

is phonemic). It is disputed whether what Reinhold writes as /e/ should not rather be written (with Buddruss) as /i/ or as GSK, /bl/. But the real problem is Reinhold's *ú*, e.g. in *žú* 'my', *mûlk* 'state', (*h*) *úmr* 'age', *vrút* 'brother', etc. It does not seem to have a simple correspondent in other transcriptions, sometimes originating from a short /u/, but sometimes corresponding to GSK /bl/ or to /a/. It may represent a real dialect characteristic of Gojal. Whilst long vowels certainly exist on Gojal speech, I have not found any minimal pairs. The matter needs further study.

Reinhold has provided no Glossary, nor grammatical notes. To make her study complete, she must urgently prepare a Glossary to her 'dialogues', listing all variants and grammatical forms which occur. It would be very pleasant for all students of Waxi if she adopted the alphabetical ordering system advocated by Sir George Grierson and used by Morgenstierne (and by the present writer) whereby entries are ordered by consonant only, taking vowels into account only when the consonantal framework is identical. This facilitates greatly the use of any vocabulary of an Iranian language, and especially Waxi, where some of the vowels are in dispute.

Whilst she is about it, she might consider adding a decent map (that given on p.108 is woefully inadequate), one which shows all place names mentioned in the texts, and in which the spellings correspond.

J. ELFENBEIN
University of Mainz, (Retired)

IN QUEST OF INDIAN FOLKTALES. PANDIT RAM GHARIB CHAUBE AND WILLIAM CROOKE. By SADHANA NAITHANI. pp. 328. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2006.
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In this impressive book, Sadhana Naithani, Professor at the Centre of German Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, makes a wonderful contribution to the field of Indian folklore studies. First she provides a previously unpublished compendium of folk stories collected in North India at the end of the nineteenth century and also studies the history of Indian folklore research. Second she makes a contribution to colonial history, in particular to the study of orientalism and indigenous involvement in the colonial production of knowledge of the colonised by studying the collaboration between a British administrator and his local informant.

The book is an in depth study of the interaction of a local *pandit* with William Croke (1848–1923), a giant in Indian Folklore Studies and possibly anthropology. During his 25-year career as an officer in the Indian Civil Service, Croke edited *North Indian Notes and Queries* (1891–1896), which stood out from other colonial journals in its focus not on antiquities, but on modern contemporary popular culture. After his early retirement, he became president of the Folklore Society in London (1911–1912) and editor of its journal *Folklore* (1915–1923). He is best remembered for his two magna opera *The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (1892) and *The Tribes and Castes of the North Western Provinces and Oudh* (1896), both published towards the end of the time he served in India.

Through this volume Sadhana Naithani makes two major achievements. First she has brought to light the handwritten manuscripts collected by William Croke that had been lying forgotten in the archives of the Folklore Society in London for a 100 years. These manuscripts contain translations of and notes to an impressive systematically recorded and thus far unpublished collection of folk stories from every district of the North Western Provinces and Oudh, collected between 1891 and 1896 mainly from village schoolteachers (the original versions in Hindi have not survived).

The bulk of the book (part 2) is devoted to the publication and annotation of these stories, complete with the Aarne–Thomson Tale Type Index numbers and a short glossary of Indian terms.

Naithani rightfully attributes the authorship of this mammoth work not to Crooke alone, but to joined authorship with his collaborator, Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube, who is the actual scribe and translator of much of the stories. The material in this section, which is also available in an earlier volume which she edited, entitled *Folktales from Northern India*, under the joint authorship of Crooke and Chaube (published by ABC-Clio in 2002; also available in an Indian edition by Shubhi Publications, Gurgaon).

In the current volume, Naithani also provides an in depth study of her material in the first part (pp. 19–38), with reproduction of some pages from the manuscripts. She studies the language as well as the narratives, pointing to issues of interest in current studies of folklore, especially the interrelation between the oral and the written, and issues of wider interest, such as gender, caste, religious reform movements, and memory of the events of 1857. She is very sensitive to issues of voice, pointing out that “these are actually the narratives told by Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube to the British civilian William Crooke”. (p. 26)

The stories are a wonderful resource in their own right in many ways. For one, they can be used to study late nineteenth-century popular culture, including with regard to the uprising of 1857. Further, this publication will make it possible to trace the life of folk stories over time and place, with of course the caveats about the redaction of the stories that Naithani discusses extensively. Last but not least, the stories make for delightful reading.

The second major contribution of the book is bringing into the limelight the capable author of this extensive work. What has been unappreciated until now is the extent of Crooke’s collaboration with his “indigenous informant”, Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube from Gopalpur in Gorakhpur District (ca. 1850–1914). Through his letters to Crooke, preserved in the archives of the Royal Anthropological Institute in London, Naithani is able to reconstruct the nature and extent of this interesting collaboration. It gives us a rare first-hand insight into the ups and downs and complexities involved in such a project conceived by the western scholar-administrator, who is assisted by an extraordinarily gifted collaborator, yet separated from him by the racial and cultural divides of the time. This relationship was characterised by a warm friendship, yet, remarkably, Pandit Ram Gharib remained unacknowledged in Crooke’s work, and his unprecedented collection of tales with their translations has remained unpublished. There seems to be an interesting paradox at the heart of this collaboration, possibly reflective of larger dynamics at the time when the colonial system was breaking down under the tide of awakening Indian nationalism.

Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube is very interesting in his own right, as an example of an English-educated, extremely gifted scholar, and he turns out to have been the tutor of none else than Ramcandra Shukla, the pioneering scholar of the canon of Hindi literature. He also collaborated with Harishankar Ojha on the translation and reworking of Tod’s *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. Finally, in his observations of the British in India, on which he wrote apparently a (now lost) book in Hindi (p. 13), he can be regarded as a representative of what Naithani terms “occidentalism” (p. 17), the counterpart of the orientalism. His tragic end, Naithani suggests, may be also indicative of larger trends as he “was learning to see and objectify the traditionality of his contemporary society while caught in the colonial structures of generation and recognition of knowledge” and thus “beginning to crack under this impossible hermeneutic situation”. (p. 14) Insightfully, Naithani relates this to broader scholarly patterns: “The Indian folklore studies which he had helped establish were to flourish in England, while folklore studies in India would not gain an identity of their own until the end of the twentieth century” (*ibid*).

This book then is a wonderful resource for classes on Indian folk literature, but also Indian religions and history. One wonderful asset for class use is that it reads extremely well as a scholarly detective story, with a haunting end that leaves many unanswered questions for fruitful discussion. On the one hand there is the question of why these manuscripts were preserved yet never published. On the other

hand, while it would be too simplistic to say that the main question around which the book revolves is whether Crooke was a crook, still putting it this way may be a good way to draw undergraduate students into the discussion of the subtle shades of grey that mark the interaction between colonial scholars and local informants. Maybe the best way to put it is “Who was Ram Gharib Chaube to William Crooke?” (p. 18), or as in the title of an influential hit movie *Hum aap ke hain koun . . . !* (“Who am I to you . . . !”) and one could add, “who are you to me?”

Naithani is exemplary in that she is very even-handed in her assessment. She never stoops to cheap bashing of orientalist *bêtes noires*. She is very careful to do justice to the considerable legacy of Crooke, and be fair to his memory. She took the trouble to try and understand his position and interviewed his descendants and studied his archives extensively. She stresses that in his interest in Indian folklore he had to fight an uphill battle with his contemporaries, pointing out the modernity of some of his views, such as this quote from a lecture on the history of Hinduism: “At present it is not too much to say that our ignorance of many important aspects of Hinduism is stupendous. Most of the existing manuals are based on sacred books, and the much more vital question, the working every-day faith of the immense rural population, has been studiously ignored” (p. 8). She suggests that he was unusual and may have been socially ostracised for his warm and equitable interactions with “natives” like Chaube and his career possibly stalled because he was a critic of government policies, especially those towards tribals (pp. 8–9). Whatever may be the case, it is clear that he remained in contact and supported Chaube even after he left India. Even so, one comes away with a bitter taste of the fate of the erudite and linguistically and poetically talented Chaube, who died destitute and disillusioned, never able to fulfil the promise of his considerable talents. Apart from the archival research in London, Naithani also went to Chaube’s village and was in contact with local scholars from Gopalpur to reconstruct and do full justice to this side of the story.

The volume raises many interesting issues regarding scholarship involving collaborations between western-schooled scholars from western and Indian origin and the nature of their contributions to the knowledge production of India. Such questions are undoubtedly very relevant today, in the passionate debates of who invented Hinduism, the role of ‘orientalism’ in the construction of our knowledge about the past and the heated outsider-insider controversies around the issue who speaks for Hinduism.

In short, while the book is on the surface about folklore studies, its relevance goes much further. In showing on the one hand how both Crooke and Chaube lost out on mundane success (to a different degree), possibly exactly because they braved the social divides of their time, it also goes a long way to rehabilitate and celebrate a collaboration across cultures in the shared “zeal and passion to document, categorise, and publicise not that which was on the docket of the mighty Asiatic Societies . . . , but that which was their own contemporary reality” (p. 12). As such it is inspiring and eye-opening to all students and scholars of India.

HEIDI PAUWELS
University of Washington, Seattle

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It is rare that one reads a collection of essays resulting from a colloquium or workshop with a sense of real excitement. This collection is one of those rare occasions. It stems from James Montgomery’s