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HISTORY OF INDIAN PUBLIC LIFE. Vol. II: THE PRE-MAURYA AND THE MAURYA PERIODS. By U. N. GHOSHAL. pp. xx, 324. Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1966. 56*s.* 6*d.*

Much effort has clearly been spent on this work since the appearance in 1945 of *A history of Hindu public life, Part I*, when this second volume was announced as "in active preparation". The author has taken great pains in the collection of his source-material and we are given an extensive survey of the available evidence, although he divides it merely between the pre-Maurya and Maurya periods and no real attempt is made to trace the evolution of theory or practice in the various branches of public life.

The part on the pre-Maurya period contains the bulk of the material surveyed, for, though still giving the date of the *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra* as 300–200 B.C. in his Chronology of principal literary sources, Professor Ghoshal has tacitly abandoned his previous adherence to the identification of Kauṭilya with Candragupta Maurya's chief minister and now uses the *Arthaśāstra* as a source for the pre-Maurya period. The resulting discrepancies between the evidence of the *Dharmasūtras* and the *Arthaśāstra* are left unresolved and the nearest that the author comes to an explanation is when summarizing the respective codes of law, where he states (p. 229) that "It is reasonable to infer that the laws of the *Dharmasūtras* and the *Arthaśāstra* applied in a general sense to the States of this period, the degree of their application varying according to the strength of the canonical or the *Arthaśāstra* tradition in different geographical areas". The chapters on economic organization, on finance, and on inter-state relations in this part rely almost entirely on the evidence of the *Arthaśāstra*, with perhaps too little attention paid to other more fragmentary but more valid evidence as a result. Thus, for instance, no explanation is given of divergencies such as that revealed in these two statements on p. 88: "An aspect of State administration which is frequently reflected in the Jātakas relates to the assignments of lands and even of villages by kings" and "When we turn to Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, we find that the general policy of State administration was to discourage, if not to forbid, the assignments of lands", and it is admitted that "We have no corroborative evidence of the application of the canons of foreign policy above described [i.e. summarized from *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, ch. 7–8] in the historical records of this period". Again, his sole source for the existence of an organized secret police in this period is the *Arthaśāstra*. However, good use is made of the evidence contained in the Buddhist and Jain canons and in Pāṇini, and also of such archaeological evidence as there is.

The second part, on the Maurya period, though slighter, sets out what is known about the public life of the period with, in the main, commendable clarity; in this part the author's critical faculty is much more in evidence. The fragments of Megasthenes and Aśoka's edicts are treated as the main sources and the author wisely refuses to build too much on later traditions. The final section of comparisons with the Achaemenids, the Seleucids, and the Ptolemies (in fact predominantly the last) is superficial and depends heavily on Rostovtzeff's *Social and economic history of the Hellenistic world*, a work of prime importance when it appeared but by now rather dated in certain respects.

The work is of solid worth as a compilation of available data on the public life of these times, even if it is weak in interpreting that assigned to the pre-Maurya period. However, very full references are given in Professor Ghoshal's usual fashion and enhance the value of the book by facilitating reference to the original sources themselves.

J. L. BROCKINGTON.

YOGA AND YANTRA. By P. H. POTT, translated by RODNEY NEEDHAM. pp. xv, 167, 15 pl., 2 tables. The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1966. *Fl.* 25.

Dr. Pott has written, among other things, the *Introduction to the Tibetan collection of the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden* (Leiden, 1951), the museum of which he is the head. That book is a classic introduction to Tibetan art and a model of clarity. The work

under review was first published in Dutch in 1946, and has been influential, at least among orientalists of the illustrious Leiden school. The author says that his aim is to examine Tantric yoga and "Indian archaeology", using each to elucidate the other. The yoga with which the book is principally concerned is that based on mystical human physiology, the system of *cakras*, especially as expounded and illustrated in the translations by Sir John Woodroffe of Śaivite Tantric texts; the "Indian archaeology" consists almost entirely of Buddhist works of art from Tibet and Nepal and of a few Javanese monuments. In a Tantric context the term *yantra* refers to mystic diagrams. For Dr. Pott, *yantras* "form the core of Indian art" (p. 3); he defines them as *all* "objects serving a practical function in meditational exercises" (p. 27): even a *guru* may be a *yantra* (p. 30). This usage, which extends an already over-tolerant definition by Zimmer, gives the book a neat title, but seems to serve no exegetic purpose.

Dr. Pott's learning is apparent on every page, and the bibliography alone is impressive. Few can be the scholars to match this expertise over so wide a field, and few therefore those truly competent to review this book. I am certainly not one of them, so it is with trepidation that I offer the criticism below.

In a modest preface Dr. Pott confesses to "some feelings of disappointment about the way in which, twenty years ago, I tried to formulate my ideas and arguments". Unfortunately I must endorse this view. It is amazing that only five years before the *Introduction* cited above the same author could have produced a work so ill-organized and obscurely written. Dr. Pott never says what specific problems he is trying to solve; and the short chapter called "Conclusions" presents what seem to be mainly mystical generalities. *En route* we have met, amidst the detail, occasional arguments and *aperçus*, but nothing which stands out as a coherent theme. It is there, somewhere, but it never comes into focus.

Fortunately our faith in and understanding of Dr. Pott are saved by the *Introduction*. In chapter 2 of the later book, "General remarks on the Lamaist pantheon", he clearly sets out within a few pages the problems and proposed solutions which the most careful reader will find hard to discern in the esoteric atmosphere of *Yoga and Yantra*. (These pages have of course only oblique relevance to the section on Javanese monuments in *Yoga and Yantra*, a subject which this review is forced substantially to ignore.) In the following recapitulation I shall use my own words; this risks misrepresentation, but may make it easier for fellow-outsiders to follow.

One problem is this: why are Tantric Buddhist Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and other *prima facie* benevolent divinities often represented as fierce and demonic? Dr. Pott's answer is that the Tantric *yogin* is trying to annihilate his ego. Now it is generally accepted that (on one level) these divinities symbolize forces of destruction, and that this accounts for their terrifying aspects. But what precisely is it that they destroy? The chain of argument which leads to Dr. Pott's conclusion is set out on pp. 30 and 31 of *Introduction*. It hinges on the number eight. One of the centres or *cakras* in Tantric physiology is the *Ānandakandapadma* or "heart lotus", a *cakra* situated at the heart and having the form of a lotus with eight petals. On each petal sits a pair of terrifying divinities, one male and one female. In the same way Tibetan and Nepalese Tantrism has a system of eight cemeteries in each of which terrifying divinities are depicted. The human personality symbolized by the heart has eight constituents, symbolized by the lotus petals; the cemeteries, in which bodies decay, symbolize the petals when the personality decays. Further, there are eight great Bodhisattvas, so one would fit in each cemetery, and they can be equated with the terrifying deities who sit in the cemeteries and whose who sit on the petals of the heart lotus. Therefore in this context the Bodhisattvas may be shown as terrifying.

The links in this chain of argument are forged in *Yoga and Yantra*. But before I descend to the detail necessary for me to explain why I think the argument very weak, let me mention two more of Dr. Pott's problems and examine his solutions to them.

The second problem is this: why do "left-hand" Tantrists practise foul excesses, not

in cemeteries? Answer: they identify themselves with the demonic forms who are to destroy their evil qualities; this identification was originally intended symbolically, and is so taken by "right-hand" Tantrists, but they have taken it literally—a mistake. (For Dr. Pott's own formulation of this answer see *Introduction*, p. 31.)

The third problem, explicitly stated at *Introduction*, p. 32, is: why do these divinities often have so many arms and heads? With this problem *Yoga and Yantra* is less concerned, but I mention it because its solution is the only one of the three here discussed which I think plausible, and the way Dr. Pott uses it will give a good example of his method in the earlier book. The answer is that these images are conflations or compressions of groups of divinities (which in many cases themselves originated as mere aspects of one divinity, so that their reassumption in one figure is a kind of accordion effect). For instance, a figure with nine heads and eighteen arms is a conflation—I would even say a shorthand form—of a figure which will no doubt be shown elsewhere with only one head and two arms, surrounded by eight similarly normal attendant figures.

I must now concentrate on *Yoga and Yantra*, and mention the three solutions just adduced in reverse order. First the conflated figures. Kublai Khan underwent a Tantric consecration called *Hevajravaśitā*. Hevajra is a god who is usually shown with seven or eight heads and eight pairs of arms, carrying eight different animals used as mounts, embracing his corresponding female goddess, and surrounded by eight other goddesses related to her. In this ritual, as in others, the person being initiated identifies himself with the relevant god. "Khubilai . . . would have tried, during and after the ceremony, to resemble Hevajra externally as well. In the nature of the case this could only be done by the disintegration of the figure of Hevajra into eight two-armed and one-headed figures" (pp. 69–70). Six bronze images, about life size, showing men embracing women while riding mounts, were once found near Peking (they have since disappeared), and five of these mounts correspond to those Hevajra carries. Dr. Pott supposes that the sixth mount should fit, the seventh has been lost, and the eighth pair was supplied by the initiate embracing his consort—perhaps Kublai Khan himself!

Flights of fancy are harmless, and Dr. Pott points out the imperfections of the correspondence between the images found and the pictures of Hevajra more fully than I have. He does not mention a fact that I found by following up his references: that the identification of Kublai Khan's initiation as a Hevajra ritual is based on an 18th-century text. But my main objection concerns the passage quoted, the crucial first step in the argument. What evidence have we that the subjects of Tantric ceremonies do try physically to resemble demonic deities, or, in particular, that a many-headed deity can thus be resembled by a man accompanied by figures (or other men?) representing the other heads? The only evidence which Dr. Pott adduces (if, which is wholly unclear, it is indeed meant to be relevant to this context) is a modern account of a Chinese ceremony in which a lāma becomes a Buddha (p. 73), one-headed and quite undemonic. No other evidence, textual or anthropological. With the above dubious exception, the book generally fails to use the evidence of serious anthropology, and this is a grave shortcoming. When it first appeared this might have been excused by the poverty of available materials. Now, however, we have the work of Agehananda Bharati, a western scholar who has received Tantric initiation in India, and discussed Tantrism in depth with high-ranking Tibetan Tantrists. Despite my scepticism I cannot say for certain that there is no evidence which would support Dr. Pott's thesis; but the point remains that Tantric ritual is no longer matter for mere speculation, and a publication which does not now take ethnological plausibility into account is thereby vitiated.

This objection is of course relevant to Dr. Pott's beliefs about the origins of "left-hand" Tantra: his answer, which again concerns the acting-out of symbols, is not merely inadequate; it is purely speculative, unsupported by any empirical evidence. In fact the work of Bharati, Eliade (*Yoga*, 1954), and even Woodroffe, whose work was available to

Dr. Pott, makes the thesis most unlikely, and makes it appear that if either had historical precedence it was the "left-hand" path, of which the "right-hand" path may be a mere timid etiolation. Naturally Dr. Pott cannot be blamed for not using material unavailable when he wrote—though this does argue against unaltered publication. However, my criticism really concerns Dr. Pott's entire methodology—the kind of answers with which he is satisfied. If he lacked anthropological evidence, he still had the empirical evidence of texts, the materials on eroticism in magic in Indian tradition all the way back to the Atharva Veda. These historical lines of inquiry, on which other scholars have worked when trying to account for "left-hand" Tantrism, are ignored by Dr. Pott. Does this help to explain his repeated insistence in the first two chapters on the hermeticism of Tantric traditions, the "air of secrecy which the Yogis themselves are least of all minded to dispel" (p. 3)? (Though Bharati and his associates seem open enough.) We seem to be lowering sail and preparing to drift into that timeless zone of calms where all distinctions are blurred behind the shifting mists of symbolism, and anything can be taken for anything else of similar shape or number. It is in these calms that "the attainment of Buddha-hood becomes similar to the ideal of non-Buddhist theosophy, viz. the union of the Yogiśvara's self with the All-spirit" (p. 105); that "it has long been known that the *aṣṭāngikamārga* was modelled on the example of the *aṣṭāngayoga*" (p. 107, note 11) (though evidence for the Buddhist eight-fold path is several centuries older than evidence for the alleged model); that "there are both Mahāyānists and Hīnayānists in all existing sects" (p. 108) (a generalization which rests on Barth's highly dubious interpretation of a remark by I-Tsing concerning the eighteen schools); and that on the same page Hīnayāna somehow gets equated with the "right-hand" path and Mahāyāna with the "left-hand" path.

Though similar passages abound, perhaps it is significant that the quotations I have just chosen come from the first part of chapter V, "Pantheons in Java and Bali". For it is in Indonesia that genuine Hindu-Buddhist syncretism occurs, and that studies of symbolism have given the most interesting results. For Indonesian specialists Dr. Pott's conclusions are doubtless valuable and his methods stimulating; but the extrapolation of methods which tend to ignore historical distance in space and time to other fields has yet to prove its worth.

It is thus that I would criticize the solution to the first problem of the terrifying deities, which obliquely occupies most of the book. Groups of three and connected groups of eight (or eight plus one) form the *tertia comparationis*, and the "heart lotus" is crucial to the argument. Groups of three are always easy to find; yet surely we must protest when even the rigidly dualist Sāṃkhya is forced into this mould, "viz., the concept of a triad consisting of a masculine and a feminine principle together with the product of their union" (p. 138). The six (or seven) *cakras* are said to derive from a system of three plus one, and though Dr. Pott again gives only Śaivite evidence for this it is supported also by Buddhist texts. (For a good explanation of why it is permissible to count "three plus one" rather than just "four", see Tucci, *The theory and practice of the Mandala*, 1961, chap. 5, especially the table on p. 117). However, the *cakra* system does not readily yield a group of eight, and none of the seven regular *cakra* lotuses have eight petals; but there are six extra "secret" *cakras* (see table on p. 23), of which one, at the heart, has eight petals. "But it is extremely difficult to arrive at a correct picture of the meaning of this padma, since this is kept a careful secret" (p. 14). Despite this secrecy there are descriptions of this lotus in Tantric texts, including the *Haṃsopaniṣad*, and it is variously said to be the seat of the soul (*jīva*) and of one's own chosen deity (*iṣṭadevatā*). (We are not told if the same is said of other lotus centres.) Further, "the lotus of the heart . . . was already in Purāṇic times the seat of the 'self' " (p. 23). If "in Purāṇic times" (whatever they were) means that this lotus is described in a *Purāṇa*, one would like a reference. Dr. Pott even makes play (p. 17) with a passage in the *Vetālapañcaviṃśati* which merely shows that a heart was used for black magic, and with a passage in the *Rudrayāmala* in which Pārvatī's father, advocating "left-hand" Tantra, tells Vasiṣṭha to worship Pārvatī with all his *heart*. The total evidence given for the overriding importance of the heart lotus is not impressive.

What do the eight petals symbolize? In the *Haṃsopaniṣad* they are obscurely assigned qualities of the *haṃsa* (individual soul), and in this text they carry no deities. The *Mahānirvāṇatantra* is the text in which each petal is said to carry a Nāyikā (an aspect of Kālī) and a Bhairava (an aspect of Śiva), but here no symbolic value is assigned to each petal, and Avalon (note on V 132) says that they represent the eight *siddhis*, attainments such as becoming large or small at will. Dr. Pott's account of the heart lotus, which he later says "comprises both the good and the evil human qualities" (p. 84), depends on an arbitrary conflation of these two texts. The *Mahānirvāṇatantra* is a (presumably Bengali) Śaiva text plausibly assigned to the 11th century, just before organized Buddhism died out in North India, and the *Haṃsopaniṣad* need not be earlier; their evidence is used to explain much older Buddhist material, including stories about Padmasambhava (8th century) and even the fierce forms of the eight great Bodhisattvas: "As we have seen, the Ānandakandapadma is the field of human qualities, out of which the ego is built up, and which is to be destroyed by way of the destruction of the eight elements out of which it is composed. Originally this was seen in a purely symbolic sense, but eventually this idea was developed to the point of giving the deities external forms and attributes corresponding to their functions as destroyers" (p. 115). Admittedly the dating is all very uncertain, but one would like at least a mention of chronology when texts are given as sources for phenomena which may well antedate them by several hundred years. Moreover, the indiscriminate use of Buddhist and non-Buddhist materials calls for justification. If we have to find a set of eight things for the eight great Boddhisattvas to destroy (whether or not the heart lotus comes into it) I much prefer Tucci's choice (*Mandala*, p. 41) of the eight forms of consciousness (*vijñāna*) of the Buddhist Yogācāra school, which was at least connected in space and time to the Buddhology under consideration.

The sad truth, I fear, is that sets of eight are all too easy to come by in a visual tradition so symmetrical as that of the *maṇḍala*, and the same goes of course for sets of four, or of five (four sides of a square with one in the middle). Tucci in fact seems to get more out of the quinary system in fewer pages (*Mandala*, pp. 49–55), but there is not much methodological improvement; these games can lead to any desired result unless strict rules are established before the players begin: rules concerning historicity, location in space and time, and what constitutes equivalence; but above all rules setting out what evidence could refute a theory propounded, for hypotheses which cannot be refuted have no scientific character.

I may seem to have done little justice to Dr. Pott's argument concerning the heart lotus and its terrible divinities, in that I have examined only a few of its links. The identification of the petals with the eight cemeteries is established in chapter 4. But this chapter is such a tangle of *non sequiturs* that I cannot hope to guide the reader through it with any brevity. At its very outset we are presented with what looks like a challenging problem: a painting of three gods who are themselves "invisible" (p. 76). Yet this phenomenon is never again referred to. And what are we to make of the chapter's conclusion? Tāranātha (writing in A.D. 1608) and a Tibetan text of A.D. 1775 are quoted saying that "Aśoka . . . took Umā and the Mothers of the cemeteries for deities". Dr. Pott goes on (p. 101): "At first sight this evidence seems highly unbelievable, but in the light of what we have seen in the course of this chapter, we may unhesitatingly conclude that Aśoka, before his conversion to Buddhism, occupied himself with mysticism, was a worshipper of Kālī-Devī, alias Lha-mo, and therefore behaved as a Bhairava-adept, at least according to the Tantrik authors quoted above." (End of chapter.) If the last clause has any weight, and Dr. Pott does *not* believe that Aśoka was a Tantrist—an *anima naturaliter Tantrica*, several centuries before contemporary evidence gives us reason to believe that that form of religion arose—why bother to mention the matter at all? But "unhesitatingly conclude" makes me think that

Dr. Pott does believe it. Truly, a thousand ages in Dr. Pott's sight are like an evening gone.

Readers less learned than Dr. Pott may find his obliquity of presentation occasionally matched by his opacity of vocabulary; he uses Sanskrit and Javanese words far more than necessary, and sometimes forgets to explain them (e.g. last paragraph of p. 120). No blame can attach to the translator, Dr. Rodney Needham, whose English is clear and simple (though "Śivaitic erections" (p. 103) is infelicitous for "Śaivite monuments"). But if this book fails as communication, is it still valuable as a work of reference? Not very, I fear. Hardly any of the works of art discussed are illustrated, reference being made instead to other books; this is probably due to publishing conditions in 1946, but one expects more nowadays. Finally, even the magnificent bibliography can only be used in conjunction with a newer one like Bharati's; for much important work on Tantra has come out in the last twenty years, nor are the texts published now so few as when Dr. Pott wrote (p. 14). H. V. Guenther, David Snellgrove, C. Chakravarti, the authors I have quoted, and recent publications from Pondichéry, to name but a few, have so added to our knowledge of Tantra that this book is sadly dated, and its republication is an act of piety rather than of service to scholarship. "If I had to deal with the same topic now", writes Dr. Pott, "I believe I would write another book". Let us hope that he will do so.

RICHARD GOMBRICH.

ŚILPA PRAKĀŚA: MEDIEVAL ORISSAN SANSKRIT TEXT ON TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE. By RĀMACANDRA KAULĀCĀRA. Translated and annotated by ALICE BONER and SADĀŚIVA RATH ŚARMĀ. Illustrations from the original palm-leaf manuscript text-drawings by SADĀŚIVA RATH ŚARMĀ. pp. lvii, 166, plates I–LXXII; Sanskrit text, pp. 102. Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1966. *Fl.* 150.

The *Śilpa prakāśa* is a mediaeval Orissan architectural text, here edited and translated for the first time. Editions of hitherto unpublished *vāstu* or *śilpa śāstras* are always welcome but this one is particularly so. A copiously illustrated palm-leaf MS exists and not only have Miss Boner and Srī Śarmā reproduced these illustrations but they have included photographs of a great deal of relevant Orissan architecture and sculpture, most of them obviously specially taken in connexion with the authors' work on the MS. This is rare indeed in books on Indian architecture and the authors and their publisher must be particularly commended for this. Paradoxically, such photographs, taken with a particular purpose in mind, usually prove of value to scholars far beyond the purposes for which they were originally intended, revealing all sorts of significant and hitherto unnoticed detail.

The author of the text was one Rāmacandra, of a family of Udgātās living in a tantric village in Orissa at some time between the 9th and 11th century, most probably at the end of this period. As a Kaulācārika, he worshipped Jagannātha as Dakṣiṇa Kālikā. The work has many tantric elements and is admittedly based on an older work, the *Saudhikāgama*. Though this was previously known only by name, a MS has recently been discovered, the authors tell us, of which they make use in elucidating obscure passages. The importance accorded to yantras in temple construction and image-making in the *Śilpa prakāśa* is characteristic of the tantric tradition.

The *Śilpa prakāśa* is outstanding in its emphasis upon one type of temple, the *vāḍabhi* (*Mitra*: *khākara*), somewhat exceptional in Orissa, of which the Vaitāl Deul is the best known, and in particular upon a sub-type, the *vimānamālinī*, of which the authors discovered in a remote village a particularly fine example. It is well worthy of the numerous photographs devoted to it. Although the MS drawings raise problems of their own, they are undeniably most exciting. For here at last one has a visual reality to put beside all the dreary scholastic lucubrations and categorizations which constitute the vast bulk of these architectural texts. The simple figures which illustrate the prescribed shapes, very bizarre