VISITORS TO SOUTH INDIAN MUSEUMS

ANITA BHARAT SHAH

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MUSEOLOGICAL CONTEXT AND VISITOR STUDY

Foreword by
François Mairesse

Never has a visitor study in India been so thorough, giving the reader a guide to museology and its components, while examining the extensive research gleaned from interviews with 2060 visitors from all walks of life at the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, Government Museums in Chennai and Bengaluru, and Regional Museums in Thanjavur and Mysuru in south India.

Dr. Shah's thesis from 1994, from which this book is derived, is even more pertinent today, as India undergoes the upheavals due to industrialization and the ubiquitous spread of information technology. The fundamental relationship of the public with identity and culture remain unaltered, while the value of museums that convey art and history have only increased.

She writes of her work: “The ultimate aim is to provide museum experts and museologists with some guidance that might be used to improve their techniques of selection, presentation and interpretation, so that the public’s enjoyment and understanding of art in every form is enhanced.”

Dr. Shah takes the reader through what museums are, what role they have in society, the tools to fulfil this role, and what the visitors think.

Anita Bharat Shah obtained her PhD from Osmania University, Faculty of Psychology, in 1994. She has been active in the Museology Committee of the International Council of Museums since 1987, and served many years on its Executive Board. She has published extensively in the Committee's museological journal ICOFOM Study Series.