Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies by J. A. Dubois; H. K. Beauchamp

Review by: W. Crooke

The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 28, No. 3/4 (1899), p. 336

Published by: [Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2842892>

Accessed: 15/06/2014 19:06

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Among other records of custom we may note that of the blood sacrifice in oath taking, two bull yaks are slain, and the parties to the oath dip their hands in the blood: the Tibetan form of salutation is to press forward the right ear and put out the tongue: when a Nepalese returns from a foreign land he is obliged to drink water with an official as a sort of reinitiation into caste: in one case the skulls of some girls who perished from starvation were made into drums for summoning the devils. The Lama, we are told, has curly hair, which is remarkable in view of the popular representation of the Buddha, which does not agree with any definite Indian type.

Among folk-lore references we have the case of the Mount Tendong, which miraculously elongated itself to save the people from the great flood: hot springs are the abode of devils which cause disease if they are not conciliated: the common marmot if ill-treated brings storms: frogs are worshipped to cause rain: a holy white bull yak appears and brings prosperity to a valley: the Spectre of the Brocken is an omen of good luck, but the beholder must mutter prayers and spells: the lake spirit appears as a furious bull yak or as an alluring siren.

We trust that this book is the forerunner of a larger monograph on the geography and ethnology of a most interesting region.

W. CROOKE.

HINDU MANNERS, CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES. By the Abbé J. A. Dubois. Translated and edited by H. K. Beauchamp. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899.

The account of the manners and customs of the Hindus of Southern India by the Abbé Dubois has long been recognised as one of the classical authorities on the religions of India. It was first published under the auspices of the East India Company in 1817, and has been more than once reprinted in later years. Unfortunately the standard edition did not include the last additions and corrections made by the revered author. The original MS. has now been discovered at Madras and has been re-translated and edited with excellent taste and an adequate display of learning by Mr. Beauchamp. The Abbé's work represents, of course, the earlier stage of inquiry into Hinduism, coeval with the writings of Sir W. Jones and the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. At that time little was known of the original Sanskrit authorities, and the Abbé's inquiries were confined to Southern India, where Hinduism is largely impregnated with Dravidian beliefs, and appears in a very different form from the version of the faith as expounded by the Pandits of Mathura and Benares. But the writer, who lived for many years as a native among the natives, was in a peculiarly favourable position for acquiring a knowledge of their beliefs and practices, and if, as a missionary, he took a more gloomy view of Hinduism than that of later and less prejudiced scholars, this is only what might have been expected. With these obvious limitations the book is valuable and interesting. In many ways it resembles Ward's account of the Hindus of Bengal, and both are useful as descriptions by practical observers of the institutions of Hinduism before it came under the influence of Christianity. Mr. Beauchamp might have done more in referring to the later literature of the subject as contained in the Sacred Books of the East and modern studies of popular Hinduism: but his notes are useful as correcting many of the Abbé's misconceptions. We trust that the Clarendon Press will continue their useful task of rendering the classical accounts of Hinduism more accessible to modern students.

W. CROOKE.