

Say to the Sun, "Don't Rise," and to the Moon, "Don't Set": Two Oral Narratives from the Countryside of Maharashtra (South Asia Research)



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Pastoralist traditions have long been extraordinarily important to the social, economic, political, and cultural life of western India. The Marathi-language oral literature of the Dhangar shepherds is not only one of the most important elements of the traditional cultural life of its region, but also a treasure of world literature. This volume presents translations of two lively and well-crafted examples of the *ovi*, a genre typical of the oral literature of Dhangars. The two ovis in the volume narrate the stories of Biroba and Dhuloba, two of these shepherds' most important gods. Each of the ovis tells an elaborate story of the birth of the god-a miraculous and complicated process in both cases-and of the struggles each one goes through in order to find and win his bride. The extensive introduction provides a literary analysis of the ovis and discusses what they reveal about the cosmology, geography, society, and political arrangements of their performers' world, as well as about the performers' views of pastoralists and women.

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