

Babb, Lawrence, A.

The Divine Hierarchy: Popular Hinduism in Central India  
N.Y.: Columbia U. Press 1975.

1. Sanskritization: - often nonsanskritic texts more influential (= define Sanskritization in terms of literacy).
  - Define Sanskritic as universal, but many nonsanskritic elements widespread (so don't define it in terms of regionalization)
  - implies a dichotomous view of two belief systems. Babb finds only one.

p. 26.
2. Central Structural Elements of Worship.
  - 2.1 Purity: approaching divinity requires moving into a sacred and pure context.
  - 2.2 Pranam: Feet of the Gods: touch feet and then forehead. My highest is lower than your lowest. See Harper 1964:181-83). Respect Pollution-Harper. Taking other's garbage. (jutha).
  - 2.3 Prasad: Food of the Gods. Offered and then returned (now equals garbage - jutha - and eaten as showing subordination. Deity given superior foods: Giver in giving shows honor, in receiving gets repayment. Asymmetrical transaction reinforces hierarchy. But receiving prasad restores a balance. Distribution to a community shows its equality.
3. Assumptions:
  - 3.1 There are powerful malevolent and benevolent beings - one must counter the former with the later.
  - 3.2 Man is hampered in his ability to deal with these because of pollution. Pollution, however, is tied to the necessities of living: sex, food, drink, birth, defecation, urination, spit etc. death.
    - Life cycle rites associated with pollution. and danger.
    - Birth, protection from evil eye. Keep iron near person for it wards off witchcraft and malevolent ghosts. Eclipses highly dangerous.
    - Purifying products are products of cow, Ganges water and other water, Mantras, iron, turmeric, cowdung ash, sandalwood paste ghee etc.
    - Contaminating are body effluvia, products of dead cattle and of death, sex etc.
  - 3.3 Ghosts may be beneficial or malevolent. (Like goddesses)
    - Suicide leads to a permanent stage of being a ghost (pret), others it is a normal passing phase, a 1/2 and 1/2 stage in and out of world. Cremation near running water. Feet south in direction of Yama, god of Death. After cremation, lot of many purification baths. 10 days of mourning and deep pollution. Simple food, no shaving. Gods removed and people in house cut off from men and gods. 3rd day, bones and ashes may be "cooled" by putting them in the river. Cooling by putting in water is common ritual element. Immersing bones is last physical vestige of dead on earth. The spirit now hopefully has crossed the barrier that separates the living from the dead and the men from the gods.
    - cutting of hair removes pollution. Hair collects pollution. So do unglazed pots that are thrown away. Cloths are washed.
    - culmination with a feast on 13th day - end of pollution. Hospitality can be extended only if pollution is absent.
  - 3.4 Exchange of food: Preparation must be pure. Wife giving food to husband 1) is act of worship, eating his leftovers is prasad, and 2) both give food to god by sprinkling water around it, and eat the returned food as prasad.

3.5 Time: Days: Tuesday and Saturday(!) inauspicious. Hanuman is protector.

4. Goddesses: Associated with smallpox. 7 sisters = seven forms of smallpox.

- Associated with heat: Fever is her anger. Heat reduced by offerings, by use of water, and prohibition of fire near patient, even lamps. Avoid bringing people that might make her jealous eg. pregnant women or women with jewelry. Called the cool one, but when encountered by humans she is hot. Meat, liquor and oily foods are hot. Lemons and onions especially cold. Cooking fires put out if a case in the house.
- Associated with seedlings, fertility and shakti or energy.
- Two types: Village that minimize marital connections. Hindu that are virtue paragons, selfless, sacrificing, etc. model of womanhood, motherhood and wifehood.
- Parvathi etc. gain strength by tapas which makes her potentially dangerous but this is removed by her marriage to Siva p. 150.

5. Melas pp. 165-;67

6/ Hierarchy of deities:

- Superior ones more pure, broader regional and social scope. Associated with texts. More powerful, greater attributional spread.
- Distinguish Deity as Object of worship, and deity as a set of characteristics assigned to the object of worship. Vishnu in great temple is the object itself, Vishnu in an untouchable home is an ascription of Vishnu to a lesser object in the form of Sanskritization.
- withches are feminine. See Harper 1969. They are hot and desire blood which is also hot. Weak (psychologically) people most susceptible as victims. Their shadows are light as opposed to heavy and salty shadows. To test shadow weight, cast it over oil being heated. If the shadow is heavy froth will form on the surface of the oil.
- Goddess of the text created by the gods to help fight demons who were overcoming them. A kind of force or shakti, Active dynamic component of reality in context to male passivity. (Bharati Tantric Tradition. = Often malicious, destructive, implacable and bloodthirsty, the incarnation of the anger of the gods. Ultimately controllable. Can serve human ends. At once Devi is Kali (destroyer\* and Lakshmi (bestower of wealth and happiness, and Mata, mother and giver of life. = The fierce form is the unmarried manifestation. p. 223. Only brought under control by marriage. See even Parvati who is uncontrolled by gods before marriage. In unmarried form the male is her bodyguard, or field guard (kshetrapala)
- Marriage the great basic vehicle of social order. creates order in the universe itself. Marriage of gods produces basic order-producing values. Siva exemplar of renunciation also potentially destructive. Vishnu as preserver primarily in marriage. as Krishna and Rama. A veritable encyclopedia of social values. Ideal warrior, good king and husband ideal son. Sita ideal wife. He ideal brother. Hanuman ideal servant and devotee.
- out of marriage goddess uncontrolled and ascendent. May aid, but is unpredictable. Blood-thirsty and needs blood not semen to satisfy her. The sinister, destructive becomes loving wife, source of wealth and progeny in restraining social relationship of marriage. Appetite for conflict and destruction transformed in fundamental social virtues making society possible. Female dominant is sinister, male dominant is orderly.