

HEINZ BECHERT (ed.), *The Dating of the Historical Buddha. Die Datierung des historischen Buddha. Part 3.* (Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, phil.-hist. Klasse, 3. Folge, Bd. 222; Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung, IV, 3). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997. VIII, 171 pages, DM 72,-. ISBN 3-525-82419-X

The Dating of the Historical Buddha is largely based on the proceedings and results of a symposium held in Göttingen in 1988, and is probably the most comprehensive work to be found anywhere concerning the problem of dating the life time of the Buddha. Just how comprehensive it is, may be seen from the fact, rather surprising at first sight, that here we find a paper on Roman laws by C. Haebler, which is meant to illustrate the difficulties of dating faced also by non-Indologist scholars.

The present volume is the third and last part of this standard work. While the first two volumes contain mostly papers contributed by the participants of the 1988 symposium¹, this volume presents additional material relevant to the question of the dating of the historical Buddha. There is valuable information about source material in the "Bibliographical Survey of Information on the Dates of the Buddha in some Ancient Sanskrit Buddhist Sources and their Translations" by H. Matsumura, in the "Übersicht über Angaben zur Datierung des Buddha im chinesischen buddhistischen Kanon" by M. Günzel and in the paper on "Bibliographical Information on the Dates of the Buddha in the Records of the Chinese Pilgrims in India and Sri Lanka" by J. Matsumura. There is also an index of the Pali sources quoted in volumes I and II compiled by S. Bretfeld. The "Selected Bibliography of Secondary Literature" by H. Bechert lists the more important literature published by the end of 1995 concerning the dating of the Buddha as well as the history of the various Buddhist chronologies. Finally, there are reprints of four important documents concerning the history of research, including an excerpt from a Siamese book with its English translation.

Anyone wishing to get an up-to-date overview of the various discussions about the dating of the historical Buddha and their results will be well advised to read H. Bechert's "Einleitung: Stand der Diskussion acht Jahre nach dem Symposion". It discusses the response to the results of the symposium as well as some other recent publications, and is worth reading even for students of history and Indology who have not studied all the papers of the first two volumes. As to the main result of the symposium, it is that an exact dating of the Buddha is impossible on the basis of our extant information.

¹ See *Internationales Asienforum* 19(1988), p. 391-403; 23(1992), p. 374-377; 24(1993), p. 365-366.

However, it appears that the Buddha died some time later than most scholars had thought so far. The evaluation of all the available data allows a dating of the Buddha's death between 420-350 BC. This is confirmed by archaeological evidence and cultural history. Such a vague dating may appear to be a somewhat meagre result, yet it means a considerable step forward in the study of Indian history.

Almuth Degener

HERMANN KREUTZMANN, *Ethnizität im Entwicklungsprozeß. Die Wakhi in Hochasien*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1996. 488 pages, 44 tables, 56 figures, 16 photos, DM 98,-. ISBN 3-496-02581-6

In this book Kreutzmann aims at describing and analyzing various aspects of ethnicity and their relevance for the development of Wakhi society under the shadow of the four dominant nation states of Tajikistan, Afghanistan, China and Pakistan. After a general discussion of the various existing concepts of 'ethnicity' and 'minority status', the author develops a model for analyzing processes of ethnicity in the peripheral regions of this area, where the Wakhi are confronted and constrained by the values, norms and rules of the dominant majorities. However, the reader is left wondering which of the many definitions and concepts are used for this analysis.

In the second, third and fourth chapters of the book the author deals with the historical context of the Wakhi, their ethnic status and the formation of groups. The geographical and environmental conditions under which their traditional economy functioned are also described. The agrarian system and the use of high pastures for transhumance are discussed and analyzed in terms of survival strategies in high altitude zones. The fourth chapter reconstructs the migrations of the Wakhi as responses to the changing political situation in the wider area from the 16th century until today. Their migration patterns are perceived as problem solving strategies which are of special importance and relevance in the highlands of Asia. The last section of this chapter focusses on the population dynamics and the distribution of the Wakhi in relation to historical developments; numerous relevant documents are presented in an Appendix together with the necessary statistics. All the data presented in the first four chapters provide the necessary background information for the main part of this study in which Kreutzmann discusses the processes of ethnicity which have developed in the contexts and under the influence of the above-mentioned nation states.

The first context analyzed is that of Afghanistan where, since the reign of Abdur Rahman Khan, the Wakhi were increasingly brought under the in-