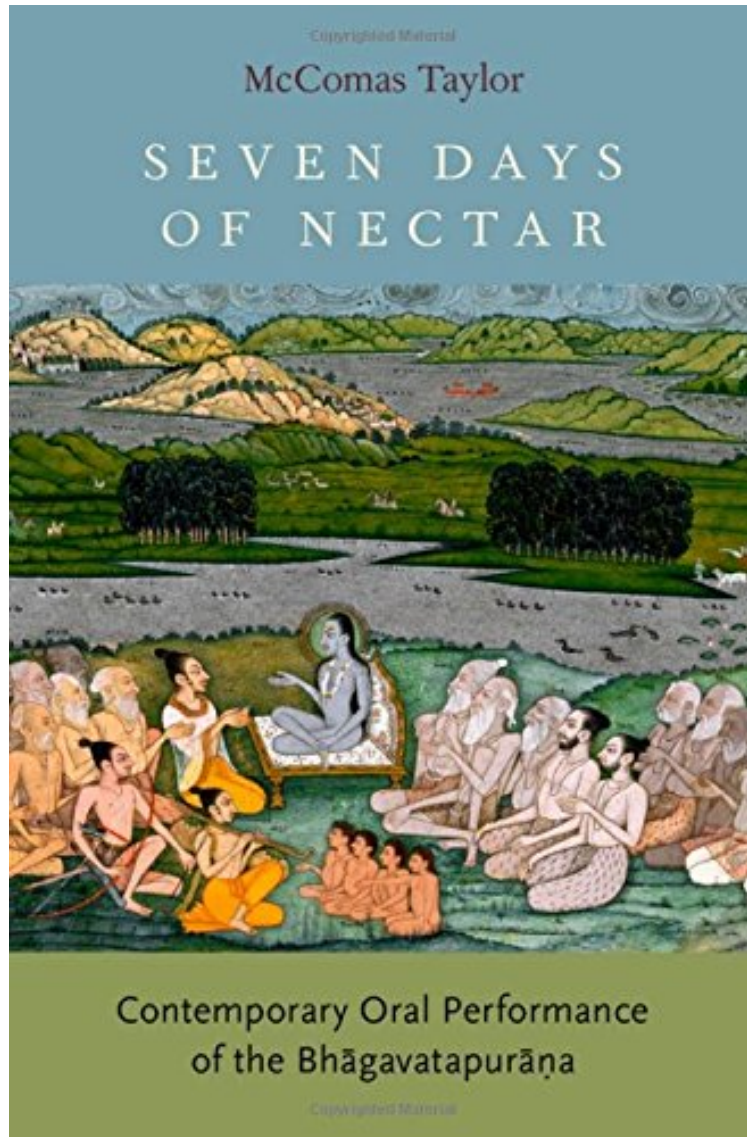


(Mobile ebook) Seven Days of Nectar: Contemporary Oral Performance of the Bhagavatapurana

Seven Days of Nectar: Contemporary Oral Performance of the Bhagavatapurana

McComas Taylor

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McComas Taylor : Seven Days of Nectar: Contemporary Oral Performance of the Bhagavatapurana before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Seven Days of Nectar: Contemporary Oral Performance of the Bhagavatapurana:

The thousand-year-old Sanskrit classic the Bhagavatapurana, or "Stories of the Lord," is the foundational source of narratives concerning the beloved Hindu deity Krishna. For centuries pious individuals, families, and community groups have engaged specialist scholar-orators to give week-long oral performances based on this text. Seated on a dais in front of the audience, the orator intones selected Sanskrit verses from the text and narrates the story of Krishna in the local language. These sacred performances are thought to bring blessings and good fortune to those who sponsor, perform, or attend them. Devotees believe that the narratives of Krishna are like the nectar of immortality for those who can appreciate them. In recent years, these events have grown in number, scale, and popularity. Once confined to private homes or temple spaces, contemporary performances now fill vast public arenas such as sports stadiums, and attract live audiences in the tens of thousands while being simulcast around the world. In *Seven Days of Nectar*, McComas Taylor applies the tools of performance theory to uncover the factors that contribute to the explosive growth of this tradition. His innovative approach, which draws on close textual reading, philology, and ethnography, casts new light on the ways in which narratives are experienced as authentic and transformative and, more broadly, how texts shape societies.

"Taylor attentively brings to the ethnographic field a keen awareness of the larger Hindu and Sanskrit episteme within which these events emerge...To conclude, the book richly offers academics a close look at the Bhagavata-saptaha tradition in three distinct contexts: the rural town of Naluna, India; the more cosmopolitan Vrindavana, India; and the author's hometown of Canberra, Australia...Scholars, mainly of anthropology, religious studies, South Asia, and folklore, interested in the interplay of power, text, and oral performance would be greatly benefited by this well-documented ethnography on the contemporary practice of oral performances of the Bhagavatapurana."--Reading Religion

"This book is a marvelous contribution to scholarship on the neglected Bhagavatapurana and its traditions. Lucidly written, the author shows us how the text is recited over a seven day period and the importance of such recitation for the contemporary Hindu audience in India and abroad. This is an excellent book for all interested in the the history of Hinduism and the ways in which the old traditions are still maintained; an engaging and well written book."--Gavin Flood, author of *The Truth Within, a History of Inwardness in Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism*

"Seven Days of Nectar offers a rich, multi-perspectival entrance into the thriving performance tradition of week-long Bhagavatapurana recitation. Bringing to bear a rare combination of competence in the text and participant-observer (-listener!) attention to current practices, Taylor captures in close-up detail and with helpful analysis how and why these events of devotional exposition and hearing draw huge crowds eager for pious pleasure and spiritual transformation."--Kenneth Valpey, co-editor of *The Bhagavata Purana: Sacred Text and Living Tradition*

"A Hindu sacred text is not what appears on a cold printed page. It is read out loud, performed and discoursed upon, and intensely experienced by the listeners. This book brilliantly shows how the seven-day Bhagavatapurana performances create such an experience of the Bhagavatapurana to modern day Hindus and brings them together as a community in the process. Reading this book, students of religion get a transformative understanding of Hindu religious texts. A truly superb book."--Velcheru Narayana Rao, Koppaka Visweswara Rao and Sita Chair in Telugu Literature, History and Culture, Emory University

About the Author McComas Taylor is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies at The Australian National University.