

Both books give an excellent survey of the periods in the history of Hindi literature they cover. In addition to this, the bibliographical notes never try to be exhaustive (as in some of the other volumes in the same series), but are confined to a very carefully made selection that is of great help to anybody looking for further material on the subject.

Rainer Kimmig

MILINDAPANHA. Die Fragen des Königs Milinda. Zwiegespräche zwischen einem Griechenkönig und einem buddhistischen Mönch. Aus dem Pali übersetzt von Nyanatiloka. Herausgegeben und teilweise neu übersetzt von Nyanaponika. Interlaken: Ansata Verlag, 1985. 393 pp., sFr 58.-

It was in the second century B.C. that king Menandros, a ruler of Greek origin over north-western parts of India, discussed with the Buddhist monk Nagasena the basic assumptions of Buddhist theories of knowledge and personality. These dialogues have been preserved in Pali, the language of Theravada-Buddhism under the title "Milindapanha". Anton Walter Florus Gueth (born in Wiesbaden 1878) who was named Nyanatiloka after his ordination as Buddhist monk in Burma in 1904 (he was the second European to take the yellow robe), translated the complete text into German during the first World War. The edition of the two volumes published in 1919 and 1924 respectively has been out of print for several decades. Thus, it is indeed a meritorious act that Ansata publishers have brought out a new and comparatively cheap (cloth-bound!) edition for which Nyanaponika (born in Hanau 1901), the main disciple of Nyanatiloka signs responsible, and to which Heinz Bechert has written a short historio-indological introduction. Anyone with any experience of discussions on Buddhist questions will find "Milindapanha" to be an extraordinarily modern book: We have not (how could we?) gone further than king Menandros in our (futile) attempts to question the eternal laws of dependent origination which Samana Gotama was able to reveal - and to transcend.

Detlef Kantowsky