



16. Ditto 15.



17. Devotees dance wildly to the pulse of the village drums as they experience the force of Yellama's spirit rising within them



17_a. Drenched in Yellow turmeric powder, with images of Goddess Yellama balanced on their heads, devadasis in trance weave through the crowds at the Yellamma festival.



18. Female devotees rolled in the red earthen mud.



18_a. Ditto 18.



19. Girls are not exclusively dedicated to the goddess. Often sons of devadasis are offered to the goddess and castrated to become eunuchs—*hijras*.



20. Almost a third of the women dedicated to Yellama will end up in the red light districts of Mumbai, Pune, or Gokak . A few devadasis working in Bombay make a point of traveling to the festival in hopes that Yellama will cure them of their sexually transmitted diseases.



21. Ditto 20.



22. Many of the children dedicated as servants to Goddess Yellamma end up in urban brothels. Devadasis pay homage to the Goddess at their brothel shrine, Karnathipura, Mumbai.



23. Devadasi colouring one another's head with yellow vermilion powder.



24. The red and white “marriage” beads, the sign of accomplished dedication, worn by devadasis.



25. Dalit women working in a sea of dried red chillis.



26. Each year, approximately 3,000 girls are brought to the festival of Yellamma to be dedicated as “slaves of the goddess.” They are then sacred, unable to marry a mere mortal, and often destined for a life on the streets.



27. ditto 26



28. Temple glittering at night.



29. Portrait of senior Devadasi, showing her dreadlock.