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JAPANESE WAY, AMERICAN WAY, BUDDHIST WAY
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After—after forty days of my leaving from here I feel I am a stranger to the building, not to you but [laughs] to the building and my cups and [laughs, laughter]. I forgot where is my—where was my things. Each time I need something, I have to try to think about "Where is it? Oh! There." [Laughs.] Something like that.

I am thinking about now, at the same, time Dōgen-zenji's teaching: "There are people who is in enlightenment over enlightenment and delusion in delusion." You know, enlightenment over enlightenment [laughs]. It does not mean after attaining enlightenment he lost himself, and he—that he became a hermit or something.

"Enlightenment over en- [partial word]—over enlightenment" may be too much enlightenment [laughs, laughter] for you. But "enlightenment over enlightenment"—maybe tr- [partial word]—my translation is wrong, but I don't know how to translate it.

"Enlightenment over enlightenment" means to forget enlightenment after attaining enlightenment. Such people, you know, because they have no idea of enlightenment anymore because they already have gone through enlightenment, so there is no trace of enlightenment in their mind. So they have, you know, they do not stick to enlightenment anymore. They do not stick to Buddhist way anymore. So they are quite common. And you—common enough—to be a ordinary person.

So he [Dōgen] says—delusion—in delusion—*meichu umei, gojō tokugo*.¹ *Gōsho tokugo* means "enlightenment—after enlightenment" or "over enlightenment." And [*meichu umei* means] "delusion in delusion."

Many people ask me, you know, "At Tassajara you are practicing Japanese way [laughs]—Japanese Zen." What— "Do you think that is appropriate for us," you know, "to observe Japanese way of practice? Are we going to be a Japanese [laughs] after," you know, "practicing zazen?" They ask me that kind of question.

Our purpose of zazen is, of course, first of all we should be—we should attain enlightenment or we should get through our practice. But after,

¹ *mei* (delusion); *chu* (inside or within); *u* (again); *mei* (delusion); *go* (enlightenment); *jō* (to put on top of); *toku* (get); *go* (enlightenment). From Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō* "Genjo Kōan."

you know, you become a real Buddhist, you know, then you should forget that you are Buddhist. Even though you wear robe, you should forget all about what you are we- [partial word]—wearing. This is very important point.

But I don't mean that you shouldn't wear robe after [laughs] you attained enlightenment. I don't mean that because you attained enlightenment there is no need for you to practice zazen anymore. You should, you know, continue your zazen practice. But in that zazen practice, you should have complete freedom even from zazen practice. There you have no idea of zazen, or eating—no special idea of *ōryōki*, you know, eating—eating by *ōryōki* or practicing in cross-legged position.

This is a very interesting point. And if you really get through our practice, you will enjoy [laughs] your robe, you know, because you have no idea. When we have no idea of robe—wearing robes or practicing zazen, people, you know, may ask you, "Why do you wear such a long-sleeved robe? Isn't it better to wear something simple?" Sometimes they may ask me, and sometimes they may say, "Oh, that is beautiful!" [Laughs.] "Let me see how long your sleeve [laughs] is—are."

Many people ask me various question, but, you know, for me, you know, it doesn't—my feeling and their feeling about my robe is completely different. I don't mind what I wear, you know. But people—when people become interested in what I am wearing: "Oh! Ohh [laughs]. My sleeves are very long!" [Laughs.] "Oh, this must be a very inconvenient!"—you know.

But when people think it is inconvenient, you know, if I don't feel, you know, inconvenient, this is strange feeling. "What—what am I wearing?" [Laughs.] You know, you may have that kind of, you know, feeling. And this is actually the secret of—secret of how to live in this world and how to be successful in your business. Is there some businessman [laughs] here? I don't know. I don't think so, but if there is some businessman, I want to tell him the secret of [laughs, laughter] how to be a successful [laughter] businessman.

Nowadays, it is not so much, but when I was quite young—young schoolboy, what we see in Yokohama City, where there was a big port, you know, Yokohama: It is big trading center, and there were many cups and pots and everything for ho- [partial word]—foreign countries to export. What we see there was not supposed to be Japanese article, you know. But to me, it was—to us, it was not at all Japanese, you know, things. It is things to attract, you know, foreigners as a Japanese article, but it isn't—it was not actually—they were not actually Japanese article. They were too—maybe too much Japanese

[laughs] or something.

Anyway, we felt very bad about—to see—about seeing that kind of article to be called Japanese, you know, article. When your understanding—when your practice is not good enough or very superficial, you will buy that kind of thing, thinking that they are Japanese article. If you really understand what is Japanese article, what you may buy is really Japanese, and which could be applied in—which could be very harmonious articles in your own room. Sometime you may not realize this is Japanese article, because it will be very—it will go with the furn- [partial word]—other furnitures or things you have there. That is, you know, what I want to call Japanese article.

There are many such articles which is really Japanese and which could be really American. That kind in—that kind of article is the article I want to introduce [to] you. And what that kind of, you know, Zen is I want to introduce to America. That is why I stick to robes [laughs]. Do you understand? Maybe not.

I thought at that time, when I saw many, you know, pseudo-Japanese articles, you know, in—in Yokohama, I felt very bad and I felt very sad to see them and to export that kind of a thing as Japanese article.

At that time I thought—I thought I might go to abroad after understanding our Zen completely to introduce real, you know, Zen Buddhism to some other countries. Buddhism I want to introduce to this country is, I think should be very, very Japanese in its true sense, and at the same time it could be, you know, completely applied in America too.

So I am very particular about, you know, about design of the temple or altar. I don't like, you know, too—too much Japanese things or too—not enough Japanese or seemingly too much, but in its real sense it is not enough Japanese, you know. When our practice is not good enough, we will stick to our practice. We have no freedom from our practice. When we understand Dōgen-zenji's way completely, when he said: "no trace of enlightenment there," or "enlightenment—after enlightenment. Over"—not over—"after enlightenment."

I don't mean that, you know, I am completely Japanese or completely Zen teacher. I don't think so, I must confess [laughs] because, you know, I am very much, maybe, Japanese still, and I may stick to Japanese—Japanese way, maybe, still. But what I am trying to [do] is without changing my, you know, outlook, and to be completely—how to be completely Japanese or forget all about Japanese. This is not so easy thing. You shouldn't think this is quite easy. If you think it is quite easy, it is—will be a great mistake.

So at—at the same time, I do not accept so-called-it "American way" [laughs, laughter], as I don't accept Japanese way so easily, even though this is Japanese, old, beautiful, you know, thing. "No," I may say, most of the time. So even though you say "this is American way," I don't easily accept that. Here there is real point of our practice in Tassajara and in City zendō: how to be real American—how to be, for us, how to be a real Japanese, without, you know, changing our original nature—original face. Before we attain this point for Japanese it was necessary, you know, to be a Chinese, and I think it is necessary, you know, for you to be a Japanese once [laughing], and forget all about American or Chinese.

Without this kind of, you know, determination, you cannot be a Buddhist in its real sense. Even though you do not actually attain this point—even though you don't attain this point, as long as you know the—how to be a real Buddhist, then that will be a great help for American culture, and not only for American culture but also for Japanese culture and some other culture, if you have eyes to see what is real, you know, human culture and what is not.

As it is, you know, already—as the day is already going shorter and shorter, and we already see the flowers in—flowers outside—autumn flower—some Chinese, you know, monk said: "Don't you see the flower of—red flower, on"—I don't know what do you call that tree you have a kind—it looks like—the trunk looks like a manzanita, you know, red trunk, and it is—it is not e- [partial word]—evergreen tree, and it has, in this time of the year, it has beautiful pink or most—red, you may say red—flowers. "You don't—don't you see the—that flower in—in—in that tree?" I don't know the name of that tree in Engl- [partial word]—in English. "Those," you know, "flowers, are result of hard practice of," you know, "successive masters. Don't you see that flower? That is result of various," you know, "masters' practice. It is," you know, "for—for—for the tree, it is not difficult to be that way."

Without fail at this time of the year that flower comes out in the same color, quite naturally. But for us human being, to be like that is almost impossible. But many successive teachers attained that kind of, you know, natural practice, which is free from everything, and which is quite natural to himself. And always helping people, without saying anything, just to be there in the corner of—of their garden is enough. But for us human being, it is after training after training, practice after practice our teachers attain that kind of freedom: "Don't you see the flower?"

Without knowing what is human being, what is the nature of human being, why we suffer so much, [and] what we are doing every day, we have no ground to talk about freedom. *[Sentence finished. Tape turned over.]*

... maybe help [?] you.

You may say—I think you can say that all the Budd- [partial word]—Buddha's teaching—power of teaching is—are all the [1 word unclear] teaching about what is human nature. But [1 word unclear] with a great mercy and wisdom, he taught about our human nature. And he wanted to make us realize what kind of practice you should have—we should have, and what kind of understanding we should have.

Actually when you realize what Buddha meant, there is no reason why we sh- [partial word]—we should be just Japanese or why we should be just American. All of us should be a son of Buddha. When the various river flow into a big ocean, there is no names of river or water. When all of us become—all human being become Buddhist, there is no Japanese or no American people.

And yet, Japanese will be just Japanese, and American people will be just American people. We are now, and—practicing our way in Buddhist way, to forget the disti- [partial word]—distinction between Japanese, and Chinese, or Indian, or American. When we get out of the—those area, we will be real Buddhist.

I want you to trust me [laughs]. I don't try to force Japanese way to you. Actually, you know, I don't like stinky Japanese way [laughs]—which stinks like Japanese, you know. And at the same time, I want you to practice Buddhist way in its true sense and see what will happen to you.

If you have doubt in your practice—you cannot practice our way without having any doubt and, you know, involved in the practice in its, you know—with great confidence, or conviction, you can practice our way.

You shouldn't say "American way" or "Japanese way." If you say so, I must find out what you mean by that. I am very strict with that point. Since I am quite young, I was making a great effort on that point. Maybe that is why I came to America.

Thank you very much.

Source: City Center transcript. Entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. Transcript checked against tape and made verbatim by Nigel Edmonds and Bill Redican (10/19/00). Miyagawa Keishi-san kindly provided assistance with the translation of Japanese terms.