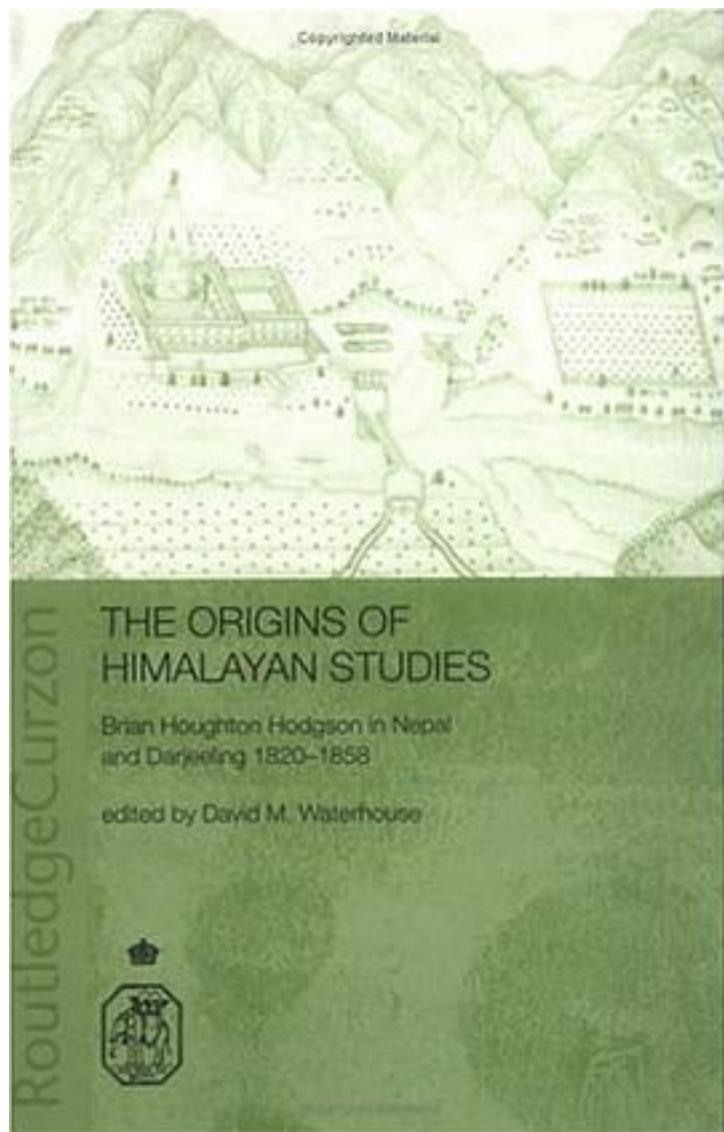


The Origins of Himalayan Studies



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出版者:Routledge

出版时间:2005-01-11

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9780415312158

Brain Houghton Hodgson was a nineteenth century administrator and scholar who lived in Nepal, where he was the British Resident from 1820 until 1843. After this he worked as an independent scholar in Darjeeling until 1858. During his time in the Himalayas Hodgson, with extraordinary dedication, laid the foundations for the study of the Eastern Himalayan region, writing about many aspects of life and culture. He was among the first westerners to take an interest in Buddhism, both writing about it and collecting manuscripts. He is perhaps best known for his work as an ornithologist and zoologist, writing around 130 papers and commissioning from Nepalese artists a unique series of drawings of birds and mammals. He also wrote about and recorded details of the buildings and architecture of the Kathmandu valley and wrote a series of ethnographic and linguistic papers on Nepal and the Himalayan region. Hodgson donated his collection of writings, specimens and drawings to libraries and museums in Europe, much of which still needs detailed examination. This book critically examines Hodgson's life and achievement, within the context of his contribution to scholarship. It consists of contributions from leading historians of Nepal and South Asia and from specialists in Buddhist studies, art history, linguistics, ornithology and ethnography. Many of the drawings photographed for this book have not previously been published.

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