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compassion (I do not remember who said that humor is a sense of the tragic wittingly expressed). At most one would have liked an even fuller emphasis on the character of Zen's laughter being the very opposite of any mirth that issues from anywhere but from Prajna, the inseparable concomitant of Karuna. Within the non-existence of existence, the unspeakable suffering of beings is so real that I wonder if the Bodhisattva's smile wouldn't fade in contemplating the contemporary torture camps of Chile, Brazil, the gas-ovens of Auschwitz, etc. etc. and whether even a Sengai would discover there "a way of life in the midst of death, and burst out in hearty laughter." The eye of Zen is indeed focused beyond both the serious and the comic.

Perhaps these remarks reflect more on the idiosyncrasies of the reviewer than on any deficiency in Dr. Hyers's admirable compendium of Zen humor. With all the high appreciation I have for Nansen I could probably not have helped to berate the master for his didactic vivisection on the cat, telling him that a religious attitude to life which in its twenty-five hundred years of tradition has not produced a single auto-da-fé, nor personalities à la Torquemada, Savonarola or Calvin, should be able to dispense with the killing of a single kitten for teaching purposes. I wonder what Nansen's rejoinder would have been. . . .

"Zen and the Comic Spirit" is an appropriately goodhumored, beautifully written, often witty and always learned, summing up of a most lovable and admirable aspect of Zen. It is a triumphant demonstration that not—as we have been told so often—is it only one single step from the sublime to the ridiculous, but that from the ridiculous to the sublime there is not even a step to be taken.

FREDERICK FRANCK

AN OUTLINE OF PRINCIPAL METHODS OF MEDITATION. Translated from the Chinese by Sujitkumar Mukhopadhyaya. Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press: Pondicherry, 1972, 53 pp.

The present work is a translation of the *Ssu-wei-lüeb-yao-fa* 思惟略要法, a Buddhist meditation text which gives a concise account of ten kinds of meditation chosen from among those prevalent in early Mahayana Buddhism in India and presumably in Central Asia. The ten are: 1] meditation on the Four Immeasurable Minds, 2] meditation on impurities, 3] meditation on white bone, 4] meditation on the image of Buddha, 5] meditation on the real Buddha, 6] meditation on the dharmakaya of Buddha, 7] meditation on Buddhas of the ten directions, 8] meditation on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life, 9] meditation on the

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real nature of dharmas, and 10] the Saddharma-puṇḍarīka samādhi meditation. The translation of the text covers 29 pages, and is prefaced by a 24 page introduction.

In the introduction, Dr. Mukhopadhyaya compares the methods of meditation in the text, especially the first three listed above, with those in Pali as well as Sanskrit materials, Buddhist and non-Buddhist, and thus makes clear the common basis between them. A further comparison between this text and kindred meditation texts in Chinese, such as the *Wu-men ch'an-ching yao-yung-fa* 五門禪經要用法, the *Ch'an-pi-yao-fa ching* 禪秘要法經, and the *Tso-ch'an san-mei ching* 坐禪三昧經 would have made it even more enlightening.

Dr. Mukhopadhyaya notes critically the following passage that appears in the description of the Saddharma-puṇḍarīka samādhi meditation: "All sentient beings of the ten directions, in the three worlds, high or low, great or small, whoever they may be—let them utter only one phrase 'namo buddhāya (salutation to Buddha)' and they shall become Buddha."

This is cited as a misuse of the Mahayanist ideal that every being, even the puniest and the most insignificant one, can become Buddha, because of Buddha nature lying within it. He writes:

In other words, commit sins as much as you can, at the end only recite once "namo buddhāya (salutation to Buddha)" or salutation to Hari, and you attain Buddhahood or go to the highest heaven. The story of Ajāmīla, the great sinner, is of the same kind. He committed sins throughout his whole life, but just before his death, by calling his son 'Nārāyaṇa' by name, he attained Vaikunṭha, the highest heaven. (p. 22)

This comment misses the point of the passage. The passage is derived from the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka sūtra*, the chapter on Resourceful Means (*upāya*), in which it is taught that any reverential act, however trivial it may seem to be, shall become an efficient cause or condition that causes one at another day to aspire after *bodhi* and finally to attain Buddhahood. Emphasis is laid on the greatness of Dharma and the importance of causes and conditions. The passage above should I think be interpreted in this light.

As for the author of the text, Dr. Mukhopadhyaya surmises as follows:

The record says that Kumārajīva translated it into Chinese. But it does not mention who the author is. It may be that Kumārajīva compiled it from different scriptures in Sanskrit, Pali, etc., for his disciples in China. (p. 23)

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But the *Cb'u-san-ts'ang-chi-chi* 出三藏記集, the oldest surviving catalogue of translated Buddhist texts compiled by Seng-yu of the Liang dynasty, makes no reference to this work. It is mentioned as Kumārajīva's translation for the first time in the *Li-tai-san-pao-chi* 歷代三寶記, the catalogue compiled in 597 by Fei ch'ang-fang of the Sui dynasty. It thus seems doubtful that Kumārajīva himself could be its author. Considering, however, that this text bears some resemblance in content with the *Tso-ch'an-san-mei ching* whose translator is acknowledged as Kumārajīva, it is conceivable that it came into existence under his influence.

The translation of the text into English, closely done in a very literal style, is highly dependable. Footnotes will be helpful for readers in tracing technical terms in Chinese back to their original forms in Pali and Sanskrit. However, a few terms, such as *sambhoga-kāya* and *nirmāna-kāya*, could have received closer explanation, given their great importance in Mahayana Buddhism.

SAKAMOTO HIROSHI

COLLECTED WRITINGS ON SHIN BUDDHISM. By Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki. Kyoto: Shinshū Ōtani-ha, 1973, 262 pp.

THE KYŌGTŌSHINSHŌ. Translated by Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki. Kyoto: Shinshū Ōtani-ha, 1973, 442 pp.

It is extremely significant that on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the birth of *Shinran Shōnin* (1173–1262) and the 750th anniversary of the founding of the *Jōdo Shin* school of Buddhism in Japan, that the western world of Buddhist scholarship should be afforded one of the basic sources for assessing the value of Shinran's philosophy and understanding the spiritual movement that is *Jōdo Shin* tradition in our contemporary times.

As Shinran was a pioneering spirit in his own time, so was Dr. D. T. Suzuki (1871–1966) the acknowledged leader in the propagation and interpretation of Mahāyāna Buddhism for the Western world. Dr. Suzuki was also a pioneer in the efforts to reveal to the world the depths of the Pure Land tradition in Buddhism through his various writings and lastly through his translation of the monumental work by Shinran, *The Kyōgyōshinshō* (Doctrine, Practice, Faith and Realization). These writings have been brought together by The Eastern Buddhist Society under the supervising editorship of Professor Nishitani Keiji.

Dr. Suzuki was perhaps best known for his interpretations of Zen Buddhism through a wide variety of publications. In addition, for most of his life he also pursued a scholarly interest in Shin Buddhism, stimulated by his many activities of teaching and lecturing at the Shinshū Ōtani University and editing *The Eastern*