

jhs



OUR LADY OF GETHSEMANI
TRAPPIST, KENTUCKY

Feb 10, 1959

My Dear Victor:

After reading over the Fiedler ms I find myself in a difficult position. The material is extremely interesting. The translation seems to me to be inadequate. At least it reads very heavily, and at times is almost impossible to understand. There is a wealth of mixed metaphors, and very often one runs up against expressions that are not English, but hang in a sort of no man's land between English and German. I can see where the translator has worked nobly at a very difficult job, but I really think it requires a lot more work and some more heads need to get together on it.

I wish I could offer something more constructive myself but I do not want to rush in with my own inadequate knowledge of German, and the Italian is not enough to go on.

I think you ought to edit the work quite a lot, as the translator suggests. But above all it should be reduced to fluent, readable English. Technical if you like, but without too great a burden of jargon, and with greater precision all along the line. This may be demanding a lot-- perhaps only a really first class translator, an extraordinary translator, would be able to manage it, and such people are rare.

I am enclosing the sheet on which I started to jot down observations as I went along, but I stopped doing so since they were so largely negative. It would be ungracious to find fault without having anything constructive to offer to balance it. I am very sorry I cannot be of more help to you.

Tomorrow is Lent, and in order to clear the decks I am getting the manuscript back to you now so that you can go further with it. I look forward with interest to the notes on Classical Art which you announce.

And now as for the Desert Fathers- how can anyone argue with a Santuccio? Certainly the manuscript belongs to the Santuccio. Print it as you please. The conditions mentioned in your letter are quite acceptable: namely 50 copies for the Santuccio to sell and 12 for me to give away. This letter will serve as a contract and I will keep yours for the same purpose.

May Lent be a ver sacrum full of light and joy for both of you, a season of renewal in preparation for the great renewal of Easter.

Faithfully in Christ

fr Louis

I have the Zen book & it is man's work. Do you mind if I hold on to it for a few weeks more?