

Shunryū Suzuki-rōshi
SANDŌKAI LECTURE III
Monday, June 1, 1970
Tassajara

[The following lines of the *Sandōkai* are discussed in this lecture:

Line 5 *Reigen myōni kōkettari.*
Line 6 *Shiha anni ruchūsu.*
Line 7 *Ji wo shūsuru mo moto kore mayoi.*
Line 8 *Ri ni kanō mo mata satori ni ara zu.*

Line 5 The true source is pure and stainless.
Line 6 The branch streams flow in the dark.
Line 7 Clutching at things is delusion.
Line 8 To recognize the truth is not always
 enlightenment either.]

[Suzuki-rōshi sneezes directly into the mike as it is being set up. He and students laugh.] I want to know the feedback. [Laughs, laughter.] Oh my. [Laughs.]

After all, it's better to follow one character after another like this. [Points to the blackboard where the characters of the text are written.¹] This part is not so difficult. *Reigen—rei* is—*rei* is "something wonderful," you know, "something beyond our description, beyond our words" is *rei*. *Gen* is "source—source of the teaching." *Reigen*—"source of the teaching."

The source of the teaching of Buddha, you know—Buddha—what Buddha talked about is the source of the teaching which is beyond our words in term of right or wrong. And this is important, you know. *Rei-gen*. Whatever we can think about is not source, you know. It is already something comes—come out from the source. The source is something unknown. Only buddha knows. Or only when you practice zazen you have it. Or even though you don't practice it, or whether you realize it or not, you know, something which exist before our realization is source. The source is not like something, you know, to, you know, to put on lettuce [laughs, laughter]—not that kind of thing, you know. It is something which you cannot taste, you know, in term of tasty or not tasty. That is real source.

And this source can be— Here it says *ri*. *Ri* is "truth," we say. But when we—"truth," you know, when we say "truth," you know, in our language, the truth is something which you can see, you can figure out. But that—in

¹ The comment in these brackets is from the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

Buddhism that is not truth. Truth is something which is beyond our description, which is beyond our thinking, is the truth. *Ri*. And *reigen* is, you know, more figuratively speaking, *ri* can be "the wonderful," you know, "source," wonderful which is beyond our language—description. And this is source—source of all being.

By the way, when we say "being," you know, "being" include our thought too. You see? The being—when we say "being," being can be many things which we can see is being, but which we can think is also being [laughs], you know. So usually, [when] you say "truth," the truth means something underlying theory or something is truth, you know. That the sun rise from east and set in west is truth, or that the earth is turning, you know, by itself in some certain direction, is the truth. But in Buddhism that is not truth. That is being also—being which is in our big mind, you know. So in our m- [partial word]— Whatever it is, what is in our mind in term of big or small, right or wrong, that is "being." So if you think about something in term of right or wrong, or you may say "This is eternal truth" [laughs], you know, but that is—for us that is "being" too, because that is some eternal truth is something which is in your mind.

So we do not, you know, make much distinction between things which exist outside of ourselves or which exist within ourselves. You say "outside of ourself" [laughs], you know, but it is not true, you know. "Outside of yourself." You feel in that way, you know, but actually, when you say "There is river," river is already within your mind, you know. So, you know, hasty people may say "River is there," but if you think more about it you will find out the river is something which is in your mind is river. So it is a kind of thought we have in our mind.

And if you say "There is river and here is my mind," that is dualistic, you know, understanding. That is hasty, primitive, shallow understanding of things. That is so-called-it *u*.² *U*, you know. [Laughs.] *U*. *U* is, you know—maybe better to remember this words, you know: *u* or *mu*. *Mu*³—opposite of *mu* is *u*. *U*—*uken*⁴ is, you know, pre-Buddhistic, you know, understanding of things. When you become Buddhist you have no more idea or [of] *u* or *mu*.

Anyway, [*reigen* means] the "real source," "true source," or "source which is beyond our thinking."

Myōni kōkettari: *myō* is, you know, "clear"; *kōketsu* means—*kō* is "white," and *ketsu* is "stainless." It means that—"stainless" means no stain of thought or, you know, thought or words. If you describe it, that is the stain, you know—to put limitation to the truth, you know. So it means

² *u*: existence; the opposite of non-existence (*mu*) or relativity, void, nothingness (*kū*).

³ *mu*: nothing; naught; nil.

⁴ *uken*: heterodox view that dharmas have a real or permanent existence.

you stain the truth. You put some mark on the, you know, truth. So if it is pure, white, and stainless, that is clear. And that is, you know, how [what] the "true source" means, you know. So true source is pure, white, and stainless"—*ketsu* is—*seiketsu*⁵ means, you know—*seiketsu*, you know—you should keep your room *seiketsu*. *Seiketsu* means "well cleaned up" is *seiketsu*.

Kō is "white." This [pointing to *kō*] is "white." And this [pointing to *-tari?*] is "sound." Give [poetic or spoken?] sound to the character—"the white"—"the pure white"—and "stainless and clear." But this two characters [*kōkettari?*] is very interesting, you know. I will explain later.

Because he said *reigen*—"source," you know—he—it is to say "branch stream" is some rhetorical way of putting words, you know. When—Because here [pointing to *reigen*] is source, here [pointing to *shiha*] is stream, you know. To make this—those two line of the poem beautiful, he says "*shiha*." "The branch stream is"—*an* is also. It means "dark." "Dark." This [pointing to *myō*] is clear. This [pointing to *an*] is dark. And *ruchū* is "flow" or "pour in," you know. "Flow over"—not "over"—"flow in." *Ru-chū*. This [pointing to *ru*] is "flow." This [pointing to *chū*] is "pour."

So the source is, you know, pure and stainless, but this [pointing to *reigen*] is more noumenal word. This [pointing to *shiha*] is more phenomenal words. If I say, you know. But phenomenal or noumenal is not right [laughs], but tentatively I have to say so. But— So that is why I said it is better to remember this word—technical term, *ri* [noumenal]. And another important technical term is *ri—ji* [corrects *ri* to *ji*, phenomenal] [writing on blackboard]. Those two technical terms is a term which you [should] remember.

Ji is, you know, something which you can see, which you can hear, or which you can smell or taste, you know, and it include object of thinking, or ideas—is *ji*. Whatever it is, you know, which can be introduced into your consciousness is *ri—ji* [corrects *ri* to *ji*]. And this is something which is beyond our conscious world is *ri*.

So here, you know, this five characters [*Reigen myōni kōttari*] means *ri*, which is beyond words, something which is stainless. In *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, [it says] "no taste, no," you know, "no eyes, no," you know, "ears, no nose," you know. That is actually this one [the character *ri*].

And, *Shiha anni ruchūsu*. *Shiha* [*anni ruchūsu*] is "branch stream naturally or," you know, "by itself flow or pour in everywhere like water." Now water, even though you don't think there is no water, there is water, you know. Water will be inside of our physical body, or even in plants there is water. So even though we don't know, you know, there is water all over. So the pure source is all over, you know. So each being is itself,

⁵ *seiketsu* (*na*) (Jap.): (adj.) clean.

you know, pure source. And pure source is nothing but each being. If you want to know what is pure source, each being is the pure source. If you want to know what is each being, you know, pure source is each being. So even though— If, you know— There is no two things. There is no difference between *ri* and *ji*—pure source and its stream. Stream itself is pure source, and pure source is stream.

[Line 5] *Reigen myōni kōkettari.*
[Line 6] *Shiha anni ruchūsu.*

Even though you don't know, you know, there is *reigen*, the pure source. A pure source is flowing all over. Stainless. Pure source is all over. Even though you don't know—that is "dark" [*an*]. And this "don't know" is very important, and this "clearness" [*myōni?*] is also important, but I have to explain it later.

And here—so to stick to various idea, various being, or to stick to some idea of something, you know, even though [it is] Buddha's teaching, you know. And if you think you understood it, you know, [saying] "Buddha's teaching is something like this," you know, then it mean you stick to *ji*. To stick to *shū* is to—*shūsuru* is—

[Line 7] *Ji wo shūsuru mo moto kore mayoi*

—you say. *Ji* is "being." This [*shū*] means "to stick to." To stick to being or thought is originally or of course [*moto*], is delusion. *Ji wo shūsuru mo* — *Ji wo shūsuru mo moto kore mayoi*. This [*mayoi*] is "delusion." And *kore* is "itself is delusion"—"nothing but delusion," you know, "itself is delusion." Or "nothing but delusion." *Moto*—"of course," you know —"nothing but delusion." To stick to things is delusion, you know. To stick to some idea is delusion.

[Line 8] *Ri ni kanō mo mata satori ni ara zu.*

This [*satori*] is "enlightenment," and this [*ara zu*] is "no, not enlightenment." *Mo mata* is "also." This [character] is *ri*, the— This is *ri*. It's better not to say [laughs] anything, you know. It's better not to say in English, you know [laughs, laughter]. *Ri ni* [laughs]— If you translate— If I translate it [into] English it can be this [pointing to *ji* ⁶], you know [laughs] already. So—

If you, you know, think—recognize, you know. This [pointing to *kanō*] is "recognize," you know, [as in] *kai—San-dō-kai. Kai*. The point— If you, you know, make some point about *ri* [it] is not enlightenment, you know. Enlightenment is not something you can experience, actually. Enlightenment is beyond our experience. At the same time, you know, if you think enlightenment is beyond our experience, something which you

⁶ From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

cannot experience—"That is enlightenment." So if someone says, "I attained enlightenment," he is wrong.

If you say so [laughs], it means that you stick to [laughs] the explanation of enlightenment, you know. That is, you know, if you say so you are—you stick to words. That is delusion if you say so.

So you cannot say there is no enlightenment or there is enlightenment. Enlightenment is not something, you know, which you can say "there is" or "there isn't." And at the same time, enlightenment is something, you know, which you can experience is enlightenment too. If you understand really those two sentences—

At Sekitō's time, there were big dispute about, you know, sudden enlightenment and gradual practice or enlightenment. Katakū Jinne denounced the Jinshū's⁷ way very badly. And Jinshū's way is gradual attainment, while Sixth Patriarch's way is sudden enlightenment. So in the *Sūtra of Sixth Patriarch*, "just to sit" is not true practice. That kind of sentence is, you know, you can see everywhere [in the *Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*] denouncing the, you know, Jinshū's way. But maybe that is not Sixth Patriarch's idea [laughs]—that was not Sixth Patriarch idea.

There is not much difference between Jinshū and the Sixth Patriarch's way. Later, maybe fifty years later, there was this kind of words was added by Katakū Jinne. Right after Katakū Jinne passed away, maybe his disciple [added them]. Katakū Jinne was very good. On the other hand, he was very active and he was very critical with Jinshū's zazen. But he is not so, you know, hasty so he wouldn't say something like that.

⁷ Daitō Jinshū and Daikan Enō were both disciples of the Fifth Patriarch Daiman Kōnin. According to one tradition, when the Fifth Ancestor wanted to find his successor, he asked the monks to write a poem to express their understanding. Jinshū, the head monk, wrote the following poem on a wall in the middle of the night:

Our body is the bodhi tree,
our mind a mirror bright.
Carefully wipe them hour by hour,
and let no dust alight.

When Enō saw this the next day, he asked a monk to write down the following poem for him:

There is no bodhi tree,
nor stand of a mirror bright.
Since all is void,
where can the dust alight?

When Kōnin saw this, he knew the author had the understanding he was looking for and recognized Enō as his dharma heir and thus the Sixth Ancestor.

But right after the Katakū Jinne, which was great, you know, Zen master, disciple of Sixth Patriarch, you know, this kind of , you know, things was added on the *Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*, which was written right after the Sixth Patriarch's death. So [in] seven fourteen [714 C.E.] it was compiled.

And, you know, compiling and maybe many of his disciple had it, you know—the *Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*. But Katakū Jinne's disciple made some, you know, correction or [laughs] changed some part, or added something, you know, like, you know, poem: "There is no bodhi tree" [laughs] or "There is no mirror ...," you know. "There is mirror, or there is no stand for the mirror. There is nothing," you know. "How is it possible to wipe the mirror?" That kind of poem, you know. Many people criticize that kind—that poem because it is not so good, you know [laughs, laughter]. So many people thinks this cannot be the Sixth Patriarch's poem, you know. This kind of, you know, useless, you know, things was added.

And it was the, you know, a kind of pride or honor to own the *Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*. So, "Do you have this book," you know? "Yes I have." But the books they have is not same. There are many books—many kinds of the—entitled "*The Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*." Many kinds. So the oldest one is, you know, do not include that kind of, you know, denouncing [laughs] critical words to the—for the Jinshū school.

So to, you know— The purpose of *Sandōkai* is to make it clear this kind of wrong understanding of which is right, or which—Jinshū, who stick—who looks like stick to rituals and understanding or scholarly work. All the scholarly works belongs to *ji*, you know. Scholarly study belongs to *ji*. The *ri* is something, you know, which you can experience by practice is *ri*. You see, this is— Maybe you, you think scholarly work is *ri* [laughs]—you may think so—but for us it is not so. Scholarly work is *ji*. To stick to scholarly work is to stick to things. Things include our scholarly study.

To follow, or to realize, or to have complete understanding of *ri*—to accept *ri* is our practice. But even though you practice zazen and you think that is *ri*—attainment of *ri*, or realization of *ri*, but that is not always so [laughs]—that is, you know, according to the Sekitō it is so. And this is the, you know, the intention of writing this poem. So this is, you know, this is the backbone of the whole *Sandōkai*. So if you understand this much, you understood—you already understood *Sandōkai*—whole *Sandōkai*.

So this is very important part. The first part was introduction:

[Line 1] *Chikudo daisen no shin,*
[Line 2] *tōzai mitsuni aifusu.*
[Line 3] *Ninkon ni ridon ari,*

[Line 4] *dō ni namboku no so nashi.*

This is introduction, you know. And then this is the first, or this is the main point of whole sūtra. So, maybe, tentatively, I translate it like this:

[Line 1] The true mind of the great sage of India
[Line 2] handed down closely from west to east.

Tōzai mitsuni aifusu. Chikudo daisen no shin is already understood, you know. *Chikudo*— *Chikudo* is "India." *Daisen* is "great sage." *Sen* means "hermit," you know. At that time—at Sekitō's time, there were many Taoist and there were many hermits who had some supernatural power, who were proud of various supernatural power and seeking for some medicine to, you know, to live long—to keep long life, you know, maybe, you know, finding out some medicine is also Taoist way.

But they—as I explained, they do not—they were not so much interested in practice—Buddhist practice—and they don't, you know, find out—they couldn't understand why we must practice zazen—why practice is so necessary. That was also true with Dōgen-zenji [laughs]: "If," you know, "we have—all of us have buddha nature, why is it necessary to practice?" He, you know, suffered a lot about this point. He— Not only he couldn't understand it intellect- [partial word]—solve this problem, you know, by study—intellectual study—but also he couldn't accept this point.

This is very important, you know—why we should— When you really know yourself, you know, you will realize how important it is to practice zazen. Before you know what you are doing, actually, you know, you don't know why we practice zazen. You know, you think you are quite free—whatever you do, that is your choice [laughs], you say, but actually you are creating karma for yourself and for others [laughing]. And still you don't know what you are doing, so you don't think there is no need to practice zazen. But, you know—

So, we have to, you know, to pay our debt by [laughs] ourselves. No one can pay for your debt, you know. That is why it is necessary to practice, you know. To fulfill our responsibility, we practice zazen. And we have to. If we don't, you know, you will—you don't feel so good, first of all [laughs], and, you know, you will create, you know, some karma for others too. And without knowing, you say "Why is it necessary to practice Zen?" Moreover, when you say, you know, "We have buddha nature," you think buddha nature is something, you know, something, something like diamond which is in your sleeve, you know. The true buddha nature is not something like this [pointing to the character for *ji*]⁸. It is *ri*—it is not *ji*. Even diamond, it is *ji*, not *ri*. [Sentence completed. Tape changed.] [So we are always involved in this]⁹ world only without knowing *ri*.

⁸ From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

⁹ From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby (her notes during tape

The other day, when I explained about human potentiality— And I think I will ex- [partial word]— This is very im- [partial word]— For the— In this sūtra, this point is not so important. The more important thing is— In this sūtra it says:

[Line 3] *Ninkon ni ridon ari.*

This is just, you know, rhetorical, because—just because [of] rhetorical need, he put [in] this sentence. But we must ha- [partial word]— It is interesting to, you know, to understand what is human potentiality in Buddhism.

*Kikon*¹⁰/*rikon*¹¹/*donkon*¹², you know, we—

[Line 3] *Ninkon ni ridon ari.*

Nin is "human." *Kon* is "root." And it [*ninkon*] means "potentiality—human potentiality." *Ridon* [*rikon*?] is someone who has advantage, or [and someone] who has some disadvantage is *don*. And one is *ri* [*rikon*], the [other] one is *don* [*donkon*].

And *rikon* and *donkon* is, you know— There is, you know— *Ki*—*kikon*—*ki*. Here we have no— *Ki*—*ki* means [refers to] *kikon*. *Kikon*, you know [is] classified into *rikon* and *donkon*. And why I start to—started to talk about this is because I want to explain, you know, what kind of— I want to explain what kind of understanding or practice we have, you know, and why it is necessary to practice zazen. And we— Buddhists classified, you know, various people—human being in various way. So one of the classification is, you know, *rikon* and *donkon*.

*Ki*¹³ means "potentiality." *Ki*. We have potentiality to be Buddha—to be a buddha, you know, in its true sense. So it is like a bow and arrow, you know. Arrow, you know, has potentiality to—potentiality to fly, you know. Because bow and arrow has potentiality, if you use it, you know, the arrow will go. But if someone doesn't use, you know, bow and arrow it wouldn't go. So bow and arrow has potentiality. So does we human being, you know. We are ready to be a buddha, but if you don't practice zazen, or if

change).

¹⁰ *Kikon*: "The capacity of the common people to understand the teachings of Buddhism" —Daitō Shuppansha, *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary* (1971), p. 174.

¹¹ *Rikon*: "People with keen minds who are capable of understanding the subtle teachings of the Buddha"—*ibid.*, p. 234.

¹² *Donkon*: "A man of inferior spiritual capacity"—Hisao Inagaki, *A Glossary of Zen Terms*, 1991, p. 52

¹³ *Ki*: "The mind which is capable of responding to a particular spiritual impulse"—*op. cit.*, p. 173.

Buddha doesn't help you, you cannot be a buddha even though you have potentiality.

So *ki* means potentiality, and *rikon* is—means people who have good potentiality. And *donkon* means who have not much, you know, potentiality.

And so far, Buddhists classified, you know, in various way. One class-[partial word]—one interpretation—or you can translate, you know, *ki* like "potentiality." Potentiality, you know, means— One means two. One is possibility. Possibility. Potentiality, you know, is also possibility. The other is— If you, you know, talk about its nature, it is, you know, possibility—I have possibility to be a buddha. But if you observe me in term of time, you know, when, you know, in future, you know, even though I have, you know, potentiality to be a buddha, you know, if, you know, someone doesn't help me I cannot be a buddha. You see? Or if I have a chance to be a buddha by practice, we cannot be a buddha.

So from the viewpoint of nature, you know, it is possibility, you know—I have possibility. And from viewpoint of time, it is, you know—I don't know what to say in English, you know. Do you— Do you find out some good word? Future possibility [laughs], maybe. Future possibility. Future possibility will be— You know, it include the idea of time. When you don't include idea of time, it is possibility. Potentiality is possibil- [partial word]—equal possibility.

And when you have—you ask me when, it means future possibility: when, you know. Today or tomorrow. So when we think, you know, when we understand the word "potentiality" in term of nature, we should be very kind and very generous to everyone, you know, because everyone has potential—possibility to be a buddha, even though they are not buddha right now. Because right—because he has, you know, possibility to be a buddha.

So we should not, you know—we should respect him, and we should be very generous to people. But when we think about the possibility in term of "when," you know, sometime you should be very strict with someone. Do you understand? If you miss this time, you know, if you do not [make a] good effort in one week or in one year, you, you know, you will not have chance to attain enlightenment. If you say always "tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow" [laughs], you know, even though you have possibility [laughing], you cannot attain enlightenment. So when we think when, you know, time, we should be very strict with people.

It is same thing with your practice, you know. When you don't think, you know, about time—when—you know, you can be very generous with everyone, you know. You will be—you can treat people very well. Always. But if we, you know, think—if we have to think about time, you know

—"today" or "tomorrow" [laughing]—we cannot be so generous because we will lose time. So "You should finish this" and "I'll finish this" and "You should help him," you know, and "I will help some other person." In this way, you know, we should be very strict with ourselves.

So that is why we, you know, analyze potentiality in various way. One is possibility, and the other is future possibility. So possibility, *ki*, means—*ki*, means "possibility" and "future possibility." When we understand potentiality in this way, you can, you know, work—you can practice very well—sometime very generous way and sometime very strict way. We have to have, you know, two side in our practice, or in our understanding of *ki*—chance, or, you know, possibility. This is the first one [interpretation of *ki*].

And second one is interrelation. *Ki* means "interrelation." It is relationship between, you know, buddha and good people, and buddha who has—who is good nature—and who has bad nature [laughs]. I am sorry to say "bad nature" [laughs] but tentatively I have to say so. So for the people who has good nature, you know, we should give—we should encourage them, giving some, you know, joy—joy of practice. We should enjoy our practice with good person. When we practice with someone, even though tentatively, you know, while [for] a while, who is not so good [laughs], you know, we should, you know, suffer with him. That is another understanding.

So *ki* means sometime "interrelationship between buddha and someone who helps, and someone who is helped." So in the relationship between good person and you, there is—that relationship will be to encourage, to give joy of practice is *ki*—actual meaning of *ki*. And for the person who has—who is suffering, you should suffer with him, you know. That is so-called-it *jihī*.¹⁴

When we say "love" in our term, *jihī*. *Jihī* is usually translated "love," you know, but love means—love has two sides. One is to give joy, *yoraku*, and the other is *bakku*. *Bakku* is to eliminate [suffering¹⁵—to suffer with them. To eliminate [suffering]—to make their—his suffering less, you know, we suffer with him. We share their suffering. That is love. So love has two side: to give joy, to give something, you know. If he is very good, you know, we can enjoy joy of practice with him by giving good cushion, good zendo, you know, and something like this.

¹⁴ *Jihī*: friendliness and compassion. *Ji* and *hi* are two of the four boundless thoughts (*shimuryōshin*): (1) *ji* (friendliness, *maitrī*), (2) *hi* (compassion, *karuṇā*), (3) *ki* (rejoicing over the happiness of others, *muditā*), and (4) *sha* (equanimity, *upekṣā*).

¹⁵ One definition of *bakku* is "to take away suffering"—Daitō Shuppansha, *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary* (1971).

But actually, who is suffering? Zendo doesn't mean anything [laughs]. It doesn't mean anything. Whatever you give him, he will not accept it. "No, I don't need. I suffer a lot. I don't know why. Right now, you know, to get out of suffering is most important point. Nothing can help me. You cannot help me," he may say. When you hear that, like Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, you should be someone—you should be like someone who is suffering, and you should suffer as he suffers. Actually, you will feel in that way, you know. You—if you see someone who is in suffer[ing], you will suffer too. That is because of your love, you know [tapping chest], your innate love, your instinct of love, you share the suffering. That is love in its true sense. So *ki* may mean not only "possibility" or "potentiality," but also "relationship." This is second interpretation of *ki*.

And third one is "good means," or "adequateness," you know. Like, you know, pots and cover [laughs], you know. You cannot put big cover, you know, like in Japan we have bathtub, you know. You may know what is Japanese bathtub. It is wooden barrel, you know, big barrel, which has its cover. After finishing bath we cover the bath with the big wooden cover. But that cover cannot be used for the pan [laughs]. It is too big. So bath must have, you know, cover for itself.

So *ki* means, you know, "adequateness." So here it says also, if you see person who is suffering because of ignorance, because of what he is—because he doesn't know what he is doing, you must, you know, give tear—you must suffer with him. That is, you know, to—to have good relationship. When you see someone who enjoy his true nature, you should give *ji—ji*. *Ji* means, you know, compassion—not compassion—to—to encourage him.

And here, you know, this is what—this is extra [laughs]. And next thing is what I am very much interested in it. You know there is—there is Buddhist understand this way: Buddhism will not last forever, you know. It will perish, you know, after thousand year from Buddha's death. But that thousand year in some other sūtra it say some other way, but anyway, we have this kind of understanding.

When Buddha—first five hundred years—this is not exactly—cannot be exactly so—but the first five hundred years, when Buddha's direct disciple or grandson of—grand-disciple—anyway, the first five hundred [years] will have good sages like something like Buddha. And next, you know, hundred years—so it means after—one thousand years after his death—we will have, you know, people who practice zazen and who study, you know, Buddhism. That is the people after the first five hundred to one thousand. The last time [laughs]—this is interesting—last time, which is after one thousand year [laughs], they will not observe precepts [laughs, laughter]. It is exactly so [laughs, laughter]. They will not observe precepts. But they will read sūtras [laughing] and they will chant sūtras. They will not [be] interested in zazen so much. And those people we had in the first

thousand years—people like *arhat* or people who practice zazen or people who understood his teaching—difficult to find out, or no one can be like that. And the people will be involved in just, you know, idea of emptiness or, you know, somethingness [laughing]—somethingness or emptiness.

You know, we talk about emptiness, you know, and you think you understand emptiness, but if you understand emptiness, you know, even though you explain pretty well what is emptiness, but it is [laughs] this one [pointing to the character for *ji*], not that one [pointing to the character for *ri*]. Real emptiness will be ex- [partial word]—not experienced, you know—will be realized by good practice.

So here it says after—people after thousand year after Buddha will have, you know, idea of emptiness or idea of somethingness [laughs]. But they will not understand what [is] really meant by emptiness or somethingness. So purpose of *Sandōkai* is, you know, to make this point clear: what is, you know, emptiness, what is somethingness, what is darkness, what is clearness, what is true source of the teaching, what is various being which, you know, is supported by true source of the teaching is the purpose of his—his intention of writing—making this poem of *Sandōkai*.

I borrowed, you know, a book from—from—from Gary [Snyder]'s wife, you know—Mas—Masa—Masa—and about Sangai-kyo, you know, a small Vajra school of Japan: Sangai-kyo. And in that book, you know, it said—it says, the people in the last—in after one thousand year after Buddha's death—they will [laughs]—people will—may be classified in two [laughing]. Very appropriate, you know. You know, it explains what we are doing here and what they are doing here in Japan [laughs]. Good contrast. And, you know, it is explain very well, you know. Anyway, we do not observe precepts [laughs, laughter]. In Japan, you know, we eat fish, we kill animals, and in America too, you know. In its strict sense we don't observe—that is very true.

And, you know, one is very innocent [laughs], because, you know, you don't know about what you are actually doing [when] you violate precepts. But in Japan, even though they know what they are doing, you know, they still do it because they are shameless [laughs, laughter]. They have no idea of shame, you know. I thought "You have no idea of shame," but if I think more, you know, they do not—knowing that what they should do, you know, to do not observe is real shameless, you know. You know, innocent people looks like shameless, but it is not, you know, real shameless [laughs]. So I was very interested in the description of the people in our time. And anyway, we will just—we will be involved in, you know, this idea—*ji*—only.

So you may ask, you know, "What is real teaching of Buddha?" you know. If you don't, you know, understand it you will keep asking someone, you

know, "What is it? What is it? What does it mean?" You are just seeking for something which you can understand. That is mistake, you know.

Dōgen-zenji says, "There is no bird who flies after the limit of the sky," you know. "There is no fish who swim after knowing the end of the ocean." [Laughs.] We don't exist in that way. We exist in limitless world. And sentient being is, you know, numberless, and our desire is limitless, but still, you know, we have to, you know, try—we have to continue to make our effort like fish flies [laughs]—swims—like bird swim [flies]. So Dōgen-zenji says, "Bird fly like a bird; fish swims like a fish." That is bodhisattva's way, and that is how, you know, we observe our practice. When we understand in this way, according to Dōgen, we are not people in the, you know, we are not people in *mappō*. *Mappō* is last period.

Shōbō/zōbō/mappō. *Shōbō* is Buddha's time. *Zōbō* is imitation—dharma imitation—imitation-dharma time. And *mappō* is last period. But still, you know, in some way, in some way, Buddhism exist [laughs]. But if we understand, really, you know, what he meant, that is—it means that we are in Buddha's time. As Dōgen-zenji said, "Buddha is always here." You should not be involved in time or space, you know. Our practice should not be disturbed by some framework of time or space.

Oh! [Sees the lateness of the hour.] Oh, my. I am sorry.

[Tape ends. No Question/Answer session.]

Source: City Center transcript. Entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997.
Verbatim transcript checked against tape by Bill Redican (6/5/00).