam's guidance first donned the *strī-vēṣam* for the documentary *The Temple and the Swan* (1995).

30. Packert (2010, 25–26) goes on to state that, for many, artistic representations of Krishna is “kitsch par excellence . . . the highly feminized (at least to Euro-American eyes) rendition of Krishna also generates, for some, potential concerns about the seeming imbalance among taste, gender, art, and religion. The same issues are also encountered in debates about Christian art, as Colleen McDannell explains: ‘Art was given characteristics that Western culture defines as masculine: strength, power, nobility. Kitsch became associated with stereotypical feminine qualities: sentimentality, superficiality, and intimacy.’”

31. See also Amy-Ruth Holt's “Sacred Androgyny and Jayalalitha's Ritual Embodiment in Tamil Politics” (2018, 16) for a discussion of Krishna in artistic representation.

32. See Halberstam's new preface to the twentieth anniversary edition of *Female Masculinity* (2018) for a discussion of the utility of the term “female masculinity.”

33. Similarly, Halberstam (2012, 258–59) states that while drag queen performances veer toward the flamboyant, drag king performances reflect constraint and a quiet machismo.

34. For discussions of Chinna Satyam's choreography, see also Kamath 2011; Penumarthi 2012.

5. LONGING TO DANCE: STORIES OF KUCHIPUDI BRAHMIN WOMEN

1. Although I interacted with Rajyalakshmi during my fieldwork in the village in 2010, all quotes by Rajyalakshmi are from the transcript of the 2014 interview.

2. For a discussion of marriage patterns and examples of women's songs upon departure from their natal homes, see Raheja and Gold, *Listen to the Heron's Words* (1994, chap. 3).

3. Margaret Trawick includes an extensive discussion of marriage patterns in South India in chapter 4 of her 1992 book *Notes on Love in a Tamil Family*. Thanks to Leela Prasad for pointing me to this work.

4. For example, Rajyalakshmi's sons Venku and Raghava both married women from outside the village.

5. Lakshminarasamma also passed away a few years after my interview with her.

6. Rajyalakshmi seemed entirely unconcerned with Mutyam's presence and was open to answering our questions, a point that was evident to me when I returned to her house for a follow-up visit in July 2018 without Mutyam. During the return visit, Rajyalakshmi again spoke about her experiences of learning dance.

7. See Anne Mackenzie Pearson's "*Because It Gives Me Peace of Mind*": *Ritual Fasts in the Religious Lives of Hindu Women* (1996) for a discussion of the meaning that women attribute to Hindu votive rituals, *vrats*.

8. For a discussion of *habitus* and embodied practice, see also Mahmood 2001, 15–16; 2005, chap. 5.

9. Although I extensively interacted with Baliakka during my fieldwork in Hyderabad in 2009–10 and in all of my follow-up visits, all quotes by Baliakka are from the transcript of the 2014 interview.

10. The story of Ekalavya appears in *Mahābhārata* 1(7)123. This translation of the narrative is from Buitenen 1973, 270–73.

11. See my 2011 interview with Vempati Ravi Shankar in the arts journal *Kalaparva*, "Vempati Ravi Shankar: Following His Father's Footsteps," <http://commentary.kalaparva.com/2011/06/vempati-ravi-shankar-following-his.html> (accessed March 22, 2017).

12. During the interview, Baliakka often alternated between referring to her experiences in the first-person singular ("I") and the first-person plural ("we"), presumably referencing herself and her sisters. It is common for Indian language speakers to employ the first-person plural ("we") when referring to oneself, perhaps as a signal of both individual and collective experience. Joyce Flueckiger notes that Hindi speakers often colloquially refer to themselves using the first-person plural *hum* (pers. comm., September 26, 2018). In this case, Baliakka's deferral to collective voice includes her experiences as well as those of her sisters, thereby providing further legitimacy to her narrative.

13. Baliakka's school, Abhinayavani Nritya Niketan, was established following her marriage, with the support of her brahmin husband and father-in-law who are, incidentally, not from the Kuchipudi village.

14. Soneji (2012, 187) goes on to state that both *noṭṭusvaram* and *mōṭi* "stood outside the canon of the hereditary courtly repertoire (*catirkkaccēri*) of the prereform period and were not 'classical' or religious enough to be integrated into postreform-period reinvented Bharatanāṭyam of the urban middle class."

15. Baliakka's sister, Kameshwari, also continues to teach, but, due to health-related reasons in her family, she has minimized her teaching commitments.

16. For a recording of Satyanarayana Sarma as Satyabhama, see the documentary *Kuchipudi Dance: Ancient & Modern*, Part II, produced by the India Films Division, 1973.

CONCLUSION

1. Anna Morcom (2013, 172) also notes this decline in impersonation practices but dates the decline to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, as opposed to the contemporary period.

2. Impersonation is attested in a range of literary sources including premodern Sanskrit epic texts (Goldman 1993; Doniger 2000, 2004; Vanita and Kidwai 2001), *bhakti* devotional literature (Ramanujan 1989; Hawley 2000; Pechilis 2012), and Sufi and Urdu poetry (Petievich 2008; Kugle 2013). For a full discussion of impersonation in South Asia, see the forthcoming edited volume *Mimetic Desires: Impersonation and Guising Across South Asia*, co-edited by Harshita Mruthinti Kamath and Pamela Lothspeich.