

It is up to us to react to it and make something truly efficacious out of it. One can see how this goes with the author's radically experiential bias.

Further confusion is caused by the author's use of "charism" to cover almost any pneumatic effect; in so far as he does define it at all, it seems to be puzzlingly identified with the medieval theologians' "gift of the Spirit" (which they rigorously distinguish from charisms).

**THE PERFECT GENEROSITY OF PRINCE VESSANTARA**, edited and translated by Margaret Cone and Richard F. Gombrich. OUP. 1977. pp. xlvii + 111. £11.00

Margaret Cone and Richard Gombrich have produced here an attractive English version of one of the most popular Buddhist tales, as found in the Pali scriptures. I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the translation, but it is eminently readable. And the copious illustrations, many in colour, reproduced from Sinhalese paintings, almost all of them not previously known in the West, together with the excellent printing and binding, make this in every way a delightful book to use. The introduction gives a brief account of the role of the story of Vessantara in Buddhism, and an outline of the different extant versions of it. Vessantara is the type of the perfectly generous giver, embodying one of the basic Buddhist virtues, in a spirit not unlike that of the Christian precept, "give to anyone who asks" (which is also related to perfection in Matthew 5:45ff).

And finally, the reader should be warned that this book is not written in English; now that American is more or less officially recognised as a distinct language, it is surely time that English publishers gave thought to the desirability of sometimes getting American works translated into English (and, I dare say, vice versa).

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As in the Book of Job, his virtue does not go unrewarded even in this life, and Vessantara ends up, if anything, even better off than he was before, after his various trials and tribulations. Spiritual doctrine has not been allowed to spoil what is essentially a very human and humanly told tale.

The editors say that their book is intended for the general reader as well as the specialist, and they have indeed made available to the English world a delightful specimen of Pali literature, which requires hardly any previous initiation into Buddhist or Indian beliefs. Though there are one or two minor points of detail which might have been elucidated by brief editorial comment, there is never any serious difficulty in understanding what is going on.

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**THE DAMNED ART, ESSAYS IN THE LITERATURE OF WITCHCRAFT**, edited by Sydney Anglo. RKP. 1977. pp. 258 £8.50

This is a fascinating collection of essays on the major learned treatises on demonology from the *Malleus Maleficarum* in the fifteenth century to Bell's *The Trial of Witchcraft* in the early eighteenth century. Although most of the contributors evidently have but scant sympathy for the idea of witchcraft or any other kind of spiritual power, most of the essays are interesting and informative, often providing a needed corrective to popular 'rationalist' views. Stuart Clark's essay on James I is a particularly interesting attempt to show the rationality (on its own terms) of demon-

ology, but most of the contributors go at least some way to making sense of the writers' own intellectual world. The one serious exception is Sydney Anglo's contribution on the *Malleus Maleficarum*, which is nothing but abuse of a work which, whether or not he understands it himself, he certainly makes no attempt to help us to understand, on its own terms or on anyone else's. The essay on Cotton Mather leads into a very fascinating discussion, all too brief, of the role he plays in more modern American self-awareness.

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