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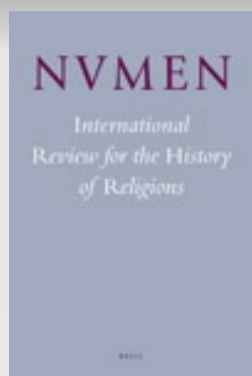
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Bearing the 'Bare Facts' of Ritual. A Critique Of Jonathan Z. Smith's Study of the Iyomante On a Study of the Ainu *Iyomante*



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A few years ago, Benjamin Ray criticized Jonathan Z. Smith's study of the bear hunting ritual. In this article, I further criticism of Smith's theory of ritual. Since he presents the Ainu bear ceremony as the exemplar case and bases his interpretation of it, I review and examine the available ethnographies of the Ainu bear ceremony *Iyomante*. My review covers both Smith's presentation of the ethnography of the bear ceremony and his interpretation of its meaning. Smith's core of the Ainu bear ceremony as the perfect hunt to resolve incongruity between the mythical ideology and the reality is not taking into consideration the Ainu religious world of meanings. From my study of the Ainu bear ceremony, I re-

dismemberment of the bear and the ritual decoration of the bear's skull constitute the core of the meaning of the ritual. In the meaning of this ritual, I point out the necessity for considering the Ainu view of personhood and ontological understanding. In the interpretation of this core part of the bear ceremony, the material form, that is the bear, of the Ainu deity is ritually consumed in a ritual mode and then sent back to the mountain whence from it originally came.

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