

2nd
of the Buddhist lineage

I must have met Suzuki-roshi around 1966-7, through my friendships with Richard Baker who became my first friend when I moved to California to teach at the U. of California, Santa Cruz, and who prompted me to ^{consider myself} ~~the~~ ^{protestant} theological witness to his Buddhist career as the one who received the transmission from Suzuki-roshi. This astonished me as a unique example of the cross-fertilization of cultures and the phenomenon of mind and religion.

I especially remember with great fondness and appreciation ^{the visit of} Richard and Roshi ^{who} came to stay overnight at our house and slept on our pull-out daybed in our sunroom. I remember peeking through the window after they had retired and observing ^{with delight} how cozy they looked. In the morning when I awoke, I found them saying prayers before my ^{bronze} Chinese Walking Buddha, which I had bought at auction, at Louis Joseph, a famous gallery in Boston, one of our family treasures, as though consecrating it for me.

I have a strong memory of Roshi sitting on a step at Tassajara and just being there in the fullness of his presence. He was always in jolly good spirits and irrepressible good humour although the sober seriousness of his ~~blatant~~ nature was always evident amidst the sunny disposition. His sitting there is associated with his stone work which he loved to do and I must have seen him working on the paths at one time or another.

He was a man of great strength, forceful, yet gentle and unassuming, utterly at ease.

I last saw him when my wife and I, and Earl McGoath, were Richard's guests at his High Mountain Throne of the Buddha Ceremony, when he manifested the transmission he had ^{received} and ^{was to} assume the position of ~~Abbot~~ of Zen Center. We all sucked in our breath when Suzuki-roshi entered the room, borne up by his son, with a burden more than

anyone could bear, as he was dying of cancer. His pallor
was greenish-yellow and filled the room as a sign
of his imminent death. We thought he would
die when Richard offered insurance to him and
said:

"Walking in Buddha's gentle rain
Our robes are soaked through
But on the Lotus
Not a drop remains."

Paul Lee Jan 14, 2000



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