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ZENSHIN-JI WINTER *SESSHIN*
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Our inner power of practice will appear according to the situation and accor- [partial word]—will respond to the situation you have like a bell. If you hit strong, the sound will be strong. If you hit it soft, the sound will be soft. But our true nature or—or true power does not make sound, but actually whatever you do, the power is there—should be there. In this way, we should understand our Zen practice power.

It is not something to acquire, or it is—but it is something to appreciate. When you sit so—just to sit [is] to be ready to [for] various activity or stimulation from—which will come from outside. But if your mind is caught by something you will lose your true mind. So without being caught by anything—just to sit without thinking—even thinking is our true practice.

In last lecture, I told you [about] this power from the opposite side. Zuigan called the names of his both:¹ "This is," you know. But if you call by your own name, that is opposite side. The power itself is—is not something you can catch or you can understand. If something happens, you will find out the power is there. But when you sit in this way, you have no idea of power. You are just sitting, that's all. But if you do something, the power is there. So in various activity, the power is there. So to call his [him?] both is to call his name as a power—a hidden power. And to call his own name means to realize his power when you do something. But actually this is two side of the one coin.

Here we understand how to apply our practice in our everyday life, how to understand your everyday life, and how to understand your true practice. So true practice is—should be everyday life. And everyday life should be the true practice. And when you practice true practice of—every—your everyday life should be there. This is how we understand our everyday life and how we understand our pure practice.

Last training period, when Bishop Sumi² came, he gave us—not kōan

¹ Juiyen Shihyen (Jap. Zuigan Shigen): n.d. Ninth-century Chan master who appears in Case 12 of the *Mumonkon (Gateless Gate)* kōan collection, "Zuigan Calls His Master." That is, every day Zuigan both called to himself as well as answered himself.

² Sumi Togen: Head or bishop of the Sōtō Zen School in America, starting in 1965. Formerly an instructor of monks at Sōji-ji monastery in Japan.

but story: the question and answer between Baso and Hyakujō.³ As you know, Baso, the Horsemaster [laughs]—Horsemaster, you know, he—we are told that when he speaks, his tongue reach through his nose [laughs], with big mouth and big—a man of big physique. So that is why we call him Horsemaster [laughs]: Baso, [who was] Nanagaku's⁴ disciple and the Sixth Patriarch's grandson. Hyakujō is the famous Zen master who set up all the monastic life, you know—monastic rules.⁵ He is the first one who set up precepts—our Mahāyāna precepts in its true sense. Before Hyakujō, almost all the Zen masters lived in precepts temples and observed Chin- [partial word]—Indian precepts. But it is not appropriate to observe Chinese people—Chinese village [?] who live in China where the climate is different and way of life different from India. But even though teaching changed, you know, into Mahāyāna, but precepts did not—they didn't change precepts, which he—they should—they should do—they should change. But Hyakujō did it and organized a monastic life. Since then we observe our precepts. Of course after Hyakujō, we changed many times—we changed our precepts many times. Precepts is the way of life.

Hyakujō—between—question and answer between Hyakujō and Horsemaster:

Horsemaster and Hyakujō were making trip. Suddenly wild geese flew over, and Baso asked Hyakujō, "What is it? [Laughs.] What is it?"

Baso—no, Hyakujō said, "That is wild geese."

And Baso said, "Where are they going?"

"They flew away," Hyakujō said.

But Baso [was] irritated, you know, with his answer and twitched his nose [laughs, laughter].

And Hyakujō cried [out?], you know. [Laughs.]

That is the story [laughs, laughter].

Here is, you know, something which we should understand. At first what did he say—what did Horsemaster say? "What is it? What is it?" This is very tricky question. "What is it?" [Laughs.] It may be, you

³ Case 53 of *The Blue Cliff Record*, "Hyakujō and a Wild Duck." The master in this kōan was Jiangxi Mazu Daoyi (Baso Dōitsu): 709-788. His disciple was Baizhang Huaihai (Hyakujō Ekai): 720-814. See also SR-71-03-09.

⁴ Nanyue Huairang (Nangaku Ejō): 677-744.

⁵ Hyakujō wrote *Hyakujō Shingi*, a set of rules for Zen monastics.

know, wild geese. And, at the same time, it is not just wild geese. When we see something, our power of practice should follow, or buddha-nature should follow. So [laughs] wild geese is not just wild geese. For the Zen student, wild geese is not wild geese. Hyakujō is not just Hyakujō, and Baso Horsemaster too. He is also, you know, buddha-nature itself.

So, *"What is it?"*

That "what" can be everything. "What is it?" It is not just wild geese. Everything can be wild geese. I don't know whether Hyakujō knew it when he said, "That is wild geese."

And Baso said: *"Where are they going?"*

[Laughs.] Where are they going? Where are they going? They are going somewhere, you know. Even though they are going somewhere, they are there. They cannot escape from the buddha-nature, from our power of practice. Wherever they go, they are right here, with us. [Laughs.]

Hyakujō said: *"They flied—flew away!"*

[Laughs.] This is rather—may be careless answer, maybe [laughs, laughter]. "Flew away." So he hit right here [demonstrates, laughs]—hit on that person—twitched his nose. Did it flew away? [Laughs, laughter.] Here there are many wild geese on your nose [laughs, laughter].

You know, if he is practicing always, if there is no gap, you know, in his practice, they—he wouldn't say, "They flew away." [Laughs.] But will you say it if you are, you know, Hyakujō? Even though you say, "They flew away," that's right answer, you know. "Flew a- [partial word]—flew away," actually it—they are not here anymore.

But if you are prepared for his—for his teacher's twitching his nose, it was all right. [Laughs.] But in his practice there were some gap. So he cried [out]. But the way he cried—I don't know how he cried [laughs]. The way he crowd—cried is good—it is all right, even though he cried.

So this kind of kōan is very interesting. If you study this kōan from various angle, you will appreciate the endless—limitless meaning in it. Our way of life should be like this. And even between great Zen master and great disciple, the way we talk will not be different from a usual person. But the difference is whether they are ready for various circumstances and condition.

Even a great Zen master, when he cries—when he should cry, he may cry. When he should laugh, he will laugh. When everyone is hungry, he will be hungry too. But there is—there should be—there is some difference [between] their hunger and hunger of usual person. If your practice is right, you will be ready for various activity. So what will—will you will gain by—what—the power we will gain by our practice is not common power. It is some special power. By "special" I mean—because it is special—it is special because it can be everything.

Usually a special power is something different from usual power, which cannot be usual. We are always up to, you know, trying to get something usual—unusual. You know, even though—even though they say "this is unusual," for us Zen student it is not unusual. Only unusual thing is the thing which can be every—everything, like, you know, money or gold. You know [laughs], you can buy everything with that. Maybe like salt, you know: Whatever you eat, there is some amount of salt [laughs], you know. In this way our power is something like this, figuratively speaking. But gold or salt is not actually the power of me—me. Something you cannot understand what is it—what it is. Something which is beyond our understanding. Something which you cannot put it in words. So we say: "teaching out of letters"—teaching which will be understood if we have ear to listen to it, eyes to see it. But if we do not have eyes to see it, we cannot see it. That is the teaching out of letters.

If you try to—it is like, as Dōgen-zenji said in his poem, it is like a letters. It can be a letter—letters written on high rock—high rugged rock on the seashore. Even the—even in stone, no waves can reach. Even though you try to see it, you cannot see it because it is too high. The only way—but the high rock on the rugged seashore is always there, giving various teaching to us. This kind of teaching is true teaching. And this kind of—our practice should be like this. We should, through our practice, always expressing the truth. This kind of tru- [partial word]—practice is our practice.

This introduction to this talk⁶—to this subject between Baso and Hyakujiō:

[INTERPRETATION OF THE INTRODUCTION]

Engo⁷ introduced the subject and said: "What is called the substance of the universe—substance of the universe, or the

⁶ Suzuki-rōshi is reading from Shaw's translation of Case 53 of *BCR*, modifying it slightly as he reads (R.D.M. Shaw, trans. and ed., *The Blue Cliff Records: The Hekigan Roku*. London: Michael Joseph, 1961, p. 177).

⁷ Yuanwu Keqin (Jap. Engo Kokugon): 1063-1135. Provided commentaries, pointers, and notes for the kōan collection *The Blue Cliff Record*, based upon Xuedou Zhongxian's (Setcho Juken's) compilation of cases and verses.

great dao, is not something which exists outside of the universe. It is omnipresent and not contained in one part only. Its total activity is entirely independent.

"An enlightened Zen scholar is one who understand this mystery, and under all ordinary circumstances knows how to deal with it. Such a man may be called one who has the right of the—rights of a graduate. With regard to his words and verse, if he omits all self-regarding ideas, he will attain to the mystery—mysterious power of controlling life and death—the power to bring enlightenment by the positive word—using positive (word-using) or negative (silent) method of instruction. Well now! In what way did he reach—the ancients attain to this ultimate serenity? Here is something for you to ponder."

Here, it—he says—translator's translation—"mysterious." Mysterious does not mean, you know, something [laughing]—something mysterious. Mysterious means, you know, it is mysterious—beyond word, it means, you know. You can—you know it, you know—you can understand it, but you cannot say—you cannot put it in word because word is just—it is not possible to say various understanding—various understanding from all angles. If you say, you know, from one—one side, you cannot say, at the same time, from the other side. So that is why we say "mysterious." So even enlightened master cannot say anything properly.

Wild geese is wild geese. If it is flew away, it is flew away. [Laughs.] You cannot say, "It is there," and "It flew away" [laughs]. Not make any sense, you know. Then, you know, master will ask you which is—which do you mean? Is it here or there? [Laughs, laughter.] You—you have no answer. No answer is right. [Laughs, laughter.] So it is impossible to say, you know, to put it—the reality into word. So that is why we say "mysterious." But mysterious—it is not mysterious. It is too, you know, obvious. That we cannot say, you know. Word is not—word is mysterious [laughs, laughter] for us, you know.

It is mysterious that we cannot say anything [laughs]. Having, you know, big words, even a Zen master—even Baso, whose tongue reached to nose, cannot say anything [laughing, ongoing laughter]. If he say something, you should pull his tongue. You shouldn't fool us by your long tongue. Give me it! That is right, you know.

So if Hyakujō pull out his tongue, Horsemaster will be—would have been very pleased. Not "mysterious," you know. Too obvious. Too clear. So we sometime call it "reality," you know—"reality." It is too obvious.⁸ So Zen is not mysterious at all. [Laughs, laughter.]

⁸ The original transcript ended here, appending "(CONTINUED)."

THE APPRECIATORY WORDS

This⁹ is also interesting. [Laughs, laughter.]

That wild—wild duck. Just what was it? Baso saw it and started a conversation. The object of his talk would have—would have been love of mountain, clouds, seas, the moon. And yet Hyakujō did not understand—understand. It is just—just flew away [laughs]. He himself wanted to fly away. Instead, he himself was silenced.

[INTERPRETATION OF APPRECIATORY WORDS]

The wild duck! Just—just what was it—just what was it? Baso saw it and started conversation.

The old teachers in his practice—there was no cessation in their practice. They are always practicing their way. They are always ready to [engage in] various activity. That is how we should be concentrated on our activity.

The concentration—our concentration is not the usual concentration, you know. Concentration means usually to be—we say to be involved in something. But at the same time, we should have freedom. So this kind of concentration is more deeper and more natural, you know. If you—if you are trying to be concentrated on something, you know, your effort is directed to one way only. So it is difficult to change it, you know. If your concentration is quite natural, you know, you can change any time. And you will be ready to change your direction of effort.

So this kind of concentration cannot be studied by usual everyday practice—everyday activity. Just Zen can do it. Through Zen you can have this kind of training.

When you have some object, you know—some object—somehow your effort is directed to that object. It means, you know, your effort is working on one way only. In that way, you cannot understand how to change the direction of effort. But in—just by practice of pure Zen, you can—you will practice how to shift—make shift in your effort.

In this *sesshin*, our practice is concentrated to put more power in your tummy, but that does not mean, you know, to—to put special power in it. It means to put—to put some power quite naturally without, you know, making—without trying too much to put strength in your tummy.

⁹ From Shaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-178.

So this practice should be—should follow—or should be followed by various instruction of sitting: *mudrā*, or breathing, or like keeping your back straight. And if you have some pain or some difficulty, it is good chance to, you know, to practice it because if your pain is this much, this much, you know, controlling power will appear. So, you know—but if you do not know this secret [laughs], you will be, you know, involved in just pain. But if you know the other side of the pain, you know, which is keeping balance in your practice, you will appreciate the feeling of the pain. Because pain is this much you have power of training this much [laughs]. If you have no pain, maybe it is rather difficult for beginner to appreciate the power of Zen.

So the ancient disciples and teachers were ready to study true way in our everyday life, but Hyakujō looks like he didn't understand this. He was not ready for question and answer with his teacher. But no one knows, you know, this is—he may be—he might have known it.

[Chant.]

Sources: City Center transcript and original tape. The last three paragraphs were transferred from SR-67-12-04, where they had been incorrectly entered. Blanche Hartman was kind enough to refer the transcriber to R.D.M. Shaw's version of *The Blue Cliff Records*, which is the version that Suzuki-rōshi would have consulted. Transcript checked against tape and made verbatim by Bill Redican (3/31/01).