[2]

On Nose Cutters, Gurus, and Storytellers

Kirin Narayan

> Salutations to the Goddess who dwells in all beings in the form of intelligence: salutations, salutations, salutations again and again.
>
> —*Durgā Saptashatī*

In anthropological circles, Clifford Geertz's (1966) definition of religion as "a system of symbols" continues to command widespread respect. Yet, work in the fields of philosophy, religious studies, and Christian theology suggests that religion could equally be defined as a system of stories (Braithewaite 1955: 32–33; Goldberg 1982; Hoffman 1986; Slater 1978; Tilley 1985; Wiggins 1975). Narratives, after all, cluster around the dominant symbols, beliefs, and ritual actions of

Though the background knowledge on which this essay is based extends back to 1970, I stayed with Swamiji as a graduate student in anthropology between June and August 1983 and July and October 1985. I am grateful for a National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship, a University of California–Berkeley Graduate Humanities Research Grant, Robert H. Lowie funds, and a Charlotte W. Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship. My thanks to Didi Contractor, Narayan Contractor, Alan Dundes, "Gulelal," Smadar Lavie, Victor Perera, Renato Rosaldo, Shubhro Sen, and Sayyad Zaidi for reading earlier drafts of this essay. Also thanks to the audiences at the Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies at U.C. Berkeley and the anthropology departments at Swarthmore College, Bowdoin College, and Westchester University for their helpful questions and comments. Above all, my deepest and abiding thanks remain with Swamiji for his endorsement and encouragement of this project.

religions the world over. Through stories, morals are fleshed out, gods acquire character, saints become exemplars, tenets are made real. As a religion is transmitted across historical eras, what happens to the stories? How are they creatively reinterpreted and retold? In this essay I turn to a religion well known for its sumptuous stories—Hinduism. Examining a folk narrative about false Gurus used by two Gurus separated by almost a hundred years, I argue that the flexibility of a spoken story allows for an improvisation that can capture the religious imagination of different audiences afresh; religious stories can be sprightly yet stern custodians of moral canons, even as creative tellers mold them around changing historical circumstances.[1]

The bulky man who sat cross-legged against the wall had been telling us about his Guru's workshops. One could sign up for initiation, he explained: It was merely a matter of a few hundred rupees, and a mystical experience was guaranteed. These workshops had been developed in America, he said, but now they were even held locally. He, Advani, had helped organize them here in this ancient pilgrimage town of Nasik in Western India.

Swamiji sat listening from his aluminum deckchair, gray head resting against a brilliantly flowered orange pillowcase. To his left was an altar filled with an array of deities. On the floor around him was the usual motley gathering: local people, visitors from other Indian towns, a handful of Westerners. There were perhaps fifteen people present, among them the graduate-student ethnographer poised with her notebook and tape recorder. As Swamiji questioned and Advani talked on, we were all listening or observing according to our varying degrees of Hindi competence. This was Swamiji's *darshan* time: the hours in which he, as an ascetic "renouncer" (*sannyāsī*) and Guru, met with visitors. *Darshan,* (to view) refers to the act of gazing at a more powerful being, whether a respected elder, a holy person, or a deity (Babb 1981; Eck 1981). So though Advani held forth, the group was largely focused on Swamiji.

There was a break in the conversation as a few visitors stood up to leave. "Hail to the Mother of the Universe, hail!" muttered Swamiji as they saluted him. He presented them with bananas. As the screen door creaked behind them, he asked us, "Haven't you heard of the Narayandarsimat?"

"The what?" we said.

"The Nose Cutters (*nāk kātne vāle*)."

"The *what?*"

"The Nose Cutters," he repeated, looking around the room, where women were seated along the right wall, men along the left. He scanned all our faces. "She's heard it!" he pointed to "Gayatri" of New Jersey who sat at his feet, wearing a sari of light blue silk. She looked to me for clarification; as an Indian-American anthropologist I often served as the culture broker who could translate or elaborate. But I was nonplussed too. Mr. Gupta, who was visiting from North India, though, rolled his head: "The . . . Nose . . . Cutters," he slowly repeated in Hindi, then added in English, "a group."

Grinning with the pleasure of a story to tell, Swamiji started in. He was still reclining with his legs outstretched, a crumpled, ochre cloth wrapped around his waist, and several weeks growth of white hair on his genial round face. He wore enormous spectacles which magnified his eyes, a strand of sacred *rudrāksha* beads, and on his forehead, a lopsided, red spot of vermillion (*kumkum*) sacred to the Goddess. Swamiji often referred to himself as a "topsy-turvy holy man" (*agaṛam bagaṛam sādhu*) who spoke a "topsy turvy" and "any-which-way" (*ulṭā sulṭā*) language. Indeed, the language in which he now told the story was his own idiosyncratic mixture. Though the basic framework was Hindi, Swamiji put in Kannada case endings (from the place of his birth), Marathi words (from the region in which he now lives), English words (which he has picked up along the way) and Sankrit terms (from scriptures). Bombay, which is four hours southwest of Nasik, has bred a similar form of hotchpotch Hindi, so most listeners could understand Swamiji. In my translation, which follows—reconstructed through headphones long after the event—I underplay the ways in which the constituent languages interact (cf. Bakhtin 1981) through Swamiji's retellings, marking only English words with an (E).

There was a Guru, like me. He had many devotees. He wasn't really like me . . . he was greater than I. Consider him to be a little like me. He would tell his disciples, "I'll give you darshan of God." And the disciples spread the word. "Our Guruji reveals God." This was the kind of propaganda they did. This world exists through propaganda. The more advertising you do, the greater a thing becomes. That's why companies(E) all advertise: on the radio(E) on the television(E). The products themselves are nothing much, that's why they must spend so much money advertising them.

[Swamiji is chuckling, and we all laugh.]

The Guru advertised himself in the same way. Say the disciples meet someone like you—especially the important officials (officer(E) *log*)—they would say, "Our Maharaj gives people darshan of God." Now everyone wishes to see God. You'll say, "Yes, I would very much like to see God."

"If that's so," the disciples would say, "Then you must donate 10,000 rupees."

"All right, I'll give you 10,000 rupees." [Swamiji agreeably rocks his head.] What's it to you if you have a lot of money? Certainly, seeing God is worth the expense. So you would be taken there by the disciples.

The Maharaj was quite handsome. He'd put on a jeweled crown. In his own hands he'd hold a conch and a discus. A disciple hiding behind him would hold a lotus and mace. He'd sit on a throne wearing golden yellow garments and a shawl. He'd sit there, just as Lord Narayan sits, with all the attributes of Narayan.

[Swamiji raises his hands up by his shoulders, then lowers them down by his waist to demonstrate this four-armed form of Vishnu, Preserver of the Universe. Narayan is a common name. As Swamiji calls me just "Kirin Mataji"—Mother Kirin—no one present seems to see this as in any way relating to me.]

This was in a dark room(E). A person would be led in through one door. A small light would be lit.

"Look, you can see God for just one second(E). If you look at him any longer than that, you'll be blinded."

So the person would be led through. The Guruji would do this—[Swamiji straightens up in his chair, fluttering his eyelids, flexing his arms bent at the elbow first upwards, then down.]

And then the person would be led through the other door. "I have seen God," the person would say [in a voice muffled with awe].

In this way, the Guru earned a great deal of money. You've had *darshan,* so you tell someone else. The second person tells a third. And so, there's a lot of advertisement.

[Swamiji pauses. We wait. Over the tape recorder, the voices of a man and a woman interweave with drum and sitar: a fast clip devotional song, bringing together classical North Indian music and contemporary film styles. Outside the room, town traffic putters past.]

One day, the Guru died. He died, leaving a lot of disciples. None

of them were quite like him. There was one disciple—like me—yes? Wherever he went, he stole.

[We laugh uncertainly.]

The king of that place gave the order(E) that his nose should be cut(E) off. The police(E) cut off his nose. As soon as this was done, he began to dance. He danced(E), then fell at the feet of the man who'd cut off his nose. "You've done me a great service!" he said, and he began to dance once more, to dance away.

[Swamiji bobs from side to side, clicking fingers against his palms.]

The police looked at him, wondering "Why is this man dancing?" [in a baffled voice].

The man danced his way out. Everyone asked [brows weighted with concern], "Why do you dance?" And he said, "I see God everywhere."

"Is that so? You see God?"

"Yes, I can see God."

Then he met someone—like our Gayatri—"Oh Baba, why don't I see God?" she asked.

[Swamiji is grinning at "Gayatri" of New Jersey. Her eyes widen: she seems surprised to find herself in the story.]

"You can see God too. I'll show you God. Come with me."

Gayatri came. He said to her. "Cut off your nose and you'll see God." ["Gayatri" adjusts her blue sari, smiling with an uncomfortable air.] She came. He cut off her nose. "Now you too should dance like me," he said. [Swamiji's white stubbled chin is raised and he exudes droll enjoyment. "Gayatri" 's face folds in mock horror, then, like everyone else, she ends up grinning.]

So Gayatri began to dance. "I see God too!" she said. By then Sarasvati appeared. [Now "Sarasvati" from London, face pale beneath her curly red hair, looks alarmed.]

"Why can't I see God?" she demanded. They told her: "You cut off your nose too, then you'll see Him." Her nose was sliced off. She began to dance too. In this way, the group(E) grew. There were a hundred, there were two hundred, there were a thousand. All people without noses. They danced all the time, cymbals in their hands. They didn't rest for a minute(E) they danced so much. "We're all seeing God!" they cried.

Doing this, they traveled to another kingdom. By then the group had grown to four or five thousand people. They would just camp in a park. They never had to worry about money; the disciples would take care of all that.

Then once there are so many followers, a religion (*dharma*) should be given a name. They gave themselves the name "Narayandarsimat," the group that gives you *darshan* of Narayan. This was the name. After they gave themselves this title, they began to travel. They went to another kingdom and stayed in a park. They ate rich sweets and fried bread (*halvāh aur pūrī*). And they danced.

Some people came up and asked, "What, *ji*, who are you?"

"We're the people who can show you God."

"Is that so? How come we don't see God?"

"It's because you have a nose, blocking your vision of God."

Those people said, "Who knows, maybe this so. . . . " They sent this news on to their King. The King was the same. He immediately came to the gardens where the visitors had camped.

"Who are you all?" the King asked, "None of you have noses. What does this mean?"

They said. "We are the people who reveal God. Our religion is called Narayandarsimat."

"Is that so? How come I don't see God?"

"Your nose blocks your vision, that's why you can't see God."

"If I cut(E) off my nose, will I see God?" the King asked.

"Yes, certainly you'll see God. We'll show you."

"Fine!" said the King. So he called his Pandit. Every state has a royal Pandit. "Tell me an auspicious time to see God."

The Pandit said, "Tomorrow at 10 is an auspicious time."

The King said, "You're such a great Pandit, you're the Pandit for the royal family. And you only tell me now that such an auspicious time is coming up tomorrow! Those people had to come here to bring this to your attention. How fortunate we are!"

The King sent his drummers out to announce(E), "Tomorrow at 10 o'clock everyone in this kingdom will see God. Whether they are men or women, everyone can see God. This is the King's order. The auspicious time is tomorrow at 10."

[Swamiji pauses again. Now the singing in the background is slow and reverential. We sit silent, tensed.]

Now a King's Prime Minister is smarter than a King. He thought—like our Gupta Saheb [Gupta Saheb, a dark man with a narrow alert face, sits impassively though all eyes now turn to him]. "No matter how much I reason with the King, he won't listen," he thought. He went home. That evening he met his grandfather. The grandfather asked, "What's new in our kingdom? What's going on?"

The Prime Minister said, "It's like this. Some people called the Narayandarsimats have come to our kingdom. The King has issued the order that everyone's nose be cut off tomorrow. No matter how much I reason with him, he refuses to listen."

Then the old man said, "Look here, where's the nose and where are the eyes? How can a nose block your vision? There's something fishy going on ("something black in the lentils"). There's some mistake(E). The King is ruining everyone. They'll all be trapped, deceived. We can't let this happen."

"What can I do?"

"Take me to the King."

So the Prime Minister took his grandfather to the King. The old man said, "King, don't do this, there's something wrong here. It's not right."

"What do you know?" asked the king. [impatiently] "You're just an old man. This is a new age. These kinds of things go on these days. These people who've come are all great scientists (*vijnānī*). Your nose blocks your vision. You haven't seen God, you don't know anything. These people have come to show us God. Why do you block their way?"

The grandfather said, "But who in our kingdom has seen the God they show? You're just assuming this is true."

"No, in our kingdom, no one has seen God," the King agreed.

"I won't lie," said the old man, "If you want to do it, do it, but let my nose be cut off first. I'll tell the truth. Don't wantonly cut off your nose and spoil yourself. You're my King and these are all your subjects. Don't ruin them all. Let my nose be cut off first."

"All right," said the King.

The next day, the military(E) surrounded the park on all sides. The Nose Cutters had all their knives ready. Then all the subjects arrived, along with the King. The Guru came in and sat down.

The King said, "Look, Maharaj, this is the most venerable minister in my kingdom. The old must always be respected. That's why he should be shown God first. Then you can give us darshan of God after him."

The Guru thought, "Thousands have had their noses cut off, does one more matter?" He said, "All right, send him on." So the old man was sent to the Guru. The Guru took his nose in one hand. In the other hand he held a knife. [Swamiji tilts back his head, pinching his nose with the left hand and straightening the right hand above it as

though ready to slice. Murmurs of apprehension rise around the room.] He cut the old man's nose off.

At the time of initiation, a *mantra* should be whispered in a person's ear, shouldn't it? At that moment, the Guru said, "Look brother, your nose has now been cut off. The nose that's gone will never come back. The whole world will make fun of you. The whole world will laugh on seeing you. That's why you should do as we do: say you've seen God. The entire world will raise you up, you'll get a lot of reverence and respect."

[Swamiji notices that the young mother with oiled black braids has set her bonneted baby down on the carpet beside her. "Pick up your baby," he advises. "He might pee. This is where everyone sits, and if he pees there's no one to clean it up." The woman hurriedly lifts the baby, patting the carpet with her handkerchief. "Has he peed?" Swamiji asks. "No," says the woman. "No," echoes Prakash Seth, a local farmer, examining the carpet's orange surface. "Babies don't know anything," Swamiji gently observes. Then he resumes the story.]

So the old man's nose was cut off. He came out and he said, "I didn't see God, I didn't see anything. I'm in terrible pain. In one ear I was told, 'Say what we say, else you'll be mocked by the world.' These people are just rogues. Round them up."

The army was already there, surrounding the place. They caught hold of the Nose Cutters and began to thrash them. Then each one began to cry out. "I don't see anything, I don't see anything! I said I did because so-and-so said so. So-and-so said so because he was told by someone else."

[Swamiji's voice has speeded up, he is grinning broadly. We all laugh. Wrong has been righted: the tension we felt as listeners has been released.]

This was the Narayandarsimat sect. One King was able to cut them short. There is a book called *Satyārth Prakāsh* and the story is written there. I read this as a child. This isn't a lie, this story actually happened in our India. Finished.

The story was done, the *Durgā Saptashatī* had also run to completion. We sat silent for a minute, attention still fixed on Swamiji. He adjusted his spectacles and looked around the room. When he spoke again, his voice was low and earnest: "The Lord has no form. You can't see Him with these eyes, but you can perceive Him through

wisdom. Wisdom is the Lord. Then, if you look into the matter, your own form is the Lord's form. Everyone's true identity is divine. Why don't you understand that everyone is God? People need to stop hating each other, to abandon jealousy, malice, backbiting. For who is it that you attack? No one other than the Lord."

By this time, the hour of darshan was well over. The long-legged little boy who lived downstairs had come and gone, having dropped off a tiffin with Swamiji's lunch inside. The visitors started to surge forward and bow before they left. A man asking for holy water deflected the conversation. As usual, Swamiji put a banana into each person's cupped hands. Then we emerged into the sunshine bright on the terrace outside.

It is well known that Hinduism consists of a plethora of doctrines, deities, and sects. Hinduism has no overarching institutional structure, no unified hierarchical organization. Through history, the Guru or religious teacher has played a vital role in transmitting and making innovations in the diverse branches of the Hindu tradition. The Guru-disciple relationship has been described as the "core of the Hindu devotional attitude," cutting across all sectarian lines (Gross 1979: 219).

According to the *Guru Gītā*, a Sanskrit scripture chanted each morning by Swamiji's altar, "*gu*" stands for darkness, "*ru*" for light: a Guru is one who leads a disciple out of the darkness of ignorance and into the bright light of understanding. Additionally, Sanskritists link *guru* to "weighty"; therefore, a Guru is a person who commands uncommon prestige (Gonda 1965: 237). The term can be used for a teacher of any sort. As Shri Shankar Lal, a Brahman interviewed by G. M. Carstairs, succinctly put it, "A man who teaches something new to anybody is called a Guru" (1961: 223). I have heard Sanskrit teachers, Hindi teachers, music teachers, and dancing masters all referred to as "Guruji," respected Guru. But insight into the nature of reality forms the highest order of understanding, and the holy person freed from attachments and desires is a cultural ideal (Carstairs 1961: 55; Singer 1972: 79; Spratt 1966: 9, Srinivas 1952: 241). Though the role and the meaning of the Guru has been subject to historical variation, the Guru as religious teacher has been and remains a central locus of sacred authority in India (Babb 1986; Gold 1987; Lannoy 1971: 346–72; Miller 1976–77; Mlecko 1982).

Most religious teachers are also ascetics. They are sādhus, holy men, and occasionally *sādhvīs*, holy women. There is a colorful range of

costume, initiation, doctrine and practice among ascetics (Ghurye 1953; Oman 1905; Miller and Wertz 1976; Sinha and Saraswati 1978; Tripathi 1978). Swamiji's ochre-wearing order of Dashanami Dandi renouncers (*sannyāsīs*), for example, emphasizes a simple, celibate life; at the other extreme, Aghori ascetics prescribe necrophagy and sex with menstruating prostitutes as part of their practices (Parry 1982). The only unifying features amid this variety may be that all ascetics see themselves as following some path that will release them from the transient world (*samsāra*), and that they all distinguish themselves from householders who are not ascetics (Burghart 1983: 643).

Louis Dumont has popularized a model in which the ascetic who stands outside the categories of caste and kinship is the only individual in an otherwise relationally oriented world. Dumont argues that Hinduism can be viewed as emerging in the dialogue between the renouncer and the man in the world. The liminal renouncer "whose unique position gave him a sort of monopoly for putting everything in question" (1970: 46) is the source of innovation in Hinduism. This argument was rephrased in Victor Turner's (1969) terms by Robert Gross: the sādhu's antistructure and communitas provide an arena for escape from structured caste society, and through interacting with the dominant society, can also trigger change such as the formation of sects (Gross 1979). The liminal renouncer, in short, is in a position to be creative, and it is as a Guru that the effects of his or her creativity have the greatest social impact.

As Dumont observes, most sects have been founded by renouncers who serve as Gurus, initiating other ascetics and also ordinary worldly people: "A majority of Indian heads of families, of all castes—even Muslims—have chosen a guru who has initiated them while whispering a *mantra* in their ears, and who, in principle, visits them once a year. Of course there is scope here for degradation, but by this channel the religion and thought of the sects, that is of the renouncer, penetrate to the great mass of men-of-the-world" (Dumont 1970: 58).

The scope for degradation that Dumont mentions lies in the potential abuse of power in the the Guru-disciple relationship. A sādhu becomes a Guru when chosen by disciples. Thereafter, it is an intense personal relationship with a secret initiation and ongoing submission on the part of a disciple. In order to reveal a transcendent reality, a Guru might strive to throw a disciple's established patterns of thought and action into question. Arbitrary, even humiliating, demands might be leveled on a disciple. It is popularly believed that if the Guru is

truly wise, any of these actions and instructions can be a source of profound understanding. But if the Guru is a pretender—self-seeking, avaricious, despotic—he or she can wreak chaos in submissive disciples' lives. This is particularly the case since the offerings of disciples are the primary source of material support for a Guru. If extravagant regalia or Rolls Royces are a part of a Guru's lifestyle, it is the disciples who feel the pinch. The two Gurus in the Nose Cutter legend, then, play upon the cultural suspicion that disciples may not only pour support into an unworthy cause, but also harm themselves by following a pretender's commands.

How does a false Guru establish himself or herself? The answer lies partly in the stripping away of identity that asceticism entails. Initiation into an ascetic order involves breaking the ties of caste and kinship. Furthermore, many ascetics are itinerant, traveling through regions in which they are not known. Ascetic costume has long been a means of going underground in India. A range of people who want to conceal their identity—spies, runaways, thieves—adopt the attire of a sādhu of some order and wander about receiving offerings from pious householders. Even the anthropologists Sinha and Saraswati confess that the "best part of their study" of ascetic organization was conducted in ascetic disguise (1978: 25).

A group set apart from ordinary life—living in isolation, holding a peculiar knowledge and, all in all, considered special—tends to generate folklore (Jansen 1959). In the case of sādhus this is certainly true. Folklore exists about these groups and within these groups. Some images in these folklore texts are positive, upholding sādhus as saintly ideals; others depict them as misguided and dangerous people. As so often happens with Indian folklore, oral transmission is intertwined with written texts. The false ascetic, for example, exists not just in legends like the Nose Cutters but also in ancient Sanskrit literature (Bloomfield 1925; Gross 1979: 59–62; O'Flaherty 1971: 276–79; Oman 1905: 68–91), in vernacular texts like the *Satyārth Prakāsh* (Dayananda Saraswati 1963; 1970), and also in the work of contemporary Indian novelists (R. K. Narayan 1958). Narratives keep alive the ever-present possibility that a seemingly wise sādhu embraced by many as Guru may not be exactly what he or she appears to be.

Westerners drawn to Gurus often lack this cultural background of stories. Although Christianity and Judaism carry stories about misguided members of religious orders, it often does not occur to a Western disciple smitten with visions of the "spiritual East" (King 1978;

Singer 1972) to apply these tales by analogy. Swami Vivekananda, who lectured in the United States and Europe between 1893 and 1896, was the first Guru to accept Western disciples. As Joel Mlecko observes in his historical survey of the role of the Guru: "This acceptance of foreign disciples without their integration into the Hindu social fabric is a continuing and developing practice with Hindu gurus" (1982: 53). Gurus have come to the West; Westerners have come to India (Brent 1972; Harper 1972; Mehta 1979). In many cases, the romance with the mystical East has ended with disappointment. After the Guru-struck 1960s, it was possible to encounter a glossy, coffee table book whose avowed aim was "to provide the Western enquirer, sceptic or not, with the means to distinguish the charlatan, whose aim is to deceive him, from the honest teacher, whose only object is to help" (Menen 1974: 8).

This then is the cultural and historical background of Swamiji's telling the Nose Cutter story to an audience composed of both Indians and Westerners in 1983. In telling a story, rather than making a summary statement, he was following the precedent of many sādhus before him (Oman 1905: 157; Gross 1979: 233, 435) and religious teachers—rabbis, Zen monks, Christ, Buddha, Mohammed—more generally. In fact, he acknowledged that he had read this story in *Satyārth Prakāsh*, the collected discourses of Swami Dayananda, a nineteenth-century Guru.

"Swamiji" is itself a generic term for an ascetic, and I use this term at his request. "I don't want publicity(E), Mataji," Swamiji said when I was discussing my plans to write about him. Between an orthodox Hindu grandmother and an intrigued American mother, I had been hauled along on visits to many different holy people through my childhood. Swamiji was one of these. Though I was a shy ten-year-old when we first met, I was captivated by his endless repertoire of stories. Graduate school abroad had given me a scholarly excuse to listen to Swamiji's stories which included reminiscences of his questing past, anecdotes about other holy people, and a profusion of folk narratives. Swamiji treated me with overwhelming generosity and indulgence. He seemed amused that a child should return as a young woman bearing the support of a university to record his "topsy-turvy" pronouncements. I was almost forty years younger than him, yet like all other women I was "mother." During the summer in which I recorded this story, I lived next door to Swamiji with three Western women,

by his arrangement. So when Swamiji requested, "Just write that some Swamiji told you all this," I felt bound to honor his words.

In making this request, Swamiji was not just ducking publicity; he was also allying himself with an ascetic tradition of Swamis. To him, the issue of ascetic authenticity was personal and deeply felt. He often spoke about the attributes of a true holy man (*sādhu*) and renouncer (*sannyāsī*) as well as Guru. According to him, and the tradition at large, desirelessness and devotion to the indwelling Self are paramount as inner attributes. In terms of behavior, the true ascetic remains celibate, and has no attachment to possessions. He does not sell food, women, or spiritual teachings (*anna vikraya, strī vikraya, dharma vikraya*). He serves all people, treating them as "his own, regardless of caste, nationality or religion." This emphasis on an ascetic's active service in the world rather than on removed renunciation is a nineteenth century construct that Swamiji owes partly to Swami Vivekananda. It also has a source in Swamiji's experience as a disciple of Gandhi's and as a freedom fighter for Indian Independance.

A Guru as well should ideally bear all these qualities. Yet, as Swamiji noted with dismay, being a Guru had through the 1960s and 1970s become a big "bij-ness." He was particularly concerned about what had happened to the Gurus who went abroad, hypothesizing that there was something in the air and water (*havā-panī*) of America which made even the best Gurus crazy about money. He also worried that, rather than serving the world, Gurus now "took slaves." One afternoon in 1983, shortly after he told this story, I found Swamiji lying flat on the cool floor musing over why contemporary Gurus behaved so rapaciously with foreigners. How could there be such injustice in the name of religion? Swamiji explained that according to his "upside down thinking," Americans had previously taken slaves from Africa. Now, the wheel of *karma* had turned and the descendants of the slave owners were being hauled off by Gurus in India. The three of us present, Prakash Seth, "Pagaldas" and I, were speechless with laughter. "Pagaldas" (slave of craziness) was originally from California, but had lived in other ashrams where he learned Hindi and got this name. If anything, he laughed loudest, shaking his frizzy, graying head as the glasses in his wire-rimmed spectacles gleamed. Looking up at us from the floor, Swamiji just grinned.

Though Swamiji allowed people to stay near him for short periods of time, he was adamant that Indians and foreigners alike should continue with their everyday lives. Many of the young men and women

from England, America, Australia, and France who found their way to him in the 1980s had in the past been involved in large-scale ashrams. Swamiji sent them home with the advice that God is within and can be found anywhere. Time in the world, he said, is best spent in your own country, caring for your family, working, and, if possible, making jobs for the poor. In his view, the Guru is a principle that exists everywhere: hanging around in an ashram can be a waste of time.

Storytelling is a creative activity; even with a folk narrative that already exists in multiple variants, the gifted teller improvises as he or she goes along (Azadovskii 1974, Degh 1969, Ortutay 1972). Listening to Swamiji retell the same stories on different occasions, I was impressed by the skill with which he altered his tellings according to the situation and audience. As he explained when questioned, "If you tell any story any time, it's not really good. You must consider the time, and shape the story so it's right. All stories are told for some purpose." In his hands, then, folklore became an interactional strategy: "an implement for argument, a tool for persuasion" (Abrahams 1968: 146). Through stories, he "shot" morals at people (cf. Basso 1983) and eased tensions by displacing the problem at hand to a structurally parallel level (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1975). For example, rather than criticizing outright Advani's Guru, or the workshops selling instant mystical experience, or the gullibility of Westerners, Swamiji couched his commentary in a narrative form. Telling the Nose Cutter legend, Swamiji adroitly attributed his views to the tradition, the past, a book. He also left the moral of the story and his motive for telling it ambiguous; if people chose to ignore the criticism couched in the story, they could.

The Nose Cutter legend was one of the few in which he acknowledged a written source. In Berkeley, two years later, I finally looked in the library for the book in which Swamiji had read the story. I found it in Hindi as *Satyārth Prakāsh* by Swami Dayananda Saraswati and in English translation as *The Light of Truth*. Swami Dayananda (1824–1883) was the founder of the Arya Samaj, a Hindu religious and social reform movement. Swami Dayanananda, like Swamiji, left his Braham background to wander through India in search of spiritual wisdom, eventually taking the vows of a Dashanāmi sannyāsī. On the orders of his blind Guru, Swami Dayananda campaigned for a return to a pristine Hinduism based on the ancient Vedas. He condemned

idolatry, emphasized humanitarianism, and bitterly critiqued other religions, Gurus and sects (Jordens 1978). In the *Satyārth Prakāsh* Swami Dayanananda synthesized the views that he had delivered orally in lectures throughout North India. The book, issued in two separate editions in 1875 and in 1884, was translated into English in 1908.

Sure enough, there in *Satyārth Prakāsh* was the story that Swamiji had told, though in a very different form (Dayananda 1963 (1884): 503–11; 1970(1908): 367–71) The story appears in chapter 11, "A Refutation and Advocation of Indian Religions," which presents an unabashedly biased history of various sects within Hinduism. There are spirited exposés of the supposed logical absurdity in mythological systems surrounding various deities, tirades against fellow Gurus, and sarcastic descriptions of the average ascetic's conduct. Many parts of the book are in dialogue. When Swami Dayananda is asked about the Swami Narayan Sect, he launches without hesitation into a description of the founder's wiles.

The Swami Narayan sect was founded in Gujarat during the early nineteenth century by Swami Sahajananda, also known because of his devotion to Vishnu (Narayan) as "Swami Narayan." As Raymond Williams (1984) has shown in a historical overview of the sect, this was a period of extreme political instability in the northwest region of India, and Sahajananda's appearance was seen as a fulfillment of the traditional view that in times of turmoil Lord Vishnu himself will come down to earth. One of Sahajananda's major patrons was a landlord called Dada Kachar who provided a residential base from which Sahajananda proceeded on tours. As more devotees gathered, a growing phenomenon was the state of mystical union (*samādhī*) that they claimed to experience through the grace of their Guru.

> What made this unusual was that it did not result from long practice of the yogic path of ascent to higher consciousness—thought by many to be the only path of its attainment; it came immediately through contact with or meditation on Sahajanand Swami. There are hundreds of stories of persons in the trance state, especially from the early part of his ministry. A constant theme in the stories is that the men and women who had such visions saw Sahajanand Swami as the Supreme Being served by other divine figures. (Williams 1984: 15)

Gurus have always judged each other from the vantage of their own teaching tradition (*sampradāya*). Swami Dayananda, writing a few

decades later, distrusted these mass visions and did not hesitate to speak his mind. According to his account in *Satyārth Prakāsh,* Swami Sahajananda had dressed up as four-armed Narayan to win over the powerful landlord, Dada Kachar. His disciples led Dada Kachar through the room with a small lamp and allowed the landlord to glimpse the Guru-deity for a brief minute. Swami Dayananda then writes, "a parable is apposite here," and starts in on the story of the criminal whose nose is cut off and claims to see God.

The story of the noseless man who dupes others is an Indic tale type[2] with other recorded variants (Crooke 1894; Robinson 1885: 31–32; Upreti 1894: 50–51). Swami Dayananda used this traditional tale as a comment on what he presents as locatable historical fact. Swamiji, in his retelling, fit together the two sequences into one legend set in an unmarked past. By making the thief whose nose is cut off a disciple of the Guru who decks himself out as a deity, Swamiji linked the two sequences through a Guru-disciple relationship. As the Guru, so the disciple, the link suggests. Fakes breed further fakes.

A detailed comparison of Swami Dayananda's written account and Swamiji's orally performed one is a potentially endless undertaking. There are differences in the use of language, the names of characters, details about when and where events occurred, and even the style of the two English translators. The most intriguing discrepancies, though, involve Swamiji's updating of Dayananda's version so that it speaks to the present: the "historically dialogical" dimension of the text (Bruner and Gorfain 1983). Broad trends in the behavior of Gurus during the latter part of the twentieth century and the immediate details of the gathering on 7 July 1983 are reflected in the shape of Swamiji's story. Both Dayananda and Swamiji describe Gurus who offer instant experiences of God and maintain a front with the help of devotees who cannot admit themselves duped. The Gurus in Swamiji's story though are likened to companies that advertise on radio and television. Members of the sect are upheld as "scientists"; manifestations of a "new age." And foreigners are among the gullible initiates.

More immediately, specific people present when the story was told were drawn into the narrative frame.[3] Swamiji likened himself to both the masquerading Guru and the thieving disciple turned Guru. "Gayatri" and "Sarasvati" became noseless initiates. Gupta Saheb was compared to the prime minister. When these analogies were made, there was a stir among those of us listening. (The baby slept on.) We smiled, exchanged glances, and listened with the added intent of following

the fates of those present who now found themselves buffeted along by the story's flow. It is difficult to definitively state Swamiji's intention in making these characterizations or telling this tale. Questions rather than a discrete list of answers appear here. Did Swamiji mean to emphasize that he belonged to the category of Guru and disciple; that the story was a reflexive statement of what he was, or craftily could be? Did he mean to mock "Gayatri" and "Sarasvati" for trekking to India in search of a Guru, to chide them for their lack of discrimination in previous involvements with sects? Did he mean to praise Gupta for his levelheadedness? Was he aware that the noses being sliced off could possibly be linked with castration anxiety among celibate ascetics? Through allusions to the present, was he consciously striving to emphasize that life and story are not, after all, too far apart?

Swami Dayananda extracts a moral at the end of the section where the Swami Narayan and Nose Cutter sects are discussed. He writes: "In this same manner, all the opponents of the Vedas are clever in stripping others of their wealth. Such is the imposition of sects" (1963: 511; 1970: 370). Similarly, in another variant of the Nose Cutter narrative recorded by a missionary in his collection of "heathen writings" from South India, the story ends: "It is thus that one of a false religion tries to draw others into it" (Robinson 1885: 32). Swamiji finished with the comment: "This isn't a lie, the story actually happened in our India." Though he did not draw out a moral, I heard this assertion of the story's facticity as implying that deception by Gurus was a real, ongoing possibility in India. I understood the story as stating that instant experiences of God were liable to be phony, that duping disciples was wrong, that sincerity and the courage to admit you had been fooled eventually triumphed over deceit. The Westerners' involvement in the story implied their need for a cultural background of cynicism. Yet, in leaving the moral implied rather than stated outright, Swamiji left the audience a generous space for interpretation. It was up to us to figure out (or forget about) what the story meant and why he chose to tell it when he did.

I did not, at the time, think to elicit "oral literary criticism" (Dundes 1966) from everyone who was slipping on the shoes lined by the door. What had they made of the story? Mr. Advani seemed unruffled. Maybe he had not caught on that there was an analogy between the workshops he was so fervently organizing and the Nose Cutters' initiation. Gupta Saheb, who had been portrayed as the prime minister,

nodded goodbye with a grin; but that was no gauge that he was pleased by this characterization, or that he agreed with the story, for he always smiled.

Upstairs, the group of women living together spread newspapers on the floor in preparation for lunch. "Gayatri" and "Sarasvati" made passing reference to the tale. Both seemed amused about having had their noses sliced off. "As though I'd do a thing like that!" "Gayatri" said, grinning and shaking her head. "Am I as gullible as all that?" "Sarasvati" mused in her clear British tones. "He always has a *message,* you know; I wonder why he said *that.*" They had both at one time been involved with large religious institutions. Bhavani's comment came a few days later. New to India, she had quite literally absorbed the story as one more insight into the complex civilization. "Far out," she said. "This country is too much. Do you know when this happened? Do you know who the king was who stopped the Nose Cutters?" I burst out laughing, but had to agree when she pointed out that Swamiji had stressed that this was true.

When I returned to Nasik in 1985, having written a preliminary draft of this essay, I was particulary interested in audience interpretation. Swamiji did not retell this legend but, in the course of an interview, "Gulelal" brought it up. "Gulelal" was an American Jew from Pittsburgh who had spent twelve years at various centers of the intercontinental ashram of another Guru. When he became disenchanted with the bureaucratic structure, he had made his way to Swamiji, and had subsequently divided his time between work in America and visits to India. "When I went to America last time, Swamiji told me not to cut off any noses," "Gulelal" said. I grinned, understanding that he had been advised not to set himself up as a bogus Guru. But, he went on to offer a very different explanation: "What he meant was, don't destroy anyone's faith. When you cut a nose, it's the central part of their face and their faith." "Gulelal" felt that Swamiji was referring to his disappointment in the previous Guru; to reveal the loss of faith to disciples who were still involved was equivalent to cutting off their noses. I openly disagreed with him over his interpretation of what Swamiji had meant. In the end, we referred back to Swamiji himself, who said, " 'Don't cut noses' means 'don't deceive others.' "

There is no doubt that we had all heard the story in different ways, that it brought us different insights depending on our own life-experiences and central concerns: "Bhavani," craving more knowledge

about India, understood it as a history lesson; "Gulelal," who felt betrayed by a Guru, saw it as a statement on the loss of faith; I, the graduate student, strained to set it in a cultural, historical, and theoretical context. Bettelheim's observations on the therapeutic power of fairy tales for children are applicable to the stories Swamiji tells his visitors: "The fairy tale is therapeutic because the patient finds his *own* solutions, through contemplating what the story seems to imply about him and his inner conflicts at this moment in his life" (Bettelheim 1977: 25).

Stories abound in all religious traditions, though the genres that these fall into and the emphasis given to stories over other forms of religious communication may vary. In religions that emphasize a written canon, stories become fixed in texts. The stories remain the same though history flows on. Yet, if a religion is to continue offering meaning to believers, it must necessarily accommodate history and changing human experience. When embedded in written form, scriptural stories require an ongoing tradition of exegesis to bring them into meaningful conjunction with the everyday lives of believers (van Baaren 1972). So, stories are reread from different perspectives. Christ's parables, for example, have been reinterpreted through time as being allegorical, historical, social interactional, and so on. Alternatively, stories may generate a growth of subsidiary stories closer to contemporary concerns; the apocryphal stories deriving from the Koran or Bible are good examples. Received stories may also be rewritten in an updated vernacular language. The Ramayana, for example, exists in multiple variants—sanskritic, vernacular, written, oral (cf. Richman 1991), all of which contain statements not only about religion but also of group identity.

Written scriptures anchor religion in the past, but teachings transmitted orally are made contemporaneous through their retellings. As can be seen in written versions of Dayananda's and Swamiji's oral performances, traditional stories are reshaped as they are retold. In drawing on a story, the storyteller shapes it to accommodate the concerns of a different audience in a changed historical circumstance. Emerging from a collectivity, a folk narrative expresses deep-rooted cultural themes, yet, its telling is effortlessly updated in language, details, and the emphases given to particular themes. The spoken word endows the message of the story with a vital immediacy, binding the teller and audience in a community (Ong 1982: 74–75). Further-

more, the ambiguity of a story, unlike a straightforward proposition, allows listeners to project their own concerns while it links them to the other believers who have heard the story in other moments in history. As Slater writes, "A creative thinker or great teacher in the tradition is one who takes us through the familiar stories. . . . and points us to new conclusions, which we can then see to be congruent with what has gone before" (1978: 165–66).

Swamiji used the story of the Nose Cutters as an example of what living Gurus could but should not be. I now shift from the negative to the positive, presenting Swamiji's conception of how the Guru should be viewed: more as an omnipresent principle than a particular person. In the afternoon of 7 July 1983, before the doors were officially reopened to visitors, Swamiji sat in his room, reflecting. He leaned against the wall, legs stretched out on a stool placed in front of his bed, pink mosquito net looped above him. Light fell through the window on the left side of his face. I sat on the floor, tape recorder by my side. Leaning against the door frame, Dagu Seth listened, too. Swamiji spoke slowly, solemnly.

> Swamiji: The entire universe is the Guru. Wherever you tread, you should continue to find the Guru. Every second. Whatever you do, find a Guru in it. When you think over something—"Why is it like that?"—that act of reflection is the Guru. You can gain some wisdom from everything, so the entire universe is the Guru. We learn each thing from this universe, don't we? That's why it should be saluted as the Guru.
>
> Kirin: So the Guru is not one person?
>
> Swamiji: That's what I think. Dattatreya [the Guru of the Gods] made twenty-four Gurus. He learned something from each one of them. He even made a prostitute his Guru, a dog his Guru. Look how honest and faithful a dog is—if you feed it just a bit of bread it doesn't forget you. A human being should be like this, too. That's why Dattatreya made a dog one of his Gurus. Even if you strike a dog after you've fed it, it won't bite you; it rolls at your feet.
>
> He made a python a Guru too. Why? Because it keeps lying in one place. It doesn't go out in search of food. It just leaves its mouth open, trusting that whatever is destined will come its way. When it feels hungry, it inhales deeply and something or the other enters its mouth. At the most it will move ten feet away from where it lives. That's why the python was made a Guru; it's so peaceful, just lying there. . . .

Then Swamiji told another sequence of stories about another group of Gurus. Looking back at Swamiji from the vantage of 1993, the

respectful, tolerant version of religion that he stood for is increasingly eclipsed by Hindu nationalists' rhetoric of hatred. If he were still alive, might Swamiji tell the story of the Nose Cutter sect to critique political leaders—both lay and ascetic—who today purport to speak for Hinduism?

Notes

1. The material in this essay is largely a condensed and altered version of Chaps. 6 and 11 in K. Narayan 1989. This essay was written first in 1985.

2. Tale Type 1707: "*The Noseless Man:* A man who has lost his nose persuades others that they too can see God if they will cut their noses off. They do so, whereupon he scoffs at them" (Thompson and Roberts 1960). The legend as told by Swamiji contains the following folklore motifs: K1286 Mock initiation for dupe; K1829 Disguise as holy man; J758.1 Noseless man persuades others to cut off their noses; 286 Wisdom of an old man (Thompson 1955–58; Thompson and Balys 1958).

3. For the concept of "frame" as the marker for a shared definition of an activity in progress, see Bateson 1955; Bauman 1977; Goffman 1974.

REFERENCES

Abrahams, Roger D. 1968. "Introductory Remarks to a Rhetorical Theory of Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 81: 143–58.

Azadovskii, Mark. 1974. *A Siberian Tale Teller*. Trans. James Dow. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Babb, Lawrence A. 1981. "Glancing: Visual Interaction in Hinduism." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 37: 387–401.

——. 1986. *Redemptive Encounters: Three Modern Styles in the Hindu Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Basso, Keith H. 1983. " 'Stalking with Stories': Names, Places and Moral Narrative among the Western Apache." In E. Bruner, ed., 1984. Pp. 19–55.

Bateson, Gregory. 1955. "A Theory of Play and Fantasy." *Psychiatric Research Reports* 2: 39–51.

Bauman, Richard. 1977. *Verbal Art as Performance*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House.

Bettelheim, Bruno. 1977. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York: Knopf.

Bloomfield, Maurice. 1924. "On False Ascetics and Nuns in Hindu Fiction." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 44: 202–42.

Braithwaite, R. B. 1955. *An Empiricist's View of the Nature of Religious Belief.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brent, Peter. 1972. *Godmen of India.* London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press.

Bruner, Edward. 1984. *Text, Play, and Story: The Construction and Reconstruction of Self and Society.* 1983 Proceedings of the American Ethnological Society, Washington, D.C.

Bruner, Edward, and Phyllis Gorfain. 1984. "Dialogical Narration and Paradoxes of Masada." Bruner, ed., 1984. Pp. 56–79.

Burghart, Richard. 1983. "Renunciation in the Religious Traditions of South Asia." *Man* (n.s.) 18: 635–53.

Carstairs, G. Morris. 1961. *The Twice-Born: A Study of a Community of High-Caste Hindus.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Crooke, William. 1894. "The Man without a Nose." *North Indian Notes and Queries* 4: Entry 301.

Dayananda Saraswati, Swami. 1963 (1884). *Satyarth Prakash* (Hindi). Delhi: Govindram Hasanand.

——. 1970 (1908). *The Light of Truth: An English Translation of the Satyarth Prakash.* Trans. Durga Prasad. New Delhi: Gnan Prakashan.

Degh, Linda. 1969. *Folktales and Society: Story Telling in a Hungarian Peasant Community.* Trans. Emily M. Schossberger. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Dumont, Louis. 1970. "World Renunciation in Indian Religions." In Louis Dumont, ed., *Religion/Politics and History in India.* The Hague and Paris: Mouton. Pp. 33–60.

Dundes, Alan. 1966. "Metafolklore and Oral Literary Criticism." *The Monist* 60:505–16. Reprinted 1975 in A. Dundes, *Analytic Essays in Folklore.* The Hague: Mouton.

Eck, Diana. 1981. *Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India.* Chambersburg, Pa.: Anima Books.

Geertz, Clifford. 1966. "Religion as a Cultural System." In M. Banton, ed., *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion.* London: Tavistock. Pp. 1–46.

Ghurye, Govind Sadashiv. 1953. *Indian Sadhus.* Bombay: Popular Prakashan.

Goffman, Erving. 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience.* New York: Harper and Row.

Gold, Daniel. 1987. *The Lord as Guru: Hindi Sants in the North Indian Tradition.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Goldberg, Michael. 1982. *Theology and Narrative: A Critical Introduction.* Nashville: Abingdon.

Gonda, Jan. 1965. *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion.* The Hague: Mouton.

Gross, Robert. 1979. "Hindu Asceticism: A Study of the Sadhus of North India." Ph.D. diss. University of California, Berkeley.

Harper, Marvin Henry. 1972. *Gurus, Swamis and Avataras: Spiritual Masters and their American Disciples.* Philadelphia: Westminister Press.

Jansen, William Hugh. 1959. "The Esoteric-Exoteric Factor in Folklore." *Fabula*

2: 205–11. Reprinted 1965 in A. Dundes, ed., *The Study of Folklore.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall. Pp. 43–51.

Jordens, J. T. F. 1978. *Dayananda Sarasvati: His Life and Ideas.* Delhi: Oxford University Press.

King, Ursula. 1978. "Indian Spirituality, Western Materialism: An Image and its Function in the Reinterpretation of Modern Hinduism." *Social Action* 28 (1): 62–86.

Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1975. "A Parable in Context: A Social Interactional Analysis of Storytelling Performance." In Dan Ben Amos and Kenneth S. Goldstein, eds., *Folklore: Performance and Communication.* The Hague: Mouton. Pp. 105–30.

Lannoy, Richard. 1971. *The Speaking Tree.* London: Oxford University Press.

Mehta, Gita. 1979. *Karma Cola: Marketing the Mystic East.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Menen, Aubrey. 1974. *The New Mystics and the True Indian Tradition.* With Photographs by Graham Hall. London: Thames and Hudson.

Miller, David. 1976–77. "The Guru as the Center of Sacredness." *Studies in Religion* 6/5: 527–33.

Miller, David M., and Dorothy C. Wertz. 1976. *Hindu Monastic Life: The Monks and Monasteries of Bhubanesheshwar.* Montreal: McGill Queens University Press.

Mlecko, Joel D. 1982. "The Guru in Hindu Tradition." *Numen* 29: 33–61.

Narayan, Kirin. 1989. *Storytellers, Saints, and Scoundrels: Folk Narrative as Hindu Religious Teaching.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Narayan, R. K. 1958. *The Guide.* Mysore: Indian Thought Publications.

O'Flaherty, Wendy. 1971. "The Origin of Heresy in Hindu Mythology." *History of Religions* 10: 271–333.

Oman, J. C. 1905. *The Mystics, Ascetics, and Saints of India.* London: T. Fisher Unwin.

Ong, Walter J. 1982. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word.* New York: Methuen.

Ortutay, Gyula. 1972. "Fedics Relates Tales." In *Hungarian Folklore: Essays.* Trans. Istvan Butyav. Budapest: Akademiai Kiada. Pp. 225–85.

Parry, Jonathan. 1982. "Sacrificial Death and the Necrophagous Ascetic." In M. Bloch and J. Parry, eds., *Death and the Regeneration of Life.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 74–110.

Richman, Paula, ed. 1991. *Many Rāmāyanas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Robinson, E. J. 1885. *Tales and Poems of South India.* From the Tamil. London: T. Woodmer.

Singer, Milton. 1972. "Passage to More than India: A Sketch of Changing European and American Images." In M. Singer, *When a Great Tradition Modernizes.* London: Pall Mall Press. Pp. 11–38.

Sinha, Surajit, and Baidyanath Saraswati. 1978. *Ascetics of Kashi: An Anthropological Investigation.* Varanasi: N. K. Bose Memorial Foundation.

Slater, Peter. 1978. *The Dynamics of Religion: Meaning and Change in Religious Traditions.* New York: Harper and Row.

Spratt, Philip. 1966. *Hindu Culture and Personality.* Bombay: Manaktalas.
Srinivas, M. N. 1952. *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India.* New York: Asia Publishing House.
Thompson, Stith. 1955–58. *Motif Index of Folk Literature.* 6 vols. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Thompson, Stith, and Jonas Balys. 1958. *The Oral Tales of India.* Folklore Series 10. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Thompson, Stith, and Warren E. Roberts. 1960. "Types of Indic Oral Tales: India, Pakistan and Ceylon." *Folklore Fellows Communications* 180. Helsinki: Suomenalainen Tiedakatemia.
Tilley, Clarence W. 1985. *Story Theology.* Wilmington, Del.: M. Glazier.
Tripathi, B. D. 1978. *The Sadhus of India: The Sociological View.* Bombay: Popular Prakashan.
Turner, Victor. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure.* Chicago: Aldine.
Upreti, Pandit Ganga Datt. 1894. *Proverbs and Folklore of Kumaun and Garhwal.* Lodiana: Lodiana Mission Press.
Van Baaren, T. P. 1972. "The Flexibility of Myth." *Studies in the History of Religions* 22: 199–206.
Wiggins, James. 1974. *Religion as Story.* New York: Harper and Row.
Williams, Raymond. 1984. *A New Face of Hinduism: The Swaminarayan Religion.* New York: Cambridge University Press.