

KLAUS-JOSEF NOTZ: *Der Buddhismus in Deutschland in seinen Selbstdarstellungen. Eine religionswissenschaftliche Untersuchung zur religiösen Akkulturationsproblematik.* (Europäische Hochschulschriften: Reihe 23, Theologie; Bd. 223). Frankfurt/M. -Bern-New York: Peter Lang, 1984. 368 pages, DM 126. -

This impressive study by K. Notz is based on statements of Buddhists in Germany. The material extends from the very beginning of the generation of founders (Grimm, Seidenstücker, Dahlke) up to contemporary statements (the Buddhist journals of the present Buddhist communities). The author received help from the president of the "Altbuddhistische Gemeinde", but he mentions that not all those he consulted were willing to cooperate.

First the author gives a historical survey of the Western knowledge of Buddhism right from earliest times. The next part deals with the formation of Buddhist communities in Germany at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century till the present day. This historical survey is intermingled with biographies of outstanding personalities (for instance Nyanatiloka, Nyanaponika, Govinda etc. to mention the most famous), but it also shows the intellectual situation of an educated class of those times that promoted interest in or acceptance of Buddhism, more precisely the southern school of the Theravadins. The main opponent is Christianity, yet the intellectual basis for acceptance is positivism and rationalism. Therefore Buddhism in Germany wants to be a religion without dogmatism, a religion of reason, a religion of tolerance, anthropocentric and mystic. Thus the propagators and addressees of this kind of Buddhism could only be an educated class. Characteristic of these German Buddhists is their recourse to the original teaching of the Buddha and not the identification with an actual Buddhist school.

The main part of the study is devoted to the process of acculturation. The author therefore discusses his material under four headings essential for this process:

- (1) autonomy of their language as a group;
- (2) demarcation from other systems of reference;
- (3) positive self-representation; and
- (4) actualization of the teaching of the Buddha.

The author is well-read and knows how to characterize the essential points of the different positions. He presents a wealth of well structured material. The work has a broad foundation, i.e. every aspect of the controversial position is touched on, be it science or psychology, religion, pedagogy or political and ideological systems. A precise definition of the items to be treated heads every section.

In the final part of the study the author treats the intellectual background of Germany as basis for the acceptance of Buddhism and the revival of Buddhism in eastern countries. Both phenomena are connected with colonialism. Buddhism in Germany proves to be a German Buddhism. This process of

acculturation releases an inquiry into Christianity with regard to its lack of religious practice and to Buddhism with regard to its distorted concept of Christianity. And here the author who is also a theologian shows himself competent to discuss this controversy.

The study has no index but a detailed table of contents. This is no lack, rather is it an invitation to the reader to read the book from beginning to end. The reader will not be disappointed, the more so since the author's excellent style facilitates the reading.

Dieter Back

GÜNTER GRÖNBOLD: Der buddhistische Kanon. Eine Bibliographie. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984. 70 pages, DM 38.-

What is unique about the present bibliography of the Buddhist canon is that it gives a list of all editions of the canons throughout the Buddhist world as well as old and modern catalogues of those editions. Besides, the author lists the secondary literature dealing with the problems of the Buddhist canon as a collected whole. An appendix informs about the different blockprints and manuscripts of the Tibetan canons, also indicating in which of the world's libraries they are to be found. A register of authors concludes the bibliography. It was the intention of the author to stimulate the Buddhologist by giving him an instrument for his research work on the history of the Buddhist canon.

The introduction deals with the history of the canon, legendary and historical. Brief historical accounts are also given of the introduction of the Buddhist doctrine into the different countries and the editions of the canon there. European interest promoted new editions of the canon and the research work on it.

A valuable instrument for research work on the tradition of Buddhist canonical texts.

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