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Tradition and Post-Tradition: Four Contemporary Indian Puppeteers

Karen Smith and Kathy Foley

Delhi-based puppeteers Dadi Pudumjee, Ranjana Pandey, Puran Bhatt, and Anurupa Roy negotiate the balance between the local and global. What do these transnational puppeteers, who represent “India” in international forums such as UNIMA, choose as their foci and how do they relate to older traditions of puppetry?

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This report will focus on North Indian puppetry innovators since the 1980s, a period that has seen a rapid transition in North India from traditional to more contemporary forms. The four most influential Delhi-based puppeteers from that period, all of whom are still active, are detailed—Dadi Pudumjee, Ranjana Pandey, Puran Bhatt, and Anurupa Roy. While the intent is descriptive, the information will also show their connected paths and concerns.

Dadi Pudumjee

Dadi Pudumjee (b. 1951), currently serving as the first non-European president of the Union Internationale de la Marionnette (UNIMA), is probably the best-known contemporary Indian puppet

artist (Fig. 1). The many influences on Pudumjee's theatrical output include European puppetry aesthetics as well as Asian puppetry, particularly Japanese *bunraku*. He is versed in India's traditional puppet theatre and grew up watching India's avant-garde theatre movement of the 1960–1970s. Visual and performing arts, including music of India and the world, inform his work. His theatre work is a rich blend of traditional, classical, and modern influences and includes exciting collaborations with fellow artists, actors, dancers, poets, and musicians. Pudumjee's productions since 2000 are often non-verbal and movement-based, relying on dramatic visual imagery rather than scripted text.

His education in graphic design and short filmmaking was at the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad, Gujarat (1971–1975). In puppetry he was already self-taught: it was his hobby during his youth in Pune, but he also took formal training at the Darpana Academy of Performing Arts in Ahmedabad with the late Meher Contractor (1918–1992) while doing his studies in design at NID. Contractor had trained in art in London, but subsequently turned toward puppetry and, while on a study tour in Czechoslovakia in 1958, she met the American puppeteer-educator Marjorie Batchelder McPharlin (1903–1997) at an UNIMA Festival in Bucharest. McPharlin encouraged Contractor's interest in establishing puppetry in tertiary education in India and came to teach in India on a Fulbright in 1963. Seeing this potential for developing training in the academy,

FIGURE 1. Dadi Pudumjee. (Photo: Courtesy of Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust)

Contractor became central to promoting puppetry as an artistic and educational medium in the country in the 1960s and 1970s.¹

Pudumjee performed in a troupe Contractor took to Charleville-Mézières, France, for a 1972 puppet festival and he was exposed there to the wide variety of contemporary object theatre. He then studied puppetry in Sweden at the Marionetteatern (the Marionette Theatre Institute), Stockholm, under Michael Meschke, from 1976 to 1977, learning various puppetry techniques and styles then on offer, including puppetry for adults. Pudumjee worked as a drama pedagogue at Vär Theatre Medborghset, Stockholm's state theatre for children and youth which was directed by Gunter Wetzel, and took classes with *bunraku* master Yoshida Minosuke in Stockholm at the Marionette Theatre Institute, resulting in a deep admiration for the Japanese art form and initiating his frequent use of onstage manipulators. In a later interview he noted: "I treasure the fan he [the teacher] used to whack us with . . . he gave it to me at the end. He is one of our greatest Masters" (Pudumjee 2013). Pudumjee directed-designed at Puppentheater in Berlin (1979) for *The Double Shadow*, a Vijaydan Detha story based on a Rajasthani folk tale, then returned to India in 1980. With his European exposure to corporeal mime and widely diverse methods of animation he went back to apply these ideas to Indian performance (Pudumjee 2013).

Pudumjee founded the Sutradhar Puppet Theatre (1980), India's first modern repertory puppet company, which performed every Saturday night and Sunday morning in a major New Delhi venue, the Shri Ram Centre for Art and Culture. *Sutradhar* means both "director" and "puller of strings." This term appears in the *Natya Sastra* (200 BCE/200 CE), India's foundational book of aesthetic theory and the term has caused some scholars to argue that the concept of director/troupe leader first rose in the context of marionette theatre. The choice of name showed Pudumjee's intent: this would be a theatre with a modern director's vision but would draw freely from traditional puppetry. In yet another acknowledgment of tradition, his company included both young university educated theatre enthusiasts and traditional artists who were members of the Rajasthani Bhatt community who traditionally practiced *kathputli* string puppetry. The most senior of the traditional performers were Jagdish Bhatt and his extremely talented younger brother Puran Bhatt, discussed below.

Pudumjee had already incorporated traditional *kathputli* into his Berlin production, but now he carried this exploration further, using traditional dancers and musicians. However, he did not stay with one style in his work—never just the single string *kathputli* or traditional shadow. He introduced rod puppets, *bunraku*-style dolls, giant figures, masks, Western-style string puppets, object theatre, tabletop puppetry,

blacklight theatre, on-stage actors and other elements, generally mixing many forms in a single work. Pudumjee's choice of music was also eclectic, including Indian folk, classical, and modern materials, as well as global influences. His developed sense of comedy—irony and the absurd—appeals to adult and child audiences alike. Viewers across class boundaries applaud his work.

Pudumjee directed a dozen productions for the Sutradhar Puppet Theatre between 1980 and 1986, including *Motu ki Moonch*, *Utsav* (Festival), and *Dhola Maru*. However, *The Little Mermaid*, based upon Hans Christian Andersen's story, was directed by Swedish collaborator Gunter Wetzel. Two other memorable shows are *Rangila Rakshasa* (The Colorful Ogre), which is Pudumjee's version of *The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs*: but here the magical creature is a cow that "lays" golden flops (excrement). *Ek tha Joota* (One Day in the Life of a Shoe) is the story of a village lad who dreams of being a backup singer in Bollywood. In this clever yet tender production, all the characters were built on the variety of Indian shoes that are characteristic of the class and community of the wearer. *Circus, Circus* used umbrellas as the base and rod mechanisms for most of the puppets in an imaginative show with no scripted text: Pudumjee and his actor-puppeteers developed a physical and sounded "language" of gestures and expressive utterances. Music provided the thematic context for each circus act. *The Monkey and the Crocodile* is based upon a *Panchatantra* tale in which a monkey outwits a threatening amphibian who has promised his wife this monkey-companion's heart. This was Pudumjee's last Sutradhar production. Indian leadership took note and sent the group to represent the country at the UNIMA Festival in Dresden (1984) with subsequent performances in Sofia, Berlin, and Moscow, followed by tours to Canada and Japan.

In 1986, Pudumjee founded Ishara Puppet Theatre (since 2001, Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust; <http://www.isharapuppet.com/>, accessed 28 September 2017). Collaborating around 1989 with groundbreaking modern dancer, Astad Deboo, he co-created a series of pure dance performances, *Friends and Thanatomorphia*. Ishara's other productions include the following. *Simple Dreams*, which Pudumjee described as "a visual journey on nature and life," is a performance with dance and movement and object theatre, notably sticks and umbrellas. *Allegory* is based on a poem by Randhir Kharre; the giant masked *Anoke Vastra* is a take on Hans Christian Andersen's "The Emperor's New Clothes." *Journeys*, inspired by Chilean folk singer-songwriter Violetta Parra's song, "Thanks to Life" ("Gracias a la Vida") and original music composed by Sawan Dutta, is "a journey of life, love, fantasy, and violence" with puppets, actors, dancers, and objects. The show is also a

journey through thirty years of Pudumjee's puppetry styles and experimentations. *Transposition*—based on the Indian legend, a Vetal Panchvinasati story, and Thomas Mann's philosophical *The Transposed Heads*—is a performance with puppets, actors, dancers, objects, and music composed by Mumbai-based Sawan Dutta who composes for Bollywood, TV, and the Internet. *Images of Truth*—a series of twelve visual images with puppets, actors, and masks portraying the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi—is probably the most popular production. Since 2002, Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust has also organized India's premier annual international puppet festival, held every winter in New Delhi.

Since the 1990s, Dadi Pudumjee has developed an ongoing relationship with the Delhi-based street children shelter, Salaam Baalak Trust. There he trained young people in puppetry and performance arts. Talented students became members of the company. Between 2005 and 2010, Ishara and Salaam Baalak Trust have collaborated on a project supported by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the European Union focused on education about HIV/AIDS and Substance Abuse.

Pudumjee's television puppet theatre work began in the mid-1970s. In 1976 he worked at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), creating and directing one of India's first made-for-television puppet serials, *Hun and Haan*. The series was designed for rural audiences in the Nadiad area of Gujarat, and focused on education and addressed social problems of the region. Pudumjee returned to television in the early 1990s, collaborating on a new serial, *Chuna Laga Ke* (He Conned Us), with Delhi-based Teamwork Films; the series was broadcast on one of India's major TV channels, Z TV.

Pudumjee's contribution to the arts and his influence on Indian puppetry were recognized in the early 1980s when he received the Sanskriti Pratishthan Award given to talented individuals early in their careers. Later he was given two major Government awards—the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1992 and in 2011 the Padmashree, one of the highest awards given to Indian civilians by the Indian Government.

Pudumjee is an exponent of visual theatre and he uses objects, masks, puppets, movement, sound/music, to create new work for modern audiences. He understands the national tradition of puppetry and hopes for its regeneration through new work and creativity. For example in 2017 he conducted the workshop for UNIMA-India that targeted traditional puppeteers from six regional styles, inviting them to think as he does “outside the box.” He believes that having new tools of contemporary theatre creates a potential pathway for younger members of traditional puppetry families to reach new audiences, and,

thereby, revivify floundering heritage arts.² Through organizing exhibits (*Putul Yatra* 2003; “Storytelling and Puppet Traditions of India” 2010), teaching, directing, producing, and international diplomacy through puppetry, Dadi Pudumjee makes his mark.

Ranjana Pandey (b. 1949)

Like Dadi Pudumjee, Ranjana Pandey is now a “senior artist” of the modern puppetry movement.³ After Meher Contractor, Ranjana Pandey is one of the earliest practitioners in India of puppetry as a medium for communication and education. She performs her puppet-based plays in schools and special education day care centers, and creates performances for urban and village communities based on a variety of social awareness issues, such as literacy, women’s health and welfare, sanitation, environmental themes, and the value of the child with disability. She has produced more than eighty shows for schools and the development sector, performing an average of a hundred shows per year.

Pandey was born in India’s capital, Delhi, in 1949. During her father’s diplomatic assignment to Belgium in the late 1960s, she began studying puppetry at the Theater Toone in Brussels. She was introduced to traditional European string and rod puppets and *guignol*, and was struck by the deep power of puppets to reach children, especially those with special needs. Upon her return to India in the early 1970s, she studied Journalism and Mass Communication at Delhi University, and began working in television production, pursuing puppetry as an avocation. The kind of puppetry for which she was uniquely destined, was not readily available in India in the early 1970s. Fortunately, Pandey met and worked with Meher Contractor, engaging children in puppetry in the classroom. The birth of her daughter with Down’s syndrome in 1980 gave Pandey a new focus.

Opportunities for children with special needs in the 1980s in India were extremely limited. In 1982, Ranjana, with craft activist, Jolly Rohatagi, and dancer, Gayatri Chopra, founded Jan Madhyam (“Of the People,” originally, Madhyam), a non-governmental organization (NGO) to educate and rehabilitate the disadvantaged and children with special needs.⁴ Co-author Karen Smith, a graduate of the University of Hawai’i Asian Theatre program, joined the group in 1985. From the start, the company used puppetry to touch special needs children wherever they could be found, usually the most rudimentary of day care facilities in some of Delhi’s poorest neighborhoods. The successful weekly *Chowkoo Pili* series of interactive puppet shows, with a cube headed boy (Chowkoo) and the yellow girl (Pili), performed in half a

dozen Delhi schools and centers for young people with special needs. It ran from the mid- to late-1980s. Since that period, Jan Madhyam has concentrated on young women with special needs, resulting in two highly acclaimed puppet shows performed by these young women, *Good Morning, Good Night* and *Raat ki Rani* (Queen of the Night Flower/Jasmine).

Unlike Ishara, Jan Madhyam rarely performed in a theatre, but usually in the open air or cramped indoor locations. Like Pudumjee, however, Pandey employed traditional *kathputli* performers, including Puran Bhatt, introducing such artists to new puppet forms, masks, and mixing puppets with actors/dancers to serve young people with special needs.

Jan Madhyam subsequently received grants from the Indian Government and foreign donors to promote women's knowledge of their rights in the face of family or societal abuse. The "Violence Against Women" series of 1986 and 1987 resulted in four productions, on themes such as: exploitation of women in the unorganized work sector; literacy and women's enfranchisement; women's legal recourse in situations of abandonment, physical abuse, and the threat of dowry deaths; and the mixed consequences in demands for women's rights. This series needed careful research into the hardships that women in India experience on a daily basis.

In 2001 and 2002, Pandey wrote and directed *Khullam Khulla* (Free and Open), an eighteen-part television series produced by Riverbank Studios for India's national television, Doordarshan, which, much like *Sesame Street*, focused on early childhood education and school readiness. Later productions include a puppet play *Jassi Jasoos* (a "Save the Vultures" Project), which she created and taught to NGOs from North and West India to develop awareness about this endangered bird species that is crucial in the Indian cycle of life.

Pandey has been a faculty member at institutions including Jamia Millia Islamia (National Islamic) University in New Delhi. She lectures regularly on puppetry in education, special education, and therapy, and she serves as the current president of UNIMA-India. Her efforts have led to greater use of puppetry in child education and applied theatre. Her themes include the rights of the disenfranchised. She has always been committed to puppetry as a way to allow groups with limitations to find their own voices, exercise their creativity, and articulate their dreams.

Puran Bhatt (b. 1954)

In 1982, Puran Bhatt (also Bhat) began working with both Pudumjee at Sri Ram Centre, gaining exposure to contemporary object

theatre techniques in his five years there, and at the same time collaborating with Pandey doing shows for special needs groups. These three artists have remained close over the decades and often work in tandem.

Puran Bhatt (Fig. 2) had mastered the traditional *kathputli* he learnt as a youth from his father and uncle Mohon Lal Bhatt (also Bhat). Remembering his childhood, he says: “Children like me couldn’t go to school because, as *banjaras*, we moved from place to place, and traveled all across northern India and even Nepal doing shows,” and, later, due to family economic pressures, he abandoned performance, working in a furniture shop since “carving was in my blood” (TOI Crest 2010). When he returned to puppetry in the 1980s at age twenty-eight under Pudumjee’s direction, Puran, of course, proved unusually adept at animating and building the new puppet forms. He has a commanding stage presence and a powerful and flexible voice.

Kathputli, of course, is from Rajasthan where the sub-caste or community known as Bhatt (also Bhat) had served as village and court

FIGURE 2. Puran Bhatt combines traditional and contemporary figures in his productions. (Photo: Courtesy of Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust)

performers (see [Jairazbhoy 1988, 2007](#); [Snodgrass 2006](#)). Under the traditional system of patronage, leading families commissioned the Bhattas for performances with their string puppets of stories—especially of Amar Singh Rathore, a Rajasthani hero in the Mughal court. Puppeteers were also the genealogists and, as such, essential assets to their villages, as they would sing the praises of the ancestors of the elite. But following Indian independence and the demise of the Rajasthani courts, the old systems of village patronage collapsed and Bhattas encountered hard times. By the 1960s–1970s, those Bhattas who were still practising puppetry were largely relegated to performing short stock acts with trick puppets and dancing figures at children’s birthday parties or tourist bus stops. In the late 1960s, a large group of Rajasthani traditional performers had come to Delhi for work, initially settling down near Turkman Gate. They later relocated to a tent city across from a bus station in West Delhi known as Shadipur Depot. It was around 1978 that Shadipur Depot Kathputli Colony came into being. This was Puran Bhatt’s home.

As he re-engaged with puppetry, Puran Bhatt assimilated the new puppetry forms and techniques for his own use. In 1991, Puran founded Aakaar Puppet Theatre,⁵ a company composed of his family members. Based until recently in Kathputli Colony, Shadipur Depot, the company performs *kathputli* in schools and for government-sponsored programs, such as the Literacy Mission and the Ministry of Environment. Productions that reflect his attempts to meld Rajasthani stories and the varied aesthetic influences from Pudumjee and Pandey include *Carvaan*, a contemporary puppet production that incorporates puppeteers wearing large papier-mâché heads to explore the legendary history of Rajasthan’s *kathputli* performers. A later work was presented at the large festival, Putul Yatra, which celebrated fifty years of India’s national academy of the arts, the Sangeet Natak Akademi, in 2003: the eponymous *Dhola Maru* is an old Rajasthani story of the Nawar prince Dhola and the Poogal princess Maru who are paired in a child marriage, but later separated when she is wed to another. This sets up a love triangle: the predestined pair must overcome obstacles to their union. Rather than in the traditional cloth-draped booth on a bed frame, the presentation was on an open stage and performed with beautifully made *kathputli* string figures and rod puppets. This was a full-fledged production, with a developed story line and full characterization. In speaking of the production, Puran Bhatt noted:

My exposure to contemporary puppetry [via Pudumjee and Pandey] gave me a larger perspective on puppet theatre and I realized that it’s

not just restricted to performing behind a screen created by two mats (*charpai*). And, so, I think my biggest influence has been contemporary puppetry.

For the first time, during the Sangeet Natak Akademi puppet festival Putul Yatra 2003, we used an open stage for our play “Dhola Maru”. For the first time in traditional Rajasthani theatre, we used actors and allowed the puppeteers to be visible. Usually, the movements of the katputhlis are slow, but here, we made them very fast with dances, etc. Ordinarily, Rajasthani puppets would tell a story without visuals as such. But Dhola Maru’s script was made very strong and visuals & text were shown together. This was one of my earliest attempts at expanding the scope of katputhlis and mixing it with elements of contemporary styles. (Prasad 2008)

Using rod, string, and shadow puppets, Puran Bhatt has created shows that deal with such issues as HIV/AIDS, family planning, as well as the shows for intellectually challenged children. Puran Bhatt has also created puppets for and performed on television.

In the 1980s, Puran Bhatt performed in a series of Festivals of India held in various world capitals. He has taught *kathputli* puppet making and manipulation workshops in France, England, and in India. In 2003, the Government of India recognized Puran’s unique contribution to Indian puppetry by bestowing on him the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. More recently, he used his art and expertise in a struggle to save their districts from a planned urban redevelopment scheme: the topic of a 2014 film, *Tomorrow We Disappear*, which helped the group raise public awareness. Puran Bhatt became the significant interlocutor for the film and larger campaign to stop the proposed evictions (Ward 2015).

The traditional puppeteers in India today who make a living from their art and who thrive are the ones like Puran Bhatt, who have adapted to contemporary demands, including using traditional puppetry for educational and issue-based shows. The talented traditional puppeteers with exposure to other theatre forms and national and international travel seem to have the most success.

Puran Bhatt like Pudumjee and Pandey has frequently worked with young people from traditional puppeteer communities, conducting workshops and internships so they can see paths to the future in the arts. If the traditional arts die, he avers: “It’s our fault. The audience that reveres and looks up to anything that comes from the West and ignores its own rich heritage” (Prasad 2008). He asks not for subsidies but: “A little acknowledgement, respect, space to call our own, where we can practice, and improve an art form that can bring joy, beauty and honor to the country” (Prasad 2008).

Anurupa Roy (b. 1977)

The last artist discussed here, Anurupa Roy, is a professional puppeteer, puppet designer and director of Kat-Katha Puppet Arts Trust, the Delhi-based company of storytellers and puppeteers she founded in 1997 (Fig. 3).⁶ Born in Delhi in 1977, Anurupa Roy is a generation younger than the three figures above and has learned from and with them. Her work extends their models in new directions that reflect her interests and concerns. Anurupa was a child when her parents took her regularly to see Pudumjee's shows. Ten years later she was working with him as a puppeteer. Like Pudumjee, she became interested in the *bunraku*-style as a manipulation technique. She holds diplomas in Puppet Theatre from the Dramatiska Institutet for Film, TV, Drama and Radio, at the University of Stockholm where she worked with Michael Meschke and others. She studied Italian traditional glove puppetry, *guarattelle*, at the Scuola della Guarattelle Napoli. She travels and lectures around the world.

In the late 1990s, Roy worked closely with Ranjana Pandey's company Jan Madhyam on a six-month-long workshop for *Good*

FIGURE 3. Anurupa Roy with American puppeteer Nancy Staub. (Photo: Courtesy of Nancy Staub)

Morning, Good Night, discussed above, which was both created with and performed by “challenged” young women. In 2001 and 2002, Roy worked with Pandey on her *Khullam Khulla* television series. Roy has also collaborated with Pudumjee on shows, such as *Journeys* and *Transposition*.

Roy has directed and performed in over fifteen Kat-Katha productions, including *Her Voice* (1999), *Almost Twelfth Night* (2002), *Virus ka Tamasha* (2004), *About Ram* (2006), the *Kashmir Project* (2005), *Bollywood Bandwagon* (2009), and *Mahabharata* (2016). She, like Pandey, uses puppetry as a tool for empowerment of women and youth. Roy tackles projects relating to gender, health, and the effects of communal violence and war in places like Sri Lanka (2012) and Manipur (2013). One of the strong examples of this last line of her work is her 2005 *Kashmir Project*—based on actual testimonials of Kashmiri women and their suffering through the ongoing violence (2006). She worked on this healing project in the village of Bijbehara in Kashmir with trauma reduction workshops extending over seven months using puppets, masks, theatre, and story telling. The young women involved studied with her the oral tradition of Kashmir to develop the show. The final narrative brought the fourteenth century Sufi poetess Lal Ded into confrontation with the issues of the ongoing fighting in the region—this border with Pakistan that, since the partition of India in 1947, has not known peace. With poetry and puppets the group explored the process of possible healing.

In 2016, she did a version of the *Mahabharata* with Karnataka’s *togalu gombeyata* style colored shadow figures, masks, and projections, and in September 2017, took the production to the acclaimed Festival Mondial des Théâtres de Marionnettes at Charleville-Mézières in France. In the piece, puppets fight humans or puppeteers become the horse that a *bunraku*-style figure might ride. The Kerala martial art of *kalaripayattu* modeled some of the movement and the fourteen chosen figures from the great epic evoked the impact of war on fragile human lives. Though the piece was drawing on the classic epic, the discussion was very much about present divides.

Conclusion

These four artists have been working collaboratively to train and enlarge the visions of the next generation of puppeteers through their many individual projects, workshops, and teaching positions. Through UNIMA-India, they have been facilitating summer workshops, which are well documented in the UNIMA-India magazine *Sutradhar* (see <https://www.unima.org/en/centres-unima/unima-india/>, accessed 27 September 2017).

These have included *togalu gombeyata* shadow puppetry of Karnataka (2014), led by shadow master Gunduraju, and *kathputli* (2015) by Puran Bhatt. In 2017, Dadi Pudumjee taught a group of traditional puppeteers from six regional genres, encouraging them to try out new skills and techniques. Such work spearheaded by the four artists here and their collaborators is both preserving the rich past of Indian puppetry and extending it into the future.

The origin of the Rajasthani *kathputli* is often traced to the famed Thirty-two Tales of the Throne of King Vikramaditya. Supposedly, figures showing the “great works” of this ideal King were carved onto this monarch’s throne. The Bhatt are said to have seen the images and were inspired to bring the stories to life, creating *kathputli*. Although today’s tales are diverse—stories of environmental justice, rights of women or the disabled, caste issues, interpretations of how the old epics apply in the here and now—master puppeteers of India continue to make the “great works” pertinent today.

NOTES

1. For more discussion of Meher Contractor and other women puppeteers discussed in this essay, see [Orenstein \(2013\)](#). Contractor had strong links to Western Europe and the United States and often her mentees studied or traveled in those areas. In contrast, Sergei Obraztsov’s Russian style was more influential for puppeteers in Calcutta, West Bengal, which then had Marxist leanings. The Cold War divide meant that both the United States and the Eastern Bloc governments were funding selected artists to train in the West and sending professional artists from their respective countries to consult in India. From the United States, Marjorie Batchelder McPharlin and television puppeteer Bil Baird were funded to come to India, then a non-aligned state.

2. For more information on Dadi Pudumjee, see [Pudumjee and Sreevathsa \(2017\)](#) who asks the question: “How can Dadi Pudumjee and UNIMA-India, as outsiders to the traditional puppetry, facilitate this process of enabling them to take responsibility to changes in their own tradition?” (p. 2). A three-week workshop with traditional puppeteers was part of the answer.

3. See [Orenstein \(2013: 252–255\)](#) for more detail on Ranjana Pandey.

4. See <http://www.janmadhyam.org/> (accessed 27 September 2017) for more on this organization which, in 2016, reported working with 11,491 children.

5. Aakaar means root. See <http://aakaarpuppet.com/home.html> (accessed 27 September 2017) for more information on the company.

6. For more on Anurupa Roy, see Roy (2012) and Orenstein (2013: 255–259). See <http://katkatha.org/>, accessed 27 September 2017 for examples of work.

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