

The Sayings of Rinzai

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN
SUZUKI DAISETZ & UEDA SHIZUTERU

Moderator: Here we are in a mountain cottage surrounded by deep woods; it is completely quiet except for the gay chirping of birds. A bush warbler is singing and a cuckoo, too. Morning and evening they come to the eaves and sing. Just as the poem says, "A bird sings and the mountain stillness deepens."

I. RINZAI'S "PERSON"

Ueda: You have explained the *Sayings of Rinzai* by means of the concept of Person or Man (*nin* 人). Dr. Suzuki, when I read your book on the *Sayings of Rinzai*, it seemed to me your grasp of its meaning revealed your own Person. I thought: Here is a Person who can really read the *Sayings of Rinzai*. I would now like to ask you some questions about Rinzai's Person and its relation to modern man.¹

First, isn't the meaning of Rinzai's Person or True Man different from what is meant by "human being" or from what Europeans call "personality"? Doesn't it also differ greatly from the standpoint of mysticism, which conceives of man in union with God?

*This is a translation of a conversation that took place at Karuizawa in the Japanese Alps on the 21st of July, 1965, commemorating the 1100th year since Rinzai's death. Joining Dr. Suzuki was Professor Ueda Shizuteru, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education of Kyoto University. The moderator was the Reverend Kimura Shizuo, Director of the Center for the Research of Zen Culture in Kyoto. Footnotes are by the Editors.

¹ In his Japanese work *Rinzai no kibon shiso* (The Fundamental Thought of Rinzai, 1949) Dr. Suzuki deals with Rinzai's use of the word Man (*nin*) in the *Sayings of Rinzai* (*Rinzai roku*). The *Sayings*, compiled by Rinzai's disciples, is considered one of the best collections of Zen sayings, known as *Goroku*.

Suzuki: Whether it is called human being, union of God and man, or personality, all these are different from what I refer to as Rinzai's "Person." The difference lies not only in the way of thinking of those in the West, all people have a tendency to begin at a point where thinking has already become dualistic. There is a sentence in the Zen records: "A mind-wheel never has turned; the moment it does, it invariably turns into two." Grasp the point prior to this "turning into two"—that is what I call Person. They speak of the union of man with God, but what we must grasp is that in which God and man have not yet assumed their places. The two situations, therefore, are substantially different. Rinzai's Person has nothing to do with the humanistic thought people so often talk about today. The fundamental difference lies in this: while the one aims at what comes after division, the other aims at what is prior to division. Our problem is how to grasp this undivided something.

Ueda: The European view has, generally speaking, two divisions: God and man, man and Nature. You are referring to that which is also prior to such bifurcations, are you not?

Suzuki: Yes. The very moment something begins to move even the slightest bit, it runs into two. So the question is how to grasp what is prior to this movement. When we refer to something prior to even the arising of this concern, it appears to make no sense at all. And yet this is in fact the ultimate reality. What is interesting is this ability to communicate the incommunicable. The whole of the *Sayings of Rinzai* is also nothing but a communication of what transcends ordinary communication.

Suzuki: It is here Zen works in its unique manner. In what is called in the West dialogue, two individuals stand against one another. Rinzai wants to grasp what is prior to this confrontation, and so he must strike people down, thrust them aside. This is where we see Zen's distinctive characteristic.

II. BUJI ("NO-MATTER")

Ueda: When we read the *Sayings* from this viewpoint—mere reading is not enough, though—we are struck by the recurrence of certain words or expressions. For example, *buji*, as in "a man of *buji*," or "a man of *buji* is noble."

I think it is a key word in considering the thought of Rinzai's *Sayings*.²

Suzuki: Yes, it is. I don't believe the term "no-mind" (*musbin*) appears very often in the *Sayings*.

Ueda: Only once, I believe, and that is in a quotation. In a few places, such as "since one-mindedness is already nothingness . . ." no-mind is implied. But such places are few. The word *buji* occurs very often.

Suzuki: (Looking at a notation he has written in a copy of the *Sayings*) Yes, it appears fourteen times.

Ueda: And isn't it true that the contexts in which the word *buji* appears are very important ones? Is the word (in Chinese, *wu-sbib*) originally Chinese? "No-mind," for instance, has a Sanskrit origin, I believe . . .

Suzuki: In the *Keitoku Dentōroku*³ there is a statement by the Zen master Tokusan: Have no matter (*buji*) in mind; have no-mind (*musbin*) in matter. Since Rinzai and Tokusan were contemporaries, we may presume such words as *musbin* (no-mind) and *buji* (no-matter) were used during the middle and late T'ang dynasty. Besides, much of Hua-yen (Japanese, Kegon) thought had been incorporated into Zen.

Ueda: Can we say it is because of the special place of the concept of Person in the *Sayings of Rinzai* that the word "*buji*" appears much more often than does "no-mind"?

Suzuki: The word *sbib* (心, in Chinese, *hsin*) in the compound word *musbin* (no-mind) corresponds to the Sanskrit *citta*. The Chinese people, I think, have not made frequent use of the character *sbib*. The Japanese word *ji* (事, matter, affair; Chinese, *sbib*), however, seems to be native to China. The word for *mind* was of course also of Chinese origin, but it does not seem to have been used much in a religious or philosophical context. The

² Cf. "*Buji* (*wu-sbib*, 無事) is one of the most significant terms in the vocabulary of Zen, especially in that of the Rinzai Sect. . . The trouble with *buji* is that there is no good word in English expressing all the ideas implied in *ji*. . . [The 'man of *buji*'] is really one of the busiest men of the world, and yet he has "no business," "no events are happening to him," he is "utterly unconcerned." (from "Rinzai on Zen" in the *Chicago Review*, Sept. 1958.)

³ In Chinese, *Ching-tê ch'uan-têng lu*. The most important of the traditional "histories" of Zen, containing the biographies and sayings of masters up until the time of the compilation in 1004.

Chinese seem to be a more realistic and pragmatic than reflective people. They therefore gave rise to the word *buji*, just as they appropriated existing colloquial words such as *immo* (Chinese, *jen-mo*, just so) and *sbimo* (*cbib-mo*, just, only) to correspond to the Sanskrit *evam*, in addition to the more literal word *myoze* (*ju-sbib*, thus, so). The Man—as Rinzai himself describes him, “who is at this moment in front of me listening in all clarity to this talk on the Dharma”—is the living man who is physically present right here at this very moment. But at the same time he is the one who has neither shape nor form nor any kind of thoughts, but the one who comes out with an “ouch!” when the blow falls. That is why he is different from person in the usual sense. He is not at some imaginary future time but vividly present here, “right now in front of me listening to this talk.” Yet because there is not anything there to be called “the present,” it cannot truly be said to indicate the present either. In any case, since we grasp this one and see in him the Man, it is altogether different from man or person in the usual sense.

Ueda: When Rinzai’s Man is grasped in such a vitally living sense—as a “man of *buji*”—it is often described as *buji* in our usual life, “wearing clothes and eating food.” To understand, however, that this vital, creative mode of existence consists in merely wearing our clothes and eating food, is extremely difficult.

Suzuki: Indeed it is. The term “everydayness” was first used by the Zen master Baso (707–786). He said, “everyday mind is the Way (Tao).” This “everyday mind” lies at the very base of the Chinese way of thinking. Everydayness is to come right forward, without deliberation or reflection. As soon as the mind steps back to consider, this deliberation has begun. What must be grasped without deliberation is the root from which everydayness comes. That is the Way (Tao 道). Tao is a Chinese word too, a term used in Taoism. Zen use of the word in such expressions as “everyday mind is the Tao,” gives testimony to its having become truly Chinese.

Ueda: How is it that what comes out naturally and without reflection is connected with eating food and wearing clothes? Zen is surely unique among world religions in that its highest truth is wholly revealed in wearing clothes, eating food, sleeping when tired. Isn’t it very difficult for Westerners to understand this?

Suzuki: Yes, very difficult. To make it understood is my deep desire.

Ueda: There is the danger they will take it in the sense that our daily life of wearing clothes and eating food is all right without anything more.

III. DIFFERENCES WITH REGARD TO CHRISTIANITY

Suzuki: This a most difficult point. If you are not very careful you may cause great misunderstanding. The Judaic way of thinking is after all dualistic. From the beginning God and man are separate. I am not well versed in Buber's "I and Thou," but a dualistic view seems to be a fundamental part of his thought too. Anyway, God and man can never become one. Everything operates according to God's law. Moses's Ten Commandments are in fact ten orders. Disobeying them is called evil. God punishes the evil and man pays a penalty to God. For this, Christ has to die. In the case of Buddhism, from the beginning there is no self and so no fear of death. But in Christianity, no resolution could have been achieved without Christ's crucifixion. It is due to this difference that when we see the figure of Christ nailed to the cross, the sight appears really tragic to us. But this is not the case with them. They can view it with equanimity, saying that just because of the crucifixion God must be merciful. But it must not end with death; Christ must come to life again. Otherwise, there would be no meaning in his death, as St. Paul says. Another thing which seems odd to Buddhists is that when Christ went up to Heaven, the angels made such a fuss over him that he did not come down again. In Buddhism, the Going is always, in itself, the Return. As soon as we have gone to the Pure Land, we come back to this world of actuality. This is the meaning of the "realizing of the Pure Land" in Shinran's *Kyōgyōshinbō*. As to Rinzai's Man, one can take in comparison the point in Christianity where the Christian Divinity assumed human form and was personified in Christ. This means Christ is God, but is man as well; man, but is God as well. Christ is thus never free of duality, and in this is different from Rinzai's Man. God said, "Let there be light." Because Rinzai's Man indicates the original root from which that very word comes, it can never be the same as personality in the ordinary sense. In Christianity personification as well as deification is thought of without firm grasp of this origin. Rinzai's case, however, because he tries to indicate the root from which both personification and deification arise, is quite a different matter.

Ueda: While Christianity says, "First death then Resurrection," Zen says,

"Death, that is, no-death." This Zen standpoint seems to be manifest in the explanation of *buji* also, that combines the everyday life of wearing clothes and eating food with, for instance, "entering the fire without being burned," or "entering the water without drowning." But what do these expressions mean?

Suzuki: One is not burned because one has become fire. One has become water, so one is not drowned in it.

Ueda: Then it is the same as wearing clothes, eating, or sleeping. In religion it is generally thought there is a separate entity called soul or spirit which must be purified to gain eternal life. But when Zen says because man enters the fire and is burned, therefore he is not burned . . .

Suzuki: People generally call such statements contradictions or paradoxes. But really it is something different. It is things exactly as they are. As I often say to Christian people, this is not *participation* but *identity*.

Ueda: This identity won't do for Christianity. That is to say, Christianity always starts from a dualistic position, so to insist upon "oneness" is interpreted as meaning that man becomes God, and is considered visionary or profane.

Suzuki: Rinzai was therefore the only man who could dare to say things like, "just sit decisively on the heads of Buddhas," "those who have completed the ten stages of Bodhisattvahood are still underlings," "those who have arrived at Supreme Awakening are still fellows with chains around their necks," "the arhats and pratyekabuddhas are foul excrement," "Bodhi and Nirvana are like hitching-posts for asses." These are really dangerous statements, indeed. Unless you are careful this can become like the beatniks. To prevent this, Rinzai had to strike his students or Kwatz! them. Here lies something extremely difficult to grasp, yet with a marvelous uniqueness, too, which has nothing comparable East or West, present or past. I am deeply concerned with making points like these well understood among people in the West. That does not mean I am foolish enough to be pro-Oriental. I want all people of the world to share in this Eastern way of thinking, and to become able to share in its experience. Thought such as Rinzai's could, I dare say, be found within Christianity. Eckhart, for instance. If interpreted by means of Zen he could be interpreted at his depths.

Ueda: Yes. Especially when he expresses his standpoint by means of ideas

as Rinzai does in his sermons, Eckhart is very similar to Rinzai. In Eckhart's sermons we find such phrases as "break through God" (killing the Buddha), "freedom depending upon nothing," "non-seeking," and "immediacy." There are many such phrases which seem almost to be translations of Zen terms. But when it comes to the give and take, the staff and kwatz of the *mondo* in the sections of Rinzai's *Sayings* titled "Records of Acts" (*Anroku* 行錄) and "Investigating Encounters" (*Kanben* 勘弁), which are concerned with Zen activity itself, this is something which cannot be found in Eckhart. In the world of "logos" (*ri* 理, theoretical reason) they are almost identical, but in the world of "pragma" (*ji*, practical matters) they differ considerably. Still, to help people in the West understand Zen perhaps we can make application to Eckhart as a stepping stone.

IV. INTELLECTUALITY AND SPIRITUALITY

Suzuki: It seems to me that the Chinese mind is not nearly as abstract as the Western mind. The Chinese try to grasp the concrete aspect of the thing they wish to talk about. I would like to visit China to verify this observation. Almost seventy years ago, when I translated Lao-tzu's *Tao te ching* together with Paul Carus, I realized the difficulties in translating many Chinese words that are intellectually obscure and impossible to render into more or less rational terms. It seemed impossible to take in these notions and then vomit them back up in English just as they are. Once they are put in the field of differentiation they become knowledge. Lao-tzu stands prior to the differentiation, and that fundamentally is the Chinese way of viewing things in general. As I have said before, Greek philosophy is homocentric, rational, and on a rather small scale because it emerged in a country as small as Greece. Buddhism grew up in the vastness of India. It was transplanted by the Chinese, and it is worth noting the great trouble the Chinese had when they tried to express the abstract Indian terms in the more sense-oriented Chinese language. For example, they translated *buddhāta* as *bussbō* (buddha-nature) and *dharmāta* as *bossbō* (dharma-nature)—you see the Chinese felt compelled to add the word "nature" (*sbō* 性). But when *sbō* is used one is apt to think this refers to some *thing* which is actually present. The Chinese were not satisfied, they didn't feel right, until they had expressed the abstract in concrete terms. And it was in just such a context that T'ang Zen was produced. Zen makes

use of expressions in such a way as to manifest directly this tangible or sensible quality in them. It then developed for 1000 years, reaching down to the present decay of today's Zen.

Ueda: You spoke of taking in and vomiting things up through the senses. I think this is what you mean by "spiritual awakening." I would now like to ask you some questions about this spiritual awakening. I think I can understand what you have said about returning to a state prior to discrimination. In this return the spiritual awakening rises above the intellectual plane, and at the same time, in spiritual awakening the intellect is newly revived. What then is this revived intellect?

Suzuki: Well, can't I say that the intellectual comes out of the spiritual?

Ueda: In the *Sayings* I think there are some phrases which seem to refer to the intellect rising as activity out of spirituality.

Suzuki: When we read such works as the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*,⁴ we realize that the Indian people possessed undeniably profound thought too. It says that in the beginning there exists "original awakening," and that upon contact with delusion (*avidya*) it becomes "first awakening." Without *avidya*, original awakening alone has no way to act. Thus spirituality alone is never able to act of itself. There, "one thought suddenly occurs"—this sudden occurrence is *avidya*. The moment this *avidya* chances to move, however, there is also "first awakening." I know of no other way to explain it than this. Here "why" and "how" are no more of any use.

Ueda: To ask "why" at the level that is not free from the intellect is not good, but I think that one can make discriminations or can ask "for what?" In the *Sayings* we can find the word "discriminate" often used in phrases about discriminating Buddhas from demons, telling right from wrong, "knowing" about things, or realizing that an appearance is an objective one, etc. In these phrases, a revived intellect seems to be seen. Also, the Zen master asks a disciple "why" as a means to drag him from the level of intellectuality. In these cases also I think that the intellect is actively in use.

Suzuki: "Why" is foolish, but unless we say it, a thing will not come to appear. While we pursue and pursue it we come suddenly to awareness. Intelligence,

⁴ *Daijō kishinron* 大乘起信論. Translated into English by Dr. Suzuki and published by the Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago, 1900.

therefore, is necessary. There are the so-called "Four Wisdoms," the Mirror-Wisdom, the Equality-Wisdom, the Discrimination-Wisdom, and the Practice-Wisdom. Though separated, they are in truth one. But although they are "unseparated in separation," without separation we can't say anything. And we human beings have also another quality, namely, to try to turn this all upside down. This I like to call *consciousness*.

In short, there is Act in the beginning. We know this Act by coming one step away from it. As soon as we think, "Ah, I did this act," we have already slipped out of it, yet the true knowledge originates from here. And without this true knowledge, no act can take place. Cats and dogs simply act, there is no reflection. Man, on the contrary, reflects, he thinks. By this he does bad things as well as good things, which a cat or dog does not. If heavenly beings or gods do only good things, never any bad things, then they must be said to be lower than man. If heavenly beings are such, there is no chance for them. To be both able and unable to do bad is something given to man alone. It is his qualification for being man. This is the working of *myō* (妙, the marvelous).

Ueda: Haven't you recently used the word "unconsciousness" for "spiritual awakening"? It is not the psychological unconsciousness in the ordinary sense. You call it a metaphysical unconsciousness, or a substantial, or again, a creative unconsciousness. But how is this related to self-awareness?

Suzuki: To speak of self-awakening is something that comes afterwards when we reflect. *Intuition* is something of which we can say nothing. Reflecting on it, we call it self-awakening. In Pure Land Buddhism, they speak again and again of the Other-power, but there must exist *we ourselves* who speak of the absolute Other-power. Then the true Other-power begins to move and come forth. Zen also does not become truth so long as *original awakening* does not become *first awakening*. For this to occur, *avidya* must come in. There is *myō*.

V. FREEDOM

Ueda: In the *Sayings of Rinzai* we find the phrase "not receiving human illusions" being used several times. It seems to me this is "freedom" (*jiyū*) in its real sense. . .

Suzuki: The word *jiyū* is a problem. Really it was a mistake to have translated the word "freedom" as *jiyū* (自由, literally, "to be master of oneself"). Freedom means freedom from bondage, so the most adequate translation for it is *gedatsu* (解脱, "emancipation"). The word *jiyū* appears not only in the *Sayings of Rinzai* but even earlier in the *Sayings of Nansen* (748–843). *Jiyū* is a Buddhist term. During the time of Lao-tzu the word *sbizen* (自然, nature, naturalness) existed, but *jiyū* did not. While freedom or liberty means to be released from something, *jiyū* means "to be of and by itself"—a much deeper meaning. Westerners always tend to think of something that comes from without—Thou as opposed to I. That necessitates their gaining freedom from the opposition thus produced. In the East, the innate function of a thing comes about with its being "by and of itself."

Ueda: The real "freedom," that means freedom from man's illusion, was born for Rinzai through his encounters with the Zen masters Ōbaku and Daigu. What does this signify?

Suzuki: Unless the "I" encounters the "other," the innate function of the "I" does not appear. Even though we talk of something prior to the division of a thing into two, we do so only because we are already aware of the division. We can truly say that Ōbaku did not help Rinzai to self-awakening, but that he only removed the obstacle from Rinzai's mind. He let something emerge from Rinzai. In this sense man is one and two at the same time.

Ueda: Yes, quite right. Therefore the encounter and the realizing of one's true self are bound together.

Suzuki: Pantheism is invariably brought up in this context. But pantheism eliminates the individual and leaves only the universal. Instead of this, there must be mutual interpenetration between the individual and the universal—one is many, many is one. Between one is all and all is one, there is going-and-coming. This is the crux of Zen. In Judaism God must say, "Let there be light." If there were no light, God also could not appear. When he stepped forward and said "Let there be light," it was already a mistake. But because of this mistake he came to understanding. Man likewise must once be driven out of Eden. It is not a bad thing, this expulsion.

Ueda: Such a view exists in the West. For example, Hegel said regarding the problem of sinning against God, that man was banished from the Garden

of Eden in order that he might reach the true Unity on a higher level by overcoming the disruption between God and man. It is thought that such a view of man's departure and subsequent reconciliation with God is only too logical and objective, and that man here remains but a spectator of this whole process without being involved in it as a subject sinning against God—and that therefore it is wholly unexistential.

Suzuki: They say that this view is not good? But I would put it this way. In Eden man, together with cats and dogs, cannot but do good because there is no separation of good from bad. It is a world where there is nothing bad as an object of comparison; it is a world of no differentiation. Then man ate the apple of knowledge and was expelled by God, so there is said to be no escape from original sin. Then this world came into being. That means the difference of good and bad appeared. God, seeing this, said, "All is Good." Notice, however, that this Good is not the mere good of good versus bad. It is the world of *myō* (the marvellous) as seen by God. Therefore "returning to God" is no longer relevant. When we are just as we are, then we have already returned.

Ueda: From God's view it is "good as it is," but even though this can be said from God's side, man cannot see this because man is not God. Do I understand you correctly?

Suzuki: Man possesses what belongs to God, what makes God God.

Ueda: The West calls that mysticism.

Suzuki: Mysticism takes it as something hidden, mysterious. That is the defect in mysticism. In truth it is something apparent in full grandeur, something presenting itself in all clarity right before us. It is unveiled, totally unbarred.

VI. FAITH

Kimura: If I am correct, to be detached from man's delusive passions means to believe in oneself. This differs from believing in God. In Rinzai's *Sayings* the master insists that man lacks belief in himself, that he has to believe in himself. The word "enlightenment" (*satori*), on the other hand, hardly appears in the *Sayings*. I wonder if perhaps this point doesn't hold what constitutes the center of the *Sayings*.

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Suzuki: Well, as to the term *satori*, I am not sure when it began to be used. In the *Lankavatara Sutra* we find the term “the divine wisdom of self-awareness” (自覺聖智); “enlightenment” or “realization” (證) is used too. Nansen, two generations earlier than Rinzai, speaks of “mirror-awareness here and now” (如今鑑覺). And Daie, a Rinzai master of the Sung dynasty, used to speak of “gazing-through” (觀破).

Kimura: Daie speaks of Great Doubt and Great Enlightenment. Hakuin accepted these words from Daie. But I cannot find the word “enlightenment” or “see into your own nature” in the *Denshinbōyō* of Ōbaku, the teacher of Rinzai, or in the *Sayings* of Rinzai himself. They say only that you must believe in what you possess. In other words, they would seem to be scriptures of belief. Of course this belief is essentially connected with enlightenment and does not mean belief in some other thing.

Ueda: It means the same as the term “genuine right view” (真正見解) which Rinzai used.

Kimura: The Japanese Zen master Bankei (1622–1693) used to say, “believe in the Unborn Buddha-mind.” This, too, is quite different from Great Enlightenment, I think. I have doubts whether the term “enlightenment” expressed Rinzai’s own. . .

Suzuki: The *Sayings* doesn’t contain all that Rinzai actually said. It is merely the record of his words memorized by his disciples. We cannot take all of the text as his own words. . . In the *Densōroku* there is a quotation of Rinzai’s words which is a little different from the *Sayings of Rinzai*: “There is the true man of no rank in the five *skandhas*.” In the *Sayings*, this is: “There is the true man of no rank in the mass of naked flesh.” In the *Sayings* it is included in one of the public sermons, but the *Densōroku* makes it part of the “Genuine Right View” section. Anyway, the *Sayings* were written afterwards by his disciples. How many years after I don’t know.

Kimura: To believe in oneself and to have a critical spirit toward others—which, I think, is the meaning of Rinzai’s words “authentic right view”—these characteristics of the modern spirit form the axis of the *Sayings*.

Ueda: Yes, maybe we can say that. Only the problem is how to understand the term “oneself” in this context. The point in accord with modern man is also the point modern man can easily mistake.

Kimura: In Rinzai’s time there were no *kōans*; the pupils were only pointed

to "the one who is listening to the sermon in front of the master." This difference is very important, I think.

Suzuki: Indeed. After all, Zen must come immediately out of what is vitally alive. This you must somehow nurse along, because when it no longer emerges the line of tradition is severed. It's like trout fishing. Nowadays, trout are artificially incubated and nursed and people come to fish for them, because the natural trout have all been fished out. In the same way, the time comes when something like the kōan is needed—as a method of incubation and nursing. In the time of Goso Hōen (—1104) the kōan "Mu" seems to have been developed, and it contains a large psychological element. But at the time of Rinzai, there were no psychological elements in Zen at all.

Ueda: Do you mean it has a weakness because it has an artificial incubation? But the kōan also came to be used as a compassionate means of assisting people to enlightenment.

Suzuki: Yes. But it is because of that kind of compassion that Zen has degenerated to its present state.

Ueda: But take for instance Rinzai's contemporary Fuke, an embodiment of the compassionate Buddhist—it is written that when Fuke's coffin was opened it was empty. Fuke had completely disappeared. There was only the sound of a bell ringing unseen in the sky. What could that mean?

Suzuki: It's poetry.

Ueda: In Zen, shouldn't the sound of the bell always be heard ringing?

Suzuki: Listen! It is ringing! It's poetry.

VII. ZAZEN AND EVERYDAY LIFE

Ueda: I have asked many questions about Rinzai's Man. Now I would like to pose several other questions. How can we realize this Man in modern life? In this case zazen will be the first question. Present-day life, especially city life, makes meditation extremely difficult. Must zazen be thought indispensable for realization of the Man?

Suzuki: Rinzai's concern is not whether it is indispensable or not.

Ueda: Yes. Zen itself is not zazen. Rinzai himself says doing zazen is useless. Yet he also says that realization is not something one is born with but requires hard training and experience, with the awakening emerging

suddenly from it. And even after his own realization he continued to do zazen in the meditation hall. We read of this in his *Sayings*.

Suzuki: Yes, he probably did.

Ueda: If so, it would seem to me that zazen is after all the most fundamental step in realizing this Man. . .

Suzuki: That's a very delicate point. For instance, the Man is not grasped because one does zazen. Rinzai said that he was not born with realization, that he took up Zen practice. This is true. But when dealing directly with his own realization, no matter what the questioner might say, Rinzai would strike him. It is true that he did zazen. But the idea that the Man must be awakened through doing zazen is destroyed by the Sixth Patriarch's (Enō, 638–713) insistence upon *prajñā*-intuition. If you look over the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, you will find not a single reference to the fact that Enō did zazen. When he was under the Fifth Patriarch (Gunin, 601–674), all he did was to pound rice. On the other hand, all that Jinshū (601–701), the other representative disciple, did was zazen. Jinshū wrote a book called *The Five Means in Northern Zen*, according to which he and his followers engaged in the study of sutras and other practices. In the *Platform Sutra*, it is written that zazen is not mere sitting or lying down. At any rate, Enō doesn't place much weight on zazen. If too much emphasis is put on zazen there is a real danger of becoming stuck in a psychological state of mind in zazen. Therefore, Enō tried to plunge immediately into *prajñā* itself.

Rinzai too revealed only the Man. He cast all other things aside. When Bokujū told Rinzai to go and ask Ōbaku something, Rinzai replied he didn't know what to ask. Though he then spent three years doing zazen under Ōbaku, he still didn't understand. So what is important is not zazen itself. We must look intensively at this state of our own non-understanding. This will not come about only through zazen. In zazen, when we come to the state where we don't understand, we don't even know what to ask. If the question will only come forth, then there is hope. So Bokujū advised Rinzai to ask his master "What is the essence of the Buddha Dharma?" Though he is said to have gone three times, that doesn't necessarily mean he went once today and once a month later. Two or three months may have elapsed between visits. Chinese numerical references being what they are, three times may mean five or six. No matter how many times he went, he couldn't

understand. When he finally did understand, it was upon hearing Daigu say, "My, what old motherly kindness Ōbaku showed you!" Then *prajñā* burst forth. Therefore it was not because of zazen.

Ueda: No. I agree. But it took three years of zazen practice before Rinzai came to the state where he didn't know how and what to ask.

Suzuki: That's correct. But that is the working of that which makes one do zazen rather than the working of zazen itself. That's why I tell you you must see that which makes one do zazen. When we are caught by zazen we come to see various kinds of strange mental pictures. Those who make zazen the focus are apt to take those pictures as essential. Psychologists and psychoanalysts are fond of these mental conditions. This is harmful. I always say, as Hakuin did, that the doubting is difficult to arise through the "Mu" kōan. Hakuin wrote in a letter that the "one hand" kōan was more suitable for students. When I began doing zazen I read Hakuin's *Orategama* over and over again trying to figure out what Hakuin was trying to say. When concentrating on the "Mu" kōan in zazen, rather than simply repeating "mu, mu, mu. . . ." Hakuin raised doubts: What countenance does Mu have or what is Mu's face like? What Hakuin was aiming at is the "why" or "what." Without this "what," zazen will be useless. If one goes on simply repeating "mu," he may be captivated by the psychological processes and forget the "turning over" that breaks forth from the "Mu".

Thus Rinzai's state when he was at a dead-end was a kind of samadhi, which may be called a state of uniformity of all things. This is a state of quietude that may be likened to the Pacific Ocean without a single wave: if you can turn it upside down, an "Ah!" must come forth from you. "Psychological Zen" can't go that far. In the Sung dynasty, Zen experience was sometimes expressed by means of the ejaculation "Ka!" This is very important. Zen must have this experience of "Oh!" or "Ah!" Here is *prajñā*. This is Rinzai's Man.

Ueda: We can attain the Man by entering into samadhi and by *prajñā* appearing from the break-up of the samadhi.

Suzuki: Yes, that's important.

Ueda: In that case, is it necessary to be given a kōan to concentrate on?

Suzuki: It is not necessary. It's just an accessory, so we can do without it also. Even a philosopher such as Sartre, when confronting Nihil (nothing-

ness), can do nothing. He says plunge into it; that very instant will become satori. But it isn't so easy to take the plunge. And so there is where Rinzai's blows must come.

Ueda: A concrete question: Is it still best for a layman to sit in meditation and concentrate himself on a kōan?

Suzuki: For the time being it seems so. But it proves futile because one usually falls into a rut. Yet without zazen and kōan we don't know where to turn. That is why one who has awakened to wisdom without a teacher is so extraordinary. Forms are very helpful, but at the same time they become a hindrance. It's difficult because we must have it and at the same time not have it. Therefore what Rinzai says is filled with contradictions. At any rate, for wisdom to emerge all of a sudden one must be in samadhi. I think a man like Shinran had such an experience. His "Namu-amida-butsu" was a "Ka!" that burst forth upon his attainment. This is not reciting "Namu-amida-butsu;" Shinran became "Namu-amida-butsu." Such a state of mind truly exists in him, I believe. When we read the *Kyōgyōshinsō* with this attainment firmly in hand, we can readily understand it. Shinran's son Zenran inherited this experience and put great weight on such enlightenment. This is Zenran's esoteric line of Pure Land Buddhism. Shinran himself inherited Hōnen's Nembutsu.

Men like Dr. Benz consider Zen to be "snobbish," in other words, exclusive and realizable in only a few people. But I say religion is just that. In the case of Christianity, how many true Christians are there? In Zen Buddhism too, the true followers are few and the rest follow after. That is all right. All are thus saved.

Ueda: For someone like me, even though I do zazen and take *sanzen*, I still cannot reach the goal. Is it all right even if we don't reach the goal?

Suzuki: All right. You go to the Pure Land just as you are. But if you yourself feel that even with this you are not really settled, then you must work at it.

Ueda: Then "it is good as it is" does not imply doing nothing, but doing your best as best you can.

Suzuki: Yes, from the viewpoint of those who act with their whole selves, "it is good as it is" is not good. Seen from the outside all is right. But practically that is of no help, so we must encourage them and say "work it through to the end."

Ueda: From an absolute viewpoint it may be so. "All is good" we may say. But we have to live our daily lives. So is it not necessary to come down from that standpoint and consider some regulation which will give our total life, even while not in zazen, an orientation toward samadhi?

Suzuki: That comes down to doing zazen. The same kind of practice will be found in Christianity, too. In a work by a Christian of the Russian Orthodox Church, mention is made of "constant prayer." This man wondered if it was really possible for a practitioner to continue such prayer in his actual life, so he asked various priests about it, but no one could tell him. One priest, however, said that constant prayer meant to repeat again and again, "Lord, have mercy on me!" thousands of times a day, like the million Nembutsu repetitions of the Jōdo Sect of Pure Land Buddhism. The author kept up this prayer every day. Eventually, "Lord, have mercy on me!" began to stick in his mind, the prayer came to do the daily work. Then while working his thought did not wander to this or that—he worked singlemindedly. Since he found it good, he continued it and valued it deeply. But in Zen Buddhism this too must be broken through. Today's psychologists and scholars of religion of course write excellent papers, but they lack the final breakthrough. In Zen it is there. Moreover, behind Zen lies Buddhism's solid philosophy. Masters like Hakuin used to study this philosophy in their "quest following enlightenment."

VIII. THE ZEN WORLD TODAY

Kimura: Finally, now on the eleven hundredth anniversary of Rinzai's death, could you tell us what you think of the present-day Zen world?

Suzuki: Unless a rebel appears the situation is hopeless. All of them are stuck in one mold. We read clearly in the *Sayings of Rinzai*: "The reason that students today don't really grasp Zen is because they take words as real and take their view from them." "Words" means, for example, for modern Zen followers to treasure Hakuin's marginalia. That is "words." Just as Rinzai says: "You jot down the words of dead masters on your big tablets, wrapping them carefully in cloth three or four times." It is no different now. The Zen masters of the Tokugawa period seem to have kept kōan notebooks in their pouches. It is two hundred years since Hakuin's time,

high time for a rebel to appear mighty enough to smash the mold in which Zen is now fixed. There is little else we can do but wait.

Kimura: Then, contrary to the kōan Zen of Hakuin, we seem to need someone like Bankei, who—as Bankei said—makes no use of “old tools.”

Suzuki: The kōan, in fact, has no relation to practical life. When I became aware of this, I searched eagerly, thinking there must be a type of Zen that did not depend on kōan. And when I found Bankei’s Zen I thought, “here is it.” Bankei often said: if you insist Zen is impossible without relying on the kōan, then are all the Zen masters of the T’ang dynasty not Zen? Bankei still seems to have given kōan to some of his students, but in general his is the Zen of the “Unborn” (*jusō* 不生).

The present kōan system has been molded in this form. We cannot alter this. But someone must appear to break the mold again. I think we can expect this to come from someone who has been trained in the mold and then decides to go forward on his own. Rather than from among Japanese, there might appear someone among Westerners who has the strength to do this. We in Japan must have men able to forge such a Westerner.

Kimura: I believe you have said that in future Zen needs more creative aspects.

Suzuki: Yes. As you know, it is said, “the manifestation of the great function knows no law.” That does not mean simply to break the rule, but to become one with it; then there is creativity.

Ueda: Concerning creativity in this sense, I think in view of the present-day situation, there is a great problem as to the kind of relation in which this Zen creativity makes contact with scientific technology.

Suzuki: Recently people talk of cybernetics. Because of overspecialization in technology, men are now trying to bring different areas into coordination. Therefore if we can grasp that from which cybernetics stems, from that origin creativity becomes possible. Not through applying Zen on top of the existing technology, but through the grasp of what is manifesting itself in the technology. If we fail to grasp it, increases in technology are invalid.

Ueda: Otherwise man makes and uses a machine and thereby becomes mechanized himself, losing his peace of mind. In the *Chuang Tzu*, as you have often quoted, there is a story about a farmer who eschewed all tools and

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instruments and drew water for his fields by hand. By using instruments we usher in a utilitarian concept of work efficiency that spoils man's attitude toward the work itself—this is against the Tao. That was the farmer's outlook, but life in the present world cannot subsist without machines. So unless we awaken to the Man who uses the machine we will be doomed to be used or even driven by the machine.

Suzuki: We must understand this at its deepest root. Even though science seems to be omnipotent, taking men to the moon and investigating Mars, there is after all an uneasiness. One symptom of this is war. Everyone has uneasiness and doubts about the present situation. Zen is able to solve them.

Ueda: If so, Zen has great significance for the present world. In actuality, Japan today seems to me to be a mixture of the defects of the East and the disorderly aspects of the West. I believe the Japanese themselves should realize the true Eastern way of life, and from there create an actual situation in which the problems caused by technological culture can be solved.

Suzuki: For that reason as well, Zen monks must exert themselves more. They must work for the sake of mankind.