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REZENSIONEN – COMPTES RENDUS – REVIEWS

Marie-Luce BARAZER-BILLORET / Bruno DAGENS / Vincent LEFÈVRE (Eds.), avec la collaboration de S. Sambandha ŚIVĀCĀRYA et la participation de Christèle BAROIS: *Dīptāgama. Tome II (Chapitres 22–62). Édition critique. (Collection Indologie 81.2)*. Pondichéry: Institut Français de Pondichéry, 2007. 603 S. ISSN: 0073-8352.

Nach dem 2004 veröffentlichten ersten Band der kritischen Edition des *Dīptāgama* ist nun 2007 der zweite Band erschienen, der die Kapitel 22 bis 62 der über hundert Kapitel des Textes enthält.

Der Aufbau des Buches ist ähnlich wie der des ersten Bandes. Die Einleitung (S. 1–44) revidiert zunächst das im ersten Band präsentierte Stemma in Bezug auf eines der Manuskripte und beschreibt die für den zweiten Band neu hinzugenommenen Handschriften. Anschließend stellt sie “les grands thèmes” des edierten Abschnittes des *Dīptāgama* dar, nämlich Kultbild, die Einweihung und rituelle Verehrung von Kultbildern sowie die menschlichen Akteure im Ritual, in inhaltlich geordneter Form dar, womit sie eine gute Einführung in die religiöse Praxis der Tradition des *Dīptāgama* bietet. Der kritischen Textedition (S. 45–453), die, wie im ersten Band, durch Zwischenüberschriften strukturiert ist, wodurch der Text leichter zu überschauen ist, folgt – ebenfalls wie im ersten Band – eine ausführliche Zusammenfassung des Inhalts der edierten Kapitel (S. 455–590) in Französisch, die durch hilfreiche Diagramme und systematische Listen von rituellen Details ergänzt wird.

Inhaltlich ist der hier edierte Teil des *Dīptāgama*, wie der Text als Ganzes, zum Großteil der Errichtung und Einweihung von Kultbildern gewidmet, aber es werden auch andere Themen wie z.B. das tägliche Verehrungsritual oder Rituale zu bestimmten Anlässen beschrieben. Zwei der Themen dürften besonders interessant sein, das Ritual des *patraccheda*, bei dem ausgeschnittene Blätter dargebracht werden, das laut den Editoren bisher in der *Āgama*-Literatur unbekannt war (siehe S. 27), und das Ritual in der Nacht (*ardhayāmārcana*), das nur sehr selten beschrieben wird.

Die Arbeit ist, wie auch schon der erste Band, sehr sorgfältig hergestellt worden. Es liegt in der Natur der Sache, daß für manche Gegenstände, wie z.B. eine Darstellung der im *Dīptāgama* erwähnten vedischen Mantras (siehe S. 30, Anm. 109), auf den dritten Band vertröstet werden muß. Wünschenswert wäre in

diesem letzten Band auch ein Stichwort- und eventuell ein *pāda*-Index, damit diese wertvolle Arbeit wirklich in allen Aspekten genutzt werden kann.

Marion RASTELLI (Wien)

Jean DELOCHE: *Studies on Fortification in India*. (Collection indologie, 104). Pondicherry: Institut Français de Pondichéry / École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2007, ISBN 2-85539-664-6) ii+267 pp., 436 photos and drawings, Rs. 800.–; € 29.–.

Military architecture is the art of defence, not of attack. Although a wealth of books treats the splendid sacral architecture of India, Jean Deloche and others correctly point out the paradoxically obvious: Despite countless historic defensive structures in India, both large and small, surprisingly few scholarly works have dealt with them. Moreover, while defensive architecture is a popular subject of study in the West, to which numerous serious amateurs dedicate themselves and generate basic documentation, this is hardly the case in South Asia. Thus, a heavier burden falls on the author to take up the slack. In addition, problems arise from defective and unsystematic excavation documentation, a dubious inheritance which all share in all countries. The abysmal documentation of the famous and important capital of the Vatsa Land, Kausambi, a national monument of the classical period, is a case in point. In a variety of previous essays over the years, D. has proven his competency and knowledge of the subject of defensive architecture and the history of technology.

The new monograph consists of six essays, ordered chronologically: India's most ancient fortifications, the Hindu system of fortification in South India (3rd–14th century), the Muslim system in the Deccan kingdoms (15th–18th century), Survival of the Hindu system in South India (15th–18th century), Mysore hill forts (15th–18th century), cannon artillery in South India (15th–18th century), brief general conclusions as well as an index of places, things and persons.

This book succeeds the pioneering Sidney Toy, *The Strongholds of India* (London 1957); the information then available conditioned its small size and scope. Toy takes up his history chronologically with the medieval fortifications of India and Pakistan. A second major (here unmentioned) competitor is Dieter Schlingloff, *Die altindische Stadt*. Abh. d. geistes- und soz. Kl. (Mainz 1969), who approaches the same topic by means of indological texts and art historical

monuments. Up to a certain chronological point both treat the same classical sites on the basis of the late 19th – early 20th century documentation. However, Schlingloff's excellent but seldom cited booklet centres exclusively on these, whereas D.'s text continues up to the 18th century and includes additional interesting problems e.g. those brought about by the use of cannon artillery, which in other studies seldom find mention.

D.'s chapters correspond to the main developmental rhythm in defensive architecture. Developments in poliorcetic (siege) science for South Asia are still known only in outline (p. 70): The 14th century witnesses developments in fire-casting weapons and other offensive artillery. The introduction of firearms in the late 15th – early 16th century in South Asia. These and European military developments have surprisingly little direct effect in India. For example, few fortifications with star-shaped bastions exist here (the English Ganjam fort in Orissa is an exception). Paradoxically, Indian engineers failed to adapt effective defences in the face of developments in artillery (p. 235). Surprising is the architectural revolution on the Deccan at the beginning of the 16th century (p. 140). This manifests itself as numerous public works in which the entire society participated. Many of the aspects which D. discusses were new to the reviewer – an archaeologist and not a historian of architecture.

The strength of D.'s pioneering work lies in the large number of photos combined in a text which illuminates his stated brief. Omissions include mud forts (cf. Yule, "Early Forts in Eastern India". In: *Antiquity* vol. 82 issue 316, June 2008, Project Gallery, <<http://antiquity.ac.uk/ProjGall/316.html>>), wooden fortifications, defence against fire-casting weapons, mining and countermining, circumvallation, outworks outside the ramparts (despite D.'s mention of moats), fortification gardening – all aspects about which still little is known. Wooden fortifications were more common than most would have it, to judge from Megasthenes' *Indika* (3rd century BCE), archaeological finds and ethnographic information. The argument that wooden forts are vulnerable to burning is emphasized too much and falsely negates their existence altogether. Defensive measures can and have reduced this problem.

In the section on fortifications in ancient India, although D. mentions of curtain walls and towers (p. 21), the reviewer would hope for more information about the wall atop the glacis (Yule, *Early Historic Sites in Orissa*. Delhi 2006, digital Version: <http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/savifadok/schriftenreihen_ebene2.php?sr_id=12&la=de>). These exist in traces, for example, at Mauryan Jaugada and Narla Asurgarh in Orissa. The original fortifications were far higher than one would believe solely on the basis of the preserved remains.

The subject of castramentation, that is the technique of building field fortifications for field and siege armies, forms a topic which arguably lies outside the author's scope. Till now, no one has really looked for them in India. Numerous examples are known in Europe from the Neolithic to the subrecent period. H. Neumann (*Festungsbau, -kunst und -technik*, Bonn 2004:332) points out that from the European 30 Year War, many appear reproduced in books. The reviewer knows a single potential example (Mohabhoi Sasan) in South Asia, a few metres north-west of the Sisupalgarh fortress, which may represent the remains of a siege fortification.

D. is a historian of architecture who interfaces directly with the history of art history and archaeology, less so than military history per se. He is master of his subject. This also is suggested by the limited number of titles listed in the bibliography from which he could draw. This study is affordable for students and institutions in the host country and abroad. The reviewer hopes that it will be better received there than other studies written by foreigners. Since many of the drawings and photos which D. publishes are historic, the archaeologist wonders what is left of the fascinating monuments themselves. Work in Sisupalgarh in 2005, revealed that this nationally protected monument was being built on in a commercial scale (Paul Yule and Corinna Borchert, *Sisupalgarh/Orissa: Illegal Building Operations in the North-West Area*, privately distributed, 2005 digital version: <<http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/savifadok/volltexte/2008/146/>>).

The text is nicely printed on fine white semi-gloss paper. Photos and drawings are excellently conceived, rendered and printed. Many derive from the author himself. The paperback binding is Spartan.

Paul YULE (Heidelberg)

Danielle FELLER: *The Sanskrit Epics' Representation of Vedic Myths*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2004. XIV + 369 pp. ISBN: 8120820088.

Feller's book belongs to a new generation of *Mahābhārata* scholarship, which responds to the creation of the Critical Edition by thinking about the epic as a unified work of profound literary and philosophical depth.

Feller's work is an insightful and readable introduction to the *Mahābhārata*. Originally submitted as a dissertation to Lausanne University, the book shows the input of the excellent committee Feller worked with: Bronk-

horst, Schreiner and Hildebeitel. Feller's sensitivity to resonances between the Vedic and Epic traditions shines through on every page. A minor quibble is the occasional traces of inadequate revision but fortunately, this criticism applies mainly to the first chapter.

Feller's main aim in the work is to show how the epics (mainly the *Mahābhārata*) use Vedic myth to articulate continuity and change within the tradition within which the epic self-consciously locates itself. Vedic gods continue to perform some of their Vedic functions in the epic: initiation, guarding the *amṛta*, assistance when invoked and to a limited extent, salvation. Feller demonstrates the continuity of these roles through a careful analysis of various *Mahābhārata* passages, while also being careful to note the transformation these stories undergo in the epics. In Feller's view, although "scholars generally contend that the Epics refer to sacrificial performances only vaguely, without describing the ritual acts in detail, and often with the implication that the rituals were perhaps no longer known or performed [...] it is indisputable that at least the MBh remains firmly anchored in the sacrificial world-view". (306). And as for the myths that populate this Vedic dimension of the epic, "we can observe that their epic representations, and the basic concerns they exemplify, are in general much closer to Ṛgvedic models than to late Vedic ones" (313).

Feller's introduction to the work (Chapter 1) presents the obligatory overview of theories of myth. This is the weakest section of the book. However, she quickly moves on and wisely chooses to see "myths in action" (28) rather than trying to find a theoretical framework for understanding myth. Feller adopts the "internal coherence" of myths (43) as a methodological standard and defines a precise field of application: four myths which correspond to four principal deities of the Ṛgveda. Feller's choice of Agni, Indra, Soma and the Aśvins is clever: Vṛtra, the ancient serpent of the depths, and Varuṇa with his ambivalent associations with the asuras would have needlessly complicated and distracted from the study. In Chapter 2, Feller begins her analysis with a quick portrait of Agni in the Ṛgveda and the later texts before turning to the *Mahābhārata*. This is where Feller comes into her element: she has a superb intuition for mythic patterns and the resonances these patterns create. Feller's analysis is both engaging and readable. Given her careful scholarship, her conclusion is convincing: "Agni in the Epic is no longer the young god whose various origins and births are retold, but an 'old' god who produces new, typically epic descendents. But the fundamental quality of the fire as the 'life-principle' has remained unchanged" (126). Chapter 3, dedicated to Indra, recounts the myth of Ahalyā's seduction. Chapter 4 analyzes the myth of the "Theft of Soma". Her analysis of the theft of Soma is an

example of how she uses her understanding of the Vedic precedent to make useful claims about the *Mahābhārata*: the Vedic myth inaugurates a series of events all of which have echoes of conflict. This pattern resonates in the epic itself: the myth of the theft of *amṛta* by Garuḍa in the *Ādiparvan* also sets up an agonal logic that continues into the Kurukṣetra battle. Following the shape of myths, Feller undertakes to excavate the architecture of the Epic itself. The salvation of Upamanyu by the Aśvins (twin gods of healing) helps us understand the initiatory and soteriological concerns central to the Epic's program in the *Ādiparvan*. Feller's work is among the few books that take the introductory material of the Epic seriously. In this regard, her analysis of the pedagogical stories from *The Book of Pausya* is exemplary and represents a major advance over Friedrich Wilhelm's 1965 study (*Prüfung und Initiation im Buche Pausya und in der Biographie des Naropa*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz). In the final two chapters, Feller concludes with an elucidation of the Kurukṣetra's self-conscious equation of war and (Vedic) sacrifice. By linking the *Ādiparvan* backwards to the Veda and forwards to the war, Feller makes a strong case for viewing the *Ādiparvan* as integral to the epic as whole – for this reviewer, the most valuable contribution of her book. One of her minor conclusions, by contrast, is open to debate. Feller claims that the function of the war-sacrifice equation is to smooth out moral dilemmas. However, in this reviewer's opinion, the epic deliberately underscores moral dilemmas rather than smooth them out. Examples for this can be seen in Arjuna's grief at the beginning of the *Bhagavadgītā*, or the little death he undergoes for killing Bhīṣma through unfair means.

By approaching the text as a unified whole, Feller shows how the author(s) of the *Mahābhārata* uses various anachronic genres (here Vedic myth and sacrifice) as part of its overall program – an approach which is, in this reviewer's view, far worthier than inventing a “layer” or an “interpolation” every time the reader feels a passage to be “out of place”.

The book contains seven chapters, a word index and a bibliography. It belongs on the reading list of any student and scholar who wishes to understand the epic's “inner coherence.”

Vishwa ADLURI (Hunter College, NY)