accounts of Mongol affairs in western Asia. David Morgan's 1986 '*The Mongols*', worthy though it is, is no longer the last word on Mongol History. Allsen's '*Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*', de Rastewiltz's '*Secret History*', Paul Buell's '*Soup for the Qan*', Komaroff's '*Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*' and '*The Legacy of Genghis Khan*', and the works of Charles Melville, to name just a few random examples, are studies which should be cited in any serious work tackling the Toluid Mongol Empire.

Other omissions are present. Haw's discussion of the Khitans should have made reference to Michal Biran's seminal '*Empire of the Qara Khitai* . . .', while the conquest of Dali and Mongol rule in Yunnan should have utilised the monographs published by de Rachewiltz et al and Jacqueline Armijo-Hussein. Qaidu and his challenge to Qubilai is the subject of another monograph by Michal Biran which also was not referred to by Haw though he devotes considerable space to this subject. In fact since 2000 there has been a great deal published which challenges the traditional negative views of the Mongol 'barbarians', but these new interpretations do not appear to have influenced the work under review.

Haw's work serves as a useful companion to Polo's memoirs and, despite its failings, adds to our knowledge of Yuan China, facilitating our appreciation of his travelogue and earning a place in any library of Mongol history.

George Lane
School of African and Oriental Studies, University of London

Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India. By Johannes Bronkhorst (Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section Two, India, Vol. 19). pp. xx, 420, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2007.
doi:10.1017/S1356186308008419

In this provocative book, Johannes Bronkhorst attempts to locate a common source for theories about karma and rebirth in the religious and intellectual culture of a broad region of northeastern India which he terms "Greater Magadha". He analyses tremendous a range of Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Jain literary texts in order ". . . to piece together what can be known about the culture of Greater Magadha that preceded, or existed beside, Buddhism and Jainism, and to trace the influence it exerted on what we may call classical Indian culture" (p. 9). Bronkhorst forcefully argues that beliefs in rebirth, theories of karmic retribution, the possibility of special knowledge of the self, ascetic practices of renunciation of action, and goals of liberation from worldly existence first emerged from "the fundamental spiritual ideology" (15 ff.) of ancient Magadha around the middle of the first millennium BCE. Along with promoting his thesis for Magadhan origins of new ideas adopted by Brahmanical and Śramaṇic traditions, Bronkhorst re-assesses chronologies for late-Vedic literature in relation to revised dates for Sanskrit grammarians and the emergence of Buddhism.

The broad conception of the cultural region of Greater Magadha extends far beyond the traditional political boundaries of ancient *mahājanapada* of Magadha. Bronkhorst neither defines the limits nor provides a map, but refers to the "region east of the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā" (p. 3) and "the geographical area in which the Buddha and Mahāvīra lived and taught" (p. 4) as Greater Magadha. Greater Magadha therefore includes other ancient *mahājanapada*s located in parts of modern eastern Uttar Paradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal outside of Magadha proper. Passages cited in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* indicate strong dislike of the people and languages of areas which were on the eastern periphery of the land of the Brahmins defined as *Āryāvarta* by the second-century grammarian Patañjali and as *Madhyadeśa* in the *Mānava Dharma Śāstra*. Based primarily on such

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1356186308008419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

normative Brahmanical worldviews, Bronkhorst asserts that "... Greater Magadha had a culture of its own which was different from the cultures of Vedic and early post-Vedic literature" (p. 9).

In Part I of *Greater Magadha*, Bronkhorst selectively examines Buddhist and Jain canonical texts to find cultural features that preceded the emergence of heterodox movements of renouncers. He contrasts different positions on ascetic withdrawal, juxtaposing early Jain emphasis on suppression of physical activity with Buddhist doctrines focusing on control of mental activity and intention. Bronkhorst compares the Ājīvika position that "bodies will always act according to their natures" (p. 46) to the doctrine of *svadharma* in the *Bhagavadgītā*, and suggests that criticism of the ascetic goal of abstaining from activity may be derived from "the Ājīvika view that asceticism cannot annihilate former karma" (p. 50). Although brief tangents on medicine (pp. 56–60) and cyclic time (pp. 69–71) are not pursued, the identification of the Magadhan god Kapila (pp. 61–68) with wisdom and action-less asceticism in a variety of traditions points toward regional cultic associations. While Jains, Buddhists, and Ajīvikas certainly shared numerous presuppositions and elaborated their own views of rebirth, karmic retribution, nature of the self, and ascetic withdrawal, the evidence mustered from canonical texts is not sufficient to prove that these ideas derive strictly from the Magadhan region rather than the much broader intellectual, religious and cultural milieu of ancient northern India.

Bronkhorst surveys an impressive range of orthodox Sanskrit texts in order to illustrate gradual or hesitant acceptance, criticism, and rejection of rebirth and karmic retribution within Brahmanical traditions in Part II (Brahmanism vis-à-vis rebirth and karmic retribution). According to Bronkhorst, the new doctrine was a "foreign intrusion into the Vedic tradition" which first appears 'dressed up' in "Vedic garb" (p. 120) in early Upaniṣads. Although Magadhan origins for what Gananath Obeyesekere calls "karmic eschatology"[9] are not explicit in the passages selected from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Chāndogya* and *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad*s, the basic contention that these doctrines were adopted from outside of the Vedic tradition rather than the result of gradual internal developments (as often argued) nor structural patterns (as Obeyesekere proposes) will certainly advance longstanding debates.

The incorporation or ignorance of new ideas of rebirth, karmic retribution, asceticism, and liberation in post-Vedic literature demonstrates varied reactions of mainstream Brahmanical traditions for over a millennium after their introduction in the Upaniṣads. Bronkhorst highlights a distinction between asceticism sanctioned for forest-dwelling Brahmin householders (*vānaprastha*s) and "wanderers" (*parivrāja*s) who are "against the scriptures" (p. 86) in the *Āpastambha Dharmasūtra*, but a specific link with Magadha (or northeastern India more generally) is not demonstrated. In his discussion of passages from the Rājadharmaparvan of the *Mahābhārata*, Bronkhorst vaguely localises views of death by immobilisation, avoidance of karmic retribution through inactivity, achieving knowledge of the self to halt rebirth, and the Kālavāda doctrine of fatalism in the "different religious currents" (p. 98) of Greater Magadha. He views the *Mahābhārata*'s mixture of older rituals leading to heaven (*svarga*) and new patterns of worship leading to liberation (*mokṣa*) as a gradual meeting of Vedic and Magadhan cultures (p. 140). On the other hand, "Urban Brahmins" responsible for the *Kāma Sūtra* and *Artha Śāstra* were not concerned with the goal of liberation, since they pay only 'lip-service' (p. 169) to *mokṣa*. The absence of references to *mokṣa*, rebirth, or karmic retribution in Śabara's commentary on the '*Mīmāṃsā Sūtra*' seems to indicate that Mīmāṃsakas purposefully ignored these ideas until after the middle of the first millennium C.E. Bronkhorst shows that the doctrine of rebirth in 'another world' was rejected on the basis of the position that "there is no awareness after death" (p. 154) in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*

[9]In *Imagining Karma: Ethical Transformation in Amerindian, Buddhist, and Greek Rebirth* (Berkeley/Los Angeles and London, 2002), Obeyesekere discusses theories for the non-Vedic origin of karma theories, but concludes: "I think it reasonable to ignore the problem of origins owing to the methodological impossibility of finding them ..." (p. 14). Bronkhorst, on the other hand, believes that philological methods can be employed to solve the 'problem of origins' but the results are not decisive.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1356186308008419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

2.4.12. His suggestion that criticisms of doctrines of rebirth and karmic retribution were once much closer to the Brahmanical mainstream deserves further consideration.

Bronkhorst reshuffles the deck for the "house of cards"[10] on which relative chronologies for late-Vedic Sanskrit literature have been constructed by critically evaluating dates for Pāṇini, the early Upaniṣads, and the historical Buddha in Part III. Since deviations from rules for Vedic meter indicate that the *A-ṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini (whom he dates after 350 BCE rather than ca. 500 BCE) precedes "orthoepic diaskeuasis" of the *Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya*, Bronkhorst observes that "... much of Vedic literature was still in a state of flux in his [Pāṇini's] day, and had not yet reached the unalterable shape in which we know it" (p. 198). He also disputes the relative dating of the earliest Upaniṣads before the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism, proposing instead to date their composition in approximately the same period as the Buddha (accepting later dates for the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* in ca. 400 BCE) and pushing some portions as late as the time of Patañjali (ca. 150 BCE). Although Buddhist authors were familiar with Vedic cosmogonies and Brahmanical ideas as "common background knowledge" (p. 213), Bronkhorst denies that the Buddhist doctrine of no self (*anātman*) necessarily presupposes a reaction to specific Upaniṣads (pp. 216–218). Rather than accepting the chronological assumption that concepts of rebirth and karmic retribution which first appear in the early Upaniṣads are later adopted and modified as fundamental doctrines by Buddhists and Jains, Bronkhorst instead argues that both Brahmanical and Śramaṇic traditions contemporaneously draw from a common source, which he seeks to identify as the culture of Greater Magadha.

Greater Magadha by Johannes Bronkhorst will certainly provoke scholarly discussions about the ideological origins of rebirth and karmic retribution, relationships between Brahmanical, Buddhist, Jain, Ājīvika, Cārvāka, and other systems of thought, and relative chronologies of Indian texts. This reviewer was not convinced by his arguments for locating a single underlying "fundamental spiritual ideology" in the cultural area of Greater Magadha because many of the features that he identifies as exclusively Magadhan (rebirth, karmic retribution, knowledge of the self, and ascetic renunciation for the purpose of liberation from worldly existence) probably belonged to a much larger cultural and historical milieu and are not possible to localise in a particular region of northern India during this period. Questions about the origins of these basic ideas will be difficult to answer solely through analysis of literary traditions because the doctrines as well as the textual traditions which reflect their interpretation are subject to considerable modifications. Since his reconstruction of the intellectual culture of Magadha is based primarily on analysis of textual passages, little attention is given to archaeology, art, and other aspects of material culture which might support his assertion of a distinctive regional identity. The social and political history of ancient Magadha is not addressed in any detail, resulting in a lack of contextualisation for the religious ideas attributed to this region. Nevertheless this erudite and stimulating attempt to establish regional, chronological, and intellectual contexts for the emergence and development of key ideas which inform South Asian religious traditions is a valuable contribution that merits careful attention from specialists in Indian philosophy and readers with more general interests in ancient India. Regardless of whether or not the arguments are accepted or rejected, engagement with *Greater Magadha* will be worthwhile in forming or reformulating conclusions about important issues in the interpretation of early South Asian intellectual and religious history.

Jason Neelis
University of Florida

[10]Patrick Olivelle, *Upaniṣads* (Oxford and New York, 1996), remarks "... in reality, any dating of these documents that attempts a precision closer than a few centuries is as stable as a house of cards" (p. xxxvi).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1356186308008419 Published online by Cambridge University Press