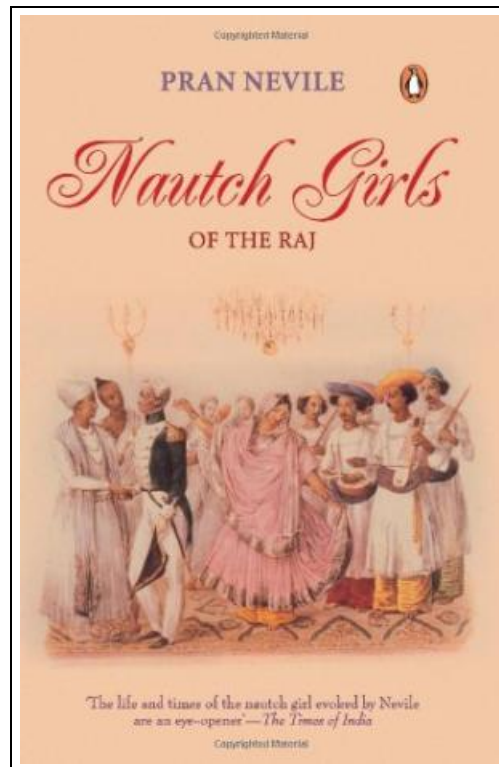


## Nautch Girls of the Raj



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Penguin Books India Pvt Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Nautch Girls of the Raj, Pran Neville, To be with her even for a moment is to taste immortality.' The much-celebrated nautch girl, extravagantly adored for both her beauty and her virtuosity, belonged to a unique class of courtesans who played a significant role in the social and cultural life of India in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The nautch girl, it may be said, was no ordinary woman of pleasure - she had refined manners, a ready wit and poetry in her blood. She embodied a splendid synthesis of different cultures and dance forms - the classical and the popular - and catered to the sophisticated tastes of the elite who had the time, resources and inclination to enjoy her accomplishments. Over the centuries female dancers have appeared in various incarnations, frequently as temple dancers dedicated to the gods, for dance is believed to have divine approval. However, historians, sociologists, novelists and chroniclers have not always done justice to the nautch girl, depicting her as either a vamp or as a showgirl bought by the wealthy for festive occasions. This book highlights the emergence of the quintessential nautch girl in the Mughal era when she reached the zenith of her talent and charisma. Her mystique continued to reign supreme during the Raj and her popularity and status among the English sahibs and the Indian aristocracy flourished during this period. Illustrated with reproductions and drawings obtained from collections all over the world this book offers a vivid glimpse of the seductive allure and dazzling grace of nautch in its days of glory. 'The nautch girl may be no more - but she lives through the pages of Pran Neville's book - they bring to life vital periods of our...



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