J. Richardson Hanks

Maternity and its rituals in Bang Chan

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verder gevolg, want officieel is het, alsof die vrouwen niet bestaan, behalve ten opzichte der kinderen, die op gelijken voet met de in het officieele huwelijk verwekte opgevoed en behandeld worden. (p. 1962-63)

Maternity and its Rituals in Bang Chan

Modern medicine is helped when it understands the underlying rationale of deeply rooted traditional medical systems. It is therefore unfortunate that the *Bijdragen* could not find a reviewer for my "Maternity and its Rituals in Bang Chan" more conversant with the realities of Thai life, and sensitive to the insights that anthropology is giving on practical problems of contemporary life such as maternal and child care (Vol. 121, p. 380).

A competent reviewer would know that ancient and modern belief systems co-exist in every civilized state... the evil eye in parts of Europe, the heritage of India and animist concepts in Thailand. With greater knowledge of southeast Asia, he would not disbelieve that in this Buddhist country, "the inhabitants of Bang Chan are influenced by Buddhist writings". He would know that a complex ceremony such as the ordination, far from being a "mischmasch", has multiple levels of meaning. Here the world of Van Gennep is highly pertinent, and the findings in present-day ethnology showing the measure to which differing cultures shape the concept of man and woman and their functions. Such a reviewer would have realized that Phya Anuman's forty pages of, not "erschöpfende", but illuminating, documentation, and my pedestrian offering are correctives to DeYoung's initial field findings. Instead of accusing me of plagiarism, he would then be better able to see the reason for the quotation from the Bangkok Calendar of 1865, that it is a measure of the extraordinary stability of these birth customs; and would know that Phya Anuman's "Life and Ritual in Old Siam" was published in English ten years after my field work.

The statistics so desired were not given because they had already been published by H. M. Hauck in no. 39, 22 and 29 of the Data Papers of the Southeast Asia program of Cornell University in Ithaca,

New York.

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