

SCRAGGY NECK
CATAUMET MASSACHUSETTS

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17 Sept. '64

Dear Bob,

Thank you very much for your prompt letter. We were particularly grateful to have it, as several days before we had received a letter from Shunryu Suzuki in San Francisco announcing a week's visit to us in Boston. He will arrive next Tuesday. I don't know exactly what he has in mind to say to us - still less can I decide what to say to him!

I have been doing much thinking on the subject of Zen Buddhism - possibly too much! - and I am discouraged. John is more than discouraged. When I told him there was a possibility of Mrs. Horioke going to New York, he said he hoped that would mean we could give up the Zazen meeting in its present form which he has never liked. Zazen simply does not interest or inspire him, though he says he thinks it is "good for" me to do it every day by myself.

A woman cannot and should not be in charge of an association like ours. In seven years, we have accomplished very little

↳ Seshuin do not bring
us new members - or help
to keep others!

Our publications are popular - especially "The Way of Zazen"
but most of our readers who write us encouraging and
appreciative letters are Christians! - Our zazen meetings
has six staunch and loyal members who want no change
- and who come year after year. All others are transients for
one reason or another. Our association has some members
who never come to a zazen meeting; some people have
attended zazen for two or three years without becoming
members.* - Anyway, all this adds up to wasted time
and effort for Reverend Suzuki. He is a good man and
I respect him, but like most Japanese priests I am afraid
he wants to plant Japanese tradition, (Dogen-shu) and
not a healthy indigenous Buddhism. Well, I must wait
and see what he has to say for himself; and he must
say it himself to our members and see their reaction
for himself. I shall no longer be go-between trying put
and possibly presumptuously, to explain each to the other.
Furthermore, there is no possibility at all of having Maezumi
sen - or any other young monk, with the possible ex-
ception of Katagiri San, unless the Soto Hongan will
establish their own headquarters here and support it too!
John is not pleased with the examples of Tai san or
Mitsa Roshi and thinks the latter ought to have better
things to do than try to transform American women into
Samurai super women and that Tai san should be man

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enough to work out ^{his} differences with you face to face, or else
go back to Japan with his unripened Dharma. I think
I agree. Is there any possibility of Sam Nishi making a
trip to Hawaii to help straighten things out? May I
write to him? I will only say that I know nothing
about the nature of the trouble - but hope it will
soon be resolved. I would also like to tell him
that young monks cannot cope with the American situation,
and that I hope all Japanese monks will try to avoid
making the mistakes here that Catholic missionaries have
always made in Japan. Recently, Dom Alfred Graham of the
Potsmouth Priory wrote me about a Japanese Jesuit whom
he has met and who occasionally visits the Priory. She
J.V. does Zazen, and complains about how westernized Jap
ese Catholicism has managed to remain! I think some
would-be Buddhist missionaries to the West would do
well to study the strong & weak points ^{part + present} of Catholic
missionary enterprises.

Please do not be offended if I say that I am
pleased and relieved that Sally Unger has joined Nishi.
Hanganji - possibly you & Ann will ^{also} agree with me. At
present, it is my tentative conviction that a lot of
Zazen or very intense Zazen combined with ~~somewhat~~
asceticism is completely unsuitable for women. Regular
short periods, with occasional ^(tristia) & moderate seshuin are
one thing - Zazen as a central ^(tristia) life project are something
else. Maybe I am wrong, I certainly plan to listen
carefully to what Rev. Suzuki has to say on the subject
but don't ^{you think} we should all give this some careful consideration. How
do you & Ann (Ann especially) feel about this?

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4
SCRAGGY NECK
CAMBRIDGE MASSACHUSETTS

I will be in Cambridge
with Rev. Suzuki next
week

Could you possibly send me Sally's new address? She is still an associate member of our association and I try to keep up with addresses - with her it is nearly impossible!

Can you keep us posted about your situation? It is of great importance to us. We have a number of as yet unresolved questions concerning our own situation which your problems & solutions cannot help but influence. Incidentally, what about Taisan's marriage? I gather this is in part of the secret, since it was publicly announced. I am wondering if Rev. Suzuki will suggest a married man for us - he is married himself.

All for the moment - you are both much in our minds & hearts these days. Our Dharma is complicated. Please write again soon if you can.

Love to you both,

Ebi