

**Shunryū Suzuki-rōshi**  
**SANDŌKAI LECTURE XI**  
**Saturday, June 27, 1970**  
**Tassajara**

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

Line 33      *Bammotsu onozukara kō ari,*  
Line 34      *masani yō to sho to wo iu beshi.*  
Line 35      *Ji sonsure ba kangai gasshi,*  
Line 36      *ri ōzure ba sempō sasō.*

(Transliteration by Kazuaki Tanahashi.)

Line 33      Everything--all beings--have their own virtue.  
Line 34      You should know how to apply this truth.  
Line 35      Things and emptiness are like a container and its  
                    cover fitting together,  
Line 36      like two arrows meeting head-on.

(Translation by Suzuki-rōshi.)]

[Begins with indecipherable whisper.] Today's lecture will be about how we observe everything—how we understand everything and how we should treat things—with what kind of understanding is the—will be the purpose of tonight's lecture. Everything has the—[sudden loud feedback from the sound system. Suzuki-rōshi stops speaking. Whispering exchange takes place about the sound system.] Oh. Okay.

Before I talk about the value of things or how we understand things, we should—I think I must explain those words [referring to the text on the blackboard].\* The important words here is—this is, you know—*bammotsu* is "myriad of things." It means "many things," "all things." [*Ari* means]\* "has." [*Onozukara* means]\* "naturally"—"naturally." [*Kō* means]\* has "function" or—this *kō* means "function" or "virtue."

Because, you know, if something has some function, you know, that function will be virtue for us—value, you know, exchange value. Or—value as a, you know—mostly we—when we say "value" it is exchange value, but this value [*kō* ] means more—it—a wider meaning. This has more wider meaning, you know. The *kō*—this *kō*— *Kō* is not [exactly?]

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\* From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

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function or—utility [searching for word and seemed to find it in "utility"]. So utility is more like value, you know. But it means more—it has more wider sense.

Ahhh. I don't know what to s- [partial word—"say"?]— [Laughs.] Funct- [partial word—"function"?]—*kō*. *Kō* is— It is sometime— It may be "merit," you know. Sometime it may be someone's—what someone did, you know, in his life or in our society or in our small society or community. *Kō*. This word include those things like virtue or utility, or some merit, or some deed. Everything has its own, you know— Because this [*bammotsu*] is—this "everything" include human being, and mountain and river, and stars and suns [planets]\* and fixed stars— Everything. It include everything. So function of—. Its function is, you know— Everything has function. Because of this function, that function will be for us value or virtue.

So this is, you know— This function— When we say "function"—function, you may wonder, "function of what," you know? Function of something. That something could be *ri*.

And we must crit- [partial word]— I have to use many technical terms tonight, so [laughs] I want to explain, first of all, those technical terms I have to use. For an instance, you see something. You see— Oh. [Laughs, laughter. The sound system is suddenly turned up and Rōshi hears his own voice coming back from the loudspeakers.]\* You hear [laughs, laughter], you know, voice, you know. But this voice is, you know, will be— You say you are listening to me, but you actually what you are listening to is maybe my voice, or you are listening to some function of, you know, electricity or machine, you know. That machine, you know— The electricity will be the function of something, you know, function of some universal, you know, entity of electric, you know— electricity which covers almost all—whole world, whole universe.

So actually you are not listening to me, you know, you are listening more like listening to our universe—univer- [partial word]—voice of universe, maybe. Voice of electricity. This is, you know, one understanding of my lecture. And another understanding will be, you know, you are listening to my nature, you know, what kind of nature I have. And you are listening to the nature of electricity. So when we, you know—when you see something or when you listen to something, already you have idea of whole universe. It is so-called-it, maybe— When we, you know, understand things in that way, we call it understanding of *tai*. *Tai* means "body." Body. But it is more ontological, you know, big body which

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\* From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

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include many thi- [partial word—"things"?]—everything.

And its nature is *shō*.<sup>1</sup> But that *shō* does not mean some special nature. It means nature of everything—basic nature for everything. And when we understand things more than—something beyond our words, we call it *ri*, "truth." Truth is not— Truth, when we say "true character," you know, it is something beyond our idea of good and bad, long and short, right or wrong. That is *ri*, which, you know, include various meaning of things.

*Kō* —and we have another word here, *yō*. This word [*yō*] is used—related to *ri*. And this word, *yō* or *kō* [it appears that Suzuki-rōshi corrected himself and decided on *kō*], is related to things—virtue of things—and this [*yō?*] is application of the truth, you know.

Looks like same, you know. *Kō* is "virtue," you know. *Yō* is, you know, "usage." But when we say *yō*, it is more function of truth or *ri*. When we say *kō*, it is function of things—each things—each thing [*ji*]. This is— Of course, we sometime we use it for, you know, for many things, but mostly here, we—in Buddhist technical term, this is—this word [*yō*] is related to *ri*.

And here [in Lines 33 and 34]\* we—he is talking about oneness of *yō* and *kō* (virtue of things). "And the truth applied itself to each occasion and every thing."

Mmm. It doesn't [laughs] make much sense [laughs, laughter]. Maybe I will translate it literally: "Ea- [partial word]—Everything—all things—has — There is virtue in all being—myriad." This [*bam*] is myriad. This [*motsu*] is "things." "Many things." "There is their own virtue in many things."

You should say—*masani*<sup>2</sup> means "you should." "Should," you know. This [*iu*] is "say." And its application [*yō*] and the place [*sho*]. "You should say"—here it says "say," but it means "you should see," you know —"see" and "say." "You should notice." When you notice something, you will say [something], so same thing.

"You should say," or "You should notice its application and where the truth is applied." So if you see things, you should know there—there is—

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<sup>1</sup> Marian Derby's transcript has a margin note stating: "NOT THE 'SHO' IN THE TEXT," which means "place" in Line 34 (*masani yō to sho to wo iu beshi*).

\* \* From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

<sup>2</sup> David Chadwick's manuscript on the *Sandōkai* states that *beshi* means "should," and *masani* means "actually," "properly," or "naturally." The *Random House Japanese-English Dictionary* states that *masa ni* means "exactly" or "really."

true teaching is revealing itself. And you should see it. And, you know, in what w- [partial word]— *Sho* means "place." "In," you know, "in what place the truth revealing itself."

Hmm. And sometime we use this word [*kō*] and this word [*yō*] together: *kōyō*. *Kō* means, you know, "function." And *yō* is its utility. *Kōyō* means, you know— When we say *kōyō*, we understand each things [*ji*]. And not only each things, we understand background of each things, which is *ri*. So we do not understand things just as you see [them]. You—we understand background of each things.

And we should know how you use it, you know. To know how you use it is to know the teaching. When you know the background of things, or way things are going, that is *ri*—way things are going. Then you will know how to use it.

So "to understand things" means to understand background of everything. And to understand value of it means to understand how you use it in right way—how—and according to the place—according to the place—according to the things—we should know how you use it. To know how you use it is to know the background of each things. That is to see things-as-it-is, you know.

Usually, to see things-as-it-is, means, you know— Usually, even though you say, "I see things-as-it-is," you don't. You see the one side of the truth, or one side of the each reality—one side of the reality, not the oth- [partial word—"other"?]—background. You don't see the background, which is *ri*. You only see things in term of *ji*—each event, each things—and you think each thing exist in that way, but it is not so. Each things are changing and related with each other. And each things has its background. The reason why— There is reason why they are here.

So to see things-as-it-is means to understand *ji* and *ri* is one, and distinction and equality is one, application of the truth and the value of the things is one. When we understand in this way, we understand things-as-it-is. So we, you know—for an instance, we thinks, you know, all universe is for human being [laughs]—only for human being. That is not right understanding, you know. That is very selfish understanding.

Our understanding is mostly based on, you know, human-centered idea. So you don't see true value of the things. You don't appreciate the true value of things. Nowadays we talk about, you know—our idea is more—became wider. Our way of understanding things are more free and wider. But even so, our understanding of things is very human-centered understanding.

So you have many questions [laughs] to ask me. If you understand this point clearly, there is not much things to ask. Most of the questions and problems are, you know, created by human-centered selfish idea. "What is birth and death?" you know [laughs]. That is already very self-centered, you know, idea. Of course, birth and death is our, you know, our virtue [pointing to *kō*].\* To [laughs]—to die is our virtue; you know. To come [in]to this world is also our virtue. And there we see, you know, how things are going: not only us: everything is going in that way—birth and—appeared and disappeared, and became older and older, or growing bigger and bigger. In that way, everything exist. Why our—should we, you know, treat ourselves specially [laughs]? Birth and death. When we say "birth and death," is mostly birth and death of human being. When you, you know, understand birth and death as, you know, birth and death of every things, including plants or vegetables or trees, you know, it is not anymore a problem. If it is problem, it is problem of everything, including us. If that is problem of everything, it is not problem anymore [laughs, laughter].

So every—almost all the question comes from narrow understanding of things. So it is necessary, you know—to understand things in this way: more wider sense, more clear understanding is necessary. You may think to talk about this kind of thing doesn't help you at all [laughs, laughter]. It will not help you [laughing] as a selfish, you know, human being. It will not help any selfish human being. Buddhism does not—do not treat human being in special category. When we treat human being in a special category, we treat human being who has very egoistic deluded being [laughs]. That is human nature.

But you accept, you know, actually. You do not reflect on our human nature and try to, you know, find out some truth—try to find out some confidence in yourself. But that is not possible, because background is wrong.

So here [*Bammotsu onozukara kō ari*] we say, "everything—all being—has its own virtue." So human being should be in the place where we are. [Writes on board.] *Sho. Tokoro.*<sup>3</sup> "Place."

And human being has some nature. So according to the nature, we should live like human being. Only when we live like human nature [being] who is—who has selfish human nature, you know, it means that you are following the truth in its greater sense, because we count [take into account?], you know, our nature in our judgement. So we should live like human being. That is how we should live in this world. So we cannot

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\* \* From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

<sup>3</sup> *tokoro*: place, part, address.

—we should not try to be a cats or dog, which has, you know, more freedom [laughs] and [are] less selfish. Human beings should be put in a cage or [laughs] invisible, you know, big cage, when dog and cats is—has no special cage of morality or, you know, teaching or religion. They don't need any religion. But we human being need religion. We human being should say, "excuse me" [laughs], but cats and dog don't need to say "excuse me." So human being should follow our way, and cats and dogs should follow their way. This is, you know, how we should apply our—the truth for everything.

Although, you know, if we, you know, observe human way and cats and dog observe animal way, it looks like human way and animal way is different. Why it is different is because we human being has different nature from animal and different form from animal. Although it is different, but background of our nature is same. Because, you know, the place we live—where we live—is different—so application of the truth should be different. Like we use electricity, you know. We will use it as a light, you know, and sometime as a speaker. But when you use electricity, according to the usage of the electricity, you know, the mechanism should be different.

So human being has its own mechanism, and animal has its own mechanism. So, you know, even though way of using it is different, but we are all using same electricity. So is the application of the truth. This is actually what he is talking about—Sekitō is talking about.

So we should not attach to the difference of the usage because we are using same nature, or same thing—same true nature or buddha-nature. So we are doing actually same thing. So time and—according to the situation, we will use buddha-nature in different way. That is how we apply—how we find out the true nature in—within ourselves in everyday life.

Next two—oh [adjusts mike]—next two line:

*Ji sonsure ba kangai gasshi,  
[ri ōzure ba sempō sasō.]*

*Ji* means—I explained already *ji*—"various things and events," and including things you have in your mind—"things you think about" is *ji*. *Ri* is "something beyond your thinking or beyond your understanding or perception" is *ri*. And again, *ji* and *ri* is same thing.

When we think about [something], we are think[ing] about this [*ji*?]. So actually, it doesn't— Same thing, but we must understand in two ways. We should not—our understanding limit in this area of *ji*.

Now, *Ji sonsure ba kangai gasshi*. *Ji*—when we see—where there is *ji*, things, there is *ri*, like cover [*gai*] and its container [*kan*], you know, meet together. *Ri* is, you know, understood in this sentence [Line 35]. "Where there is *ri*—there—*ji*—there is *ri*, like cover and—container and cover meet."<sup>4</sup> It means that where there is someone, you know, that I am here means that the true buddha nature is here. So I am, you know, tentative expression of buddha nature, and— I am not just "I," you know. It is more than "I." I am expressing true nature in my own way, so that I am here means that all whole universe is there [here], like that there is lamp [referring to the kerosene lamp on the altar],\* there is kerosene oil. That there is *ri*, or where there is *ri*, there is *ji*. *Ji* is understood in this line: *ri ōzure ba sempō sasō*. *Ri ōzure ba*.

*Ri* means—I already explained. *Ri ōzure ba*. When *ri* accord with the event—"the way *ri* accord with *ji* " (events or things) "is like two arrow meet together." And there is old story for this.<sup>5</sup> There were—in China, in old China, in War Period,<sup>6</sup> there were famous—famous archery master [Hiei].<sup>7</sup> And his disciple, Kisho,<sup>8</sup> you know, were—was also very good at—in archery [laughs]. And his disciple, you know, became very ambitious, and he [laughs] wanted to compete with him [Hiei]. And he was waiting for his master's coming with bow and arrow like this [demonstrating].\* Seeing his disciple, you know, the teacher also, you know, took the bow and arrow and hit—tried to hit first [laughs], but both of them are so good and quick that arrow meet against [each other] in the air. *Shhht!* [Laughs.] [Tape turned over.]

That, you know, that I am old, for an instance, there is some reason [laughs]. Without reason, I do not become old [laughs]. And without reason, you know, I cannot be—I couldn't be youth, you know, a boy. With same reason, I became old, you know, so we cannot complain why I became old [laughs]. The background of, you know, my being old is the background of my being raised up as a youth—as a beautiful boy [laughs, laughter]. If I should complain, I should complain when I become a, you

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<sup>4</sup> Hence, "Where there is *ji* there is *ri*, like container and cover meet."

\* \* From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

<sup>5</sup> The full story of two arrows meeting in mid-air is found in *The Book of Lieh-tzŭ (Ch'ung-hsu chen-ching, or True Book of the Expanding Emptiness)*: (A. C. Graham, trans., London: John Murray, 1960, pp. 112-113). This collection of stories and essays is attributed to Lieh-tzu, a Daoist philosopher from the Warring States Period, but its written form may date from as late as 300 C.E.

<sup>6</sup> The Warring States Period extends from 430 to 221 B.C.E.

<sup>7</sup> Hiei (Ch. Fei Wei). A written annotation in Marian Derby's transcript gives the Japanese version of his name as Higi.

<sup>8</sup> Kisho (Ch. Chi Ch'ang).

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know, good youth and see a beautiful girl [laughs]. I should complain at that time also, because, you know, background of my being old is always same, you know. We—we—I am supported—I have been supported [by] same background, and I shall be also supported [by it] even [when] I die. [Laughs, laughter.] That is, you know, our understanding.

When you, you know— To accept things, you say, looks like very difficult, but it is not difficult. It is very easy to accept things-as-it-is. Very easy. If it is not easy, if it is difficult, "Why it is difficult?" you should think, you know. Maybe, you may say, it is because of your shallow, you know, selfish understanding of yourself. But you say—you may say why [do] we have selfish understanding of things? But selfish understanding of things is also necessary. Because we are selfish, you know, we work hard. Without selfish understanding, we cannot work.

So we need some candy [laughs] always. That candy will be selfish understanding. It is not something to be rejected, but it is something which helps you always. So, you should be, you know, grateful for your selfish understanding which create [laughs] many questions. That is just question. It does not mean much [laughs, laughter]. You can enjoy question and answer, you know [laughs, laughter]. You can play j- [partial word—"joke"?] play game with it, but you shouldn't be so sincere about that. That is understanding of middle way.

The understanding of middle way could be understanding of *ri*, emptiness, and understanding of somethingness, which is *ri [ji]*. And both is necessary, you know, because we are human being and we—our destiny is to live for maybe 80 years or 90 years as a human being, so we must have some selfish, you know, way of life. Because we have selfish way of life, we will have difficulties, at the same time, which we should accept. When you accept, you know, in that way, it is middle way. You don't reject it. You accept it, but you don't stick to it, you know. You just enjoy it—enjoy your human life as long as you live. That is middle way, you know. That is understanding of *ji* and *ri*.

So, when there is *ji*, there is *ri*; when there is *ri*, there is *ji*. To understand in this way is to enjoy our life without rejecting problems or suffering.

Suffering, you know— I noticed something, you know, very important, which I did not put emphasis on it so much so far. Suffering is very valuable thing, I think. Our zazen practice should be, you know—I understand today, when I was talking with someone—discussing with someone, you know. Our practice may be—could be, you know, suffering—practice of suffering. How we suffer will be our practice [laughs]. It helps a lot.



I think most of us has suffering, as you have pain in your legs when you sit. In everyday life, you have suffering. Bishop Yamada<sup>9</sup>—do you know him? Perhaps some of you may know him. His— He put emphasis on *unshu*, which Hakuin-zenji practiced for a long time.<sup>10</sup> He was weak. He suffered consumption when he was young, and he conquered the illness by zazen practice. His zazen is called, you know, *unshu*. *Unshu* means to—when you take breathing, you do groar—what [how] do you say—"m-m-m-mmm"?

**Students:** Groan?

**Suzuki-rōshi:** Groan? *M-m-m-mmm*. When you suffer, you know, you say "*m-m-m-mmm*" [laughs] or "*m-m-m-mmhh*."

**Students:** Sigh?

**Suzuki-rōshi:** No, not sigh.

**Students:** Moan?

**Suzuki-rōshi:** Moan—no. More strength—like a tiger in pain.

**Students:** Roar? Growl?

**Suzuki-rōshi:** Growl? [Laughing.] He always said when you—your breathing should be like breathing you when you suffer. *M-m-m-mmm*, *m-m-m-mmm*. [Laughs, laughter.] Instead of saying "*m-m-m-mmm*, *m-m-m-mmm*," [laughs, laughter] he said you should put more strength here [pointing to *hara*]\* and take long exhaling like [demonstrates exhale], without saying "*m-m-m-mmm*," you know. You know, when you say "*m-m-m-mmm*, *m-m-m-mmm*"—when you say "*mmm*" it is not *unshu*. But when you don't say like the last alphabet [letter] of Sanskrit, "*mmm*," you know, "*m-m-m-mmm*." So he is— Hakuin called it *unshu*. When you repeat this *unshu* like you suffer from something, physically or mentally, and you—your practice is directed just to suffer[ing] you have, then that is—can be a good practice. It does [is] not different from *shikantaza*.

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<sup>9</sup> The late Reirin Yamada was Sōtō Zen bishop of North America from 1960 to 1965. He led several *sesshins* at Zen Center.

<sup>10</sup> Hakuin-zenji (1689-1769) was an important Japanese Zen master who revitalized and systematized the Rinzai school. His breathing practices are described in the autobiographical essay "Yasenkanna," reprinted in Trevor Leggett's *The Tiger's Cave* (London: Rider and Company, 1964, pp. 142-156).

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When you, you know, you suffer just from—by here [pointing to his chest and panting]\*—this is, you know, agony, you know. When you suffer completely, you should suffer from "m-m-m-mmm." You feel good, you know, when you do that [laughs, laughter]. It is much better than to say nothing or just to lie down.

Bishop Yamada, you know, had from his—he has had always difficulties until quite recently. He became—he, you know, is, maybe, over the cloud,<sup>11</sup> you know [laughs]. So maybe when he was in America, he suffered a lot in Los Angeles [laughs, laughter]. He suffered. But I have—at that time, I have not much suffer, you know—suffer from, so I couldn't understand—I couldn't agree with his practice of *unshu*, like, you know, a sick person [might]. "M-m-m-mmm." [Laughs, laughter.] "What is that practice?" I thought. [Laughs, laughter.] "M-m-m-mmm, m-m-m-mmm." But I found out, you know, why he practiced that kind of practice. And I found out that that practice helps us a lot. Of course, he understood, you know, what is suffering. No one likes suffering, but our destiny is to have suffering. That is human destiny. And how we suffer is the point. No one enjoys suffering, but we should not be completely caught by suffering. We should know how to suffer our human suffering. That may be Bishop Yamada's practice.

So, to find out oneness of *ji* and *ri*, oneness of joy and suffering, oneness of joy of enlightenment and difficulty of practice is, in one word, our practice which is called "middle way."

Mmm. Do you—did you understand [pointing to Lines 35 and 36]?\*

You may say, when there is suffering, there there is joy of suffering, or there there is nirvana. When even you are in nirvana, you know, you cannot be—get out of suffering. That is true nirvana. Buddhist nirvana is something like that. In suffering there is nirvana. That is true understanding of nirvana. "Extinction of—complete extinction of desire," we say, but what does it means by—by it is to have complete understanding of it and to live accordingly. That is zazen, you know. You are like this [sitting upright]. You are not this way—this side of—leaning over [to] the side of nirvana, or leaning against the side of the suffering. Right here. That is our zazen. So everyone can sit, you know, [everyone can] practice our zazen.

Mmm. No time to have question and answer. Ah, maybe.

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\* \* From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

<sup>11</sup> Perhaps meaning "over his suffering."

\* \* From the contemporaneous transcript by Marian Derby.

I am talking about—I am following his poem one by one, or—so—it is— but actually it is necessary to read from beginning to end, you know, like this. If you talk about [it] piece by piece, it doesn't make much sense.

But next lecture will be the something like conclusion of all the lectures we—I gave. He is very strict, you know, in the conclusion [laughs]. Very strict. You cannot escape from him. [Makes humorous noise.] You cannot say anything [laughs]. If you say something you will get a big stick, that's all [laughs, laughter]. [Makes another humorous noise.] At [In] his time, you know, the Zen world was too noisy, so he became angry with it. "Shut up!" [laughs]—that is what he said, actually, in one word [laughs]. So I shouldn't talk so long. Maybe already too long [laughs]. Excuse me.

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Sources: Contemporaneous typescript and notes by Marian Derby; City Center transcript entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. Transcript checked against tape by Bill Redican 6/1/00.