

Kantowsky points out at the beginning that his intention was to write a personal, subjective book reflecting his experiences and the resulting consequences. This only leaves the possibility of saying whether one liked the book or not. Nevertheless, I wish to make a few remarks. One great merit of this book is that it shows that the present problems of our time are not due to any constraints but result from our way of thinking. The changes of opinion which occur in any scientific career are described in a very impressive manner based on the author's own experience. But it is nevertheless doubtful whether this way via South Asian thinking is really necessary in order to find new alternatives. As Kantowsky says, the virtues of Buddhism are not bound to it, they can also be found in other cultures.

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JACOB RÖSEL: Der Palast des Herrn der Welt. Entstehungsgeschichte und Organisation der indischen Tempel- und Pilgerstadt Puri. (Materialien zu Entwicklung und Politik, 27). München: Weltforum-Verlag, 1980. XXXVIII, 378 pages, DM 59.-

Jagannath and the temple city of Puri which Claudius Buchanau, the first Christian missionary to visit Puri in 1806, had called "the Moloch of the heathen world which is to the Hindoos what Mecca is to the Mohammedans, the stronghold and fountain-head of their idolatry" form the fascinating subjects of J. Rösel's monograph. With its Great Temple of Jagannatha, "The Lord of the World", and about 500 other temples and holy places and about 10 000 priests and temple servants Puri attracts and accommodates according to Rösel's calculations each year about 20 times as many pilgrims (c. 1.5 million) as its own population which amounts to c. 65 000. Puri can thus still be regarded as one of India's major temple cities.

Rösel's first major chapter contains an exhaustive study of the social, economic and ritual organization of the temple city. In the context of this short review it must suffice to mention only a few major conclusions of this analysis. The chapter on the social organization and its 118 priestly groups (sevakas) and some 70 monasteries (matha) is introduced by a structural comparison of the cult of village deities and the imperial cult ("Reichskult") of Jagannatha. Whereas the ideas of the equality of the devotees of Jagannatha and his "territoriality" had their origin in his tribal and post-tribal village background, the highly sophisticated organization of Puri's Brahmanical priests served as a model for the Hinduization of the emergent class society of medieval Orissa and the political organization of the regional kingdom of Orissa. In this context Rösel's description of "the structure of traditional division of labour" is of particular interest. Despite its outward appearance of a dis-

tinctly hierarchical organization, the structure of Puri's priesthood is based on an institutionalized system of organized mistrust ("Fließgleichgewicht des Mißtrauens"). Characterized by a large number of overlapping functions and double employment, it guarantees to all, or at least most, of the priests a steady state of economic opportunity. Everybody who works on the structure of medieval Hindu kingdoms faces similar problems with the pompous titles of their officers which sometimes even seem to reflect a modern departmental system. Rösel's hypothesis on the traditional division of labour amongst the priests of Puri will certainly help us better understand the administrative system of medieval Hindu kingdoms.

The chapter on the economic organization which is introduced by a systematic analysis of about 50 copperplate inscriptions emphasizes the great importance of the landed property of the temple and mentions its additional sources of income which are derived mainly from pilgrim donations. The wide-spread yet still relatively unknown system of auctioning off to priests of Puri the right to perform various minor rituals and economic activities deserves particular notice. It is this system which according to Rösel allows the temple to minimize its administrative responsibility considerably and, at the same time, to delegate economic opportunities in order to maintain and strengthen the "Fließgleichgewicht des Mißtrauens". But above all, Rösel's analysis of the economic organization of Puri and its priesthood shows the tremendous importance of landed property for all aspects of social status, mobility and class formation. Finally, another politico-economic function of India's temple cities has to be mentioned. According to Rösel the temple cities and their daily rituals and great annual festivals have to be regarded as an immensely extended and refined system of merit economy. It leads to the redistribution of socially produced agrarian surplus on the one hand and, on the other, neutralizes (as donations to the temple treasure) suspicious private wealth of the aristocracy, thus weakening potential enemies of the central king. Furthermore, it permits socially underprivileged groups to participate at least temporarily in religious spheres which otherwise are closed to them. Thus temple economy is an essential stabilizer of the traditional society of medieval India. It is therefore not astonishing that the sacred food, its preparation, metamorphosis and distribution as divine "great grace" (mahaprasad) forms the most important part of Rösel's description and analysis of the ritual organization. As a medium of concrete communication with the gods the sacred food of Jagannath serves for Rösel as a paradigm of Orissan society and a clue for its analysis.

In his second major chapter Rösel introduces and analyzes Puri's temple legends as told by the pilgrim guides and priests to the pilgrims during their visits to Puri and its 500 temples and holy places. The idea of the survey is to evaluate semiotically the above-mentioned hypotheses on the basis of the oral tradition of Puri and to reconstruct the cosmos of Puri as viewed by Jagannatha's devotees and pilgrims. The temple legends depict Jagannatha as a divine king whose court, the temple compound, is peopled by the divine



court nobility and court officers and who holds his durbar with his divine tributary rajas who live in their respective temples and shrines in Puri. Here again the analogy with the kingdoms of the rajas of Orissa as Jagannatha's earthly deputies is quite self-evident. But the most fascinating result of Rösel's analysis of the temple legends is Jagannatha's integrative power. It operates on four different levels: 1. Through substitution of well-known Hindu gods and goddesses from all over India and Orissa, e.g. Rama from Rameshwar, Siva from Benares or Samalesvari from Sambalpur in Western Orissa; 2. accumulation of conquered or donated divine figures; 3. socialization of dangerous spirits and tribal deities, e.g. Bhadrakali, who devoured human beings in the jungles of Orissa, was allowed to settle in Puri and to become a vegetarian; 4. interregional coordination of portions of deities who have been dismembered after their death and spread all over India. All these deities were accommodated in Puri and duly honoured by separate shrines inside and outside of Jagannatha's temple compound. Through these different modes of integration the cult of Jagannatha and the temple city of Puri acted as the most important factor of local integration, the emergence of a regional tradition in Orissa and its integration or "universalization" in the all-Indian context.

The importance of Rösel's monography, however, lies not in the vast amount of detailed information, part of which has not even been mentioned at all in this review, e.g. the organization of pilgrimage and Puri's famous "pilgrim hunters". The uniqueness of his study certainly is the comprehensiveness of his structural analytical approach which leads him to far reaching conclusions. Some of them may be precipitate. But even historians will profit from the results of his "ahistorical and structural-anecdotal method" (p.99) of analysing the copperplate inscriptions, and Indologists should read carefully his "critical remarks on the Indological method" (p.218 ff.) which serve as an introduction to his analysis of Puri's temple legends. A few minor errors and Rösel's delight in witty formulations should not detract from the importance of his study. Its value can be appreciated only by those who have once stood at the "lion's gate" in front of the "Palast des Herrn der Welt" which no European has yet been allowed to enter.

Hermann Kulke

UWE HOERING (unter Mitarbeit von Christa Wichterich): Indien ohne Gandhi. Begegnung mit einer Gesellschaft im Aufbruch. (Peter Hammer-Taschenbuch, 22). Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, 1984. 207 pages, DM 14.80

The title of this book ("India without Gandhi") is, of course, doubly ironic after Mrs. Gandhi's assassination, but the author is referring to the Mahatma, who serves as a kind of discursive foil to situate topics like industrialization,