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Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- Part One: Genealogies -- 1.In the Centres and Margins of the Historical Record -- 2.Brahmin Jesters and Sufi Wise Fools -- Part Two: Contemporary Performance -- 3.Wedding Bhnds: 'From the Donkey Cart to the Aeroplane' -- 4.Bhnds in the Drawing Room: The Popular Punjabi Theatre -- 5.Satellite Bhnds: Playful Outsiders -- Conclusion: Future Moves? .
Sommario/riassunto	'This book shatters preconceptions about Muslim culture as deftly as do the comic performers it describes. Claire Pamment has written a landmark study of Pakistani comedians proving that the bhnd tradition of popular comedy deserves the appreciation and respect granted to Italian Commedia dell'Arte, English Music Hall, and American

Vaudeville. Pamment's rich descriptions and penetrating analysis brings these brilliant clowns to life as virtuoso chroniclers of absurdity, past and present.' – Ron Jenkins, author of *Subversive Laughter: The Liberating Power of Comedy* 'Pamment makes an invaluable contribution to South Asian theatre and performance history and to an understanding of the politics of high and low culture.' – Nandi Bhatia, University of Western Ontario, Canada 'Defying closure and familiar binaries, this book, like the bhnd tradition itself, celebrates the fluid play between Hinduism and Sufism, royal courts and the public bazaar, the centre and the margin, the traditional and the contemporary. Pamment's erudite scholarship is paired with an abiding appreciation for the artfulness and values of the licensed fools it describes. This is a superb addition to our all too limited knowledge of this lively tradition and its legacy, and a wonderful antidote to the now frequently conveyed impression of Islamic cultures as inherently inimical to humour.' – John Emigh, Brown University, USA This book explores comic performance in Pakistan through the vibrant Indo-Muslim tradition of the Punjabi bhnd which now holds a marginal space in contemporary weddings. With irreverent repartee, genealogical prowess, a topsy-turvy play with hierarchies and shape shifting, the low-status bhnd jostles space in otherwise rigid class and caste hierarchies. Tracing these negotiations in both historical and contemporary sites, the author unfolds a dynamic performance mode that travels from the Sanskrit jester and Sufi wise fool, into Muslim royal courts and households, weddings, contemporary carnivalesque and erotic popular Punjabi theatre and satellite television news. Through original historical and ethnographic research, this book brings to life hitherto unexplored territories of Pakistani popular culture and Indo-Muslim performance histories.
