

ring to other regions of South Asia. It is clear that any methodological discussion has to include Dirks' Putukottai (*The Hollow Crown*) und Narayana Rao/Shulman/Subrahmanyam (*Symbols of Substance*, Delhi 1992), but the bibliography does not include much of the more recent literature. More of the older literature should also have been included where useful, e.g. for understanding rituals of legitimation performed by the Kota kings. Might the reader not be interested in learning that Maharao Bhim Singh (r. 1707-20) was not the first to donate his kingdom to his *ishtadevata* (personal deity) Brijnathji, who carried on ruling as *divan* on the god's behalf (p. 17), but other kings as well, and this much earlier? This was a current notion at least since the times of the Ganga king Anangabhima III (1211-1238). Anangabhima had surrendered his sovereignty to the *rashtradevata* (state deity) Jagannatha and taken the title of *rautta* or *rajaputra* (H. Kulke, "King Anangabhima, the Veritable Founder of the Gajapati Kingship and the Jagannath Trinity at Puri", *JRAS* 1981, pp. 26-39). In this encounter of different regional histories the book has its few weak points.

Apart from its misleading title, Peabody's collected papers make interesting reading and provide good examples of how to master the twofold translation from another space and another time.

Georg Berkemer

TESSA J. BARTHOLOMEUSZ, *In Defense of Dharma. Just-war Ideology in Buddhist Sri Lanka*. (Critical Studies in Buddhism). London: Routledge Curzon, 2002. XXII, 209 pages, £ 16.99 (pb). ISBN 0-7007-1682-3

If one had to summarize the history of Sri Lanka since independence, "violence" and "civil war" would perhaps top the list. These two key terms describe the tragic aspects of Sri Lanka's political development during the last century, that have caused considerable bewilderment to observers and scholars: How can people adhering to a religion committed to non-violence and peacefulness (of mind and behavior) fall almost collectively into a state shaped precisely by the very opposite? This is the basic question of the book, and the answer the author gives is as simple as it is persuasive: Sinhalese Buddhists would generally adhere to the principles of the Buddha's teachings, but history has taught them that occasionally it may be necessary to defend their religion by all means. Violence, war and even killing are justifiable as long as the case is just. This is, in short, the conclusion of the present work.

It begins with a theoretical discussion of the ethics of war, especially in relation to international law, against the background of the civil war in former Yugoslavia. The second chapter explores what Buddhism has to say about violence and war. As the canonical scriptures remain almost silent about this topic, the discussion naturally focuses on what commentarial literature says, most notably the Mahavamsa. This exploration is continued in the following chapter,

which examines the situation in present-day Sri Lanka. The author has collected a vast amount of comments from all walks of life, including interviews with leading Buddhists (both monks and laymen), newspaper articles, pamphlets and official publications. In the final chapter, Tessa J. Bartholomeusz proceeds to uncover the ethical orientations that mediate between the Buddhist doctrinal principle of non-violence and the just-war ideology informing many of the texts and statements collected by her. However, as some of these make clear, this distinction has increasingly become blurred under the impact of the prolonged civil war on the island, and many Sinhalese now believe they are engaged in a holy war against the Tamils – an attitude that will hardly help to find a peaceful solution to the internal problem of the country.

Among the textual sources referred to, the Mahavamsa clearly stands out as a medium to reconcile Buddhist norms with modern political and social requirements. It may be questioned whether this status does justice to a chronicle composed in the 5th–6th centuries whose audience was probably confined to a small segment of society and which was drawn into the public sphere only some 13 centuries later in a process that must have included a good deal of reinterpretation. But be that as it may, the oral and written evidence presented in the book makes clear that the chronicle is crucial in shaping the opinion of the Sinhalese public today.

The book is the legacy of Tessa J. Bartholomeusz, and occasional repetitions and inconsistencies indicate that the author's untimely death prevented her from adding the finishing touch to the manuscript herself. Like its predecessors on Buddhist nuns or the more controversially discussed volume on religious fundamentalism in Sri Lanka, her last book is a substantial contribution to Buddhist studies. By providing a multi-faceted overview of what Sinhalese Buddhists think about war and violence, it greatly enhances our understanding of Sinhalese society today.

Tilman Frasch

MA THANEGI, *Pilgerreise in Myanmar*. Bad Honnef: Horlemann, 2002. 206 Seiten, € 11,90. ISBN 3-89502-146-6

Die Autorin, Malerin und Schriftstellerin sowie „zeitweise (...) Mitarbeiterin der Oppositionspolitikerin und Friedensnobelpreisträgerin Aung San Suu Kyi“, beschreibt in diesem Bericht ihre Eindrücke und Erfahrungen während einer achtzehntägigen Reise durch Myanmar.

Die einzelnen Kapitel des Buches entsprechen den Reisetagen. In ihrer „Inspiration“ (7ff.), die u. a. dem Reisebericht vorangestellt ist, begründet Ma Thanegi, wieso sie sich für diese Reise durch ihr Heimatland und nicht in ein fremdes entschieden hat: „Die Beantragung eines Passes mag in manchen Staaten nur fünfzehn Minuten dauern, doch in meinem Land, das sich gerade erst aus drei Jahr-