

October 28, 1965
Rev. S. Suzuki
Thursday morning lectures

In the past, in Hinayana practice in the first stage we still have consistent thinking faculties. We do not stop our pure thinking. This is interesting, very interesting point. Usually we stop thinking when we sit but in the first state we can retain our thinking in sitting. For instance when you contemplate on koan in Rinzai school they still think that thinking should be pure thinking. Pure thinking is the characteristic of human being. Pure thinking – no emotional faculty. There is no emotional or sensed function. When we see clear we know even though it is like this (draws a rectangle) it is clear for us and we know the four angles will make 360 degrees. That kind of thinking is pure thinking. But usually we concern if the square is right square or not. If we think in this way, some discrimination involved in it, that is not pure thinking, which is limited in our pure human being thinking.

When we are concerned about something else, some sensitive or emotional thinking or faculty is involved that is not pure thinking or consistent thinking. Emotional faculties will give some interruption to the pure thinking. So, in the first stage, we have consistent, pure thinking. This pure thinking helped Buddhism very much and all the thinking, all the philosophy of Buddhism is established by this kind of pure thinking, which is the characteristic of human being. But we do not neglect emotional thinking or more instinctive thinking, like animal. So religious life is to go back and forth from animal world to human world (coming back to animal world and human world, back and forth). This is how we live as human beings actually. So in human life we say good and bad. Bad means more animal-like way of life. Good and bad is half and half. We are always going back and forth. But in pure religion, even

though it looks like going back and forth between two worlds, but we do not actually go to the animal world. For religious people the animal world is, should be a religious world.

Before we transcend the discrimination of humanity or animal life, animal way of life, we are going...we will be going back and forth but after we transcend those two worlds we look like going back and forth, but actually we don't. That is so-called to resume to our true nature. Both human nature and animal nature is supported by the true nature of various existences. So when we resume to our true nature, there is no purely human or purely animal life. For him animal life and human life are the two ways of life supported by one innate nature. So, there is no conflict between those two ideas, those two ways of life – no conflict. But before we transcend the discrimination of human life and animal life we have conflict. So that is why we have the second Zen stage or third Zen stage. Or that is why we practice second stage or third stage where we can transcend our physical and mental...our physical feeling and mental thinking or even pleasure of transcending those physical and mental joy. That is the second or third stage or the fourth stage.

Even though we attain the fourth stage, it does not mean to be like stone or brick. It is still a living being. So Buddha was...is supposed to preach or give their followers some guidance. In the fourth stage even though he was talking, he was talking in the fourth stage. That is the difference. That is so-called tongueless speech, or brainless speech. You may call it intuitive speech, but that intuition is some result of a sort of intuition, but something different from so-called intuition. So this kind of subtle distinction is very important. And this kind of distinction between our usual thinking and consistent

thinking, or pure thinking, or thinking in fourth stage will be understood by practice. I think your practice is pretty good because you have no prejudice in Buddhism, so your practice is very good, much better than usual Japanese because Japanese people have some prejudice. So for them it is rather difficult for them to practice, to practice pure practice, because of some knowledge of what is Buddhism or some prejudice of the practice. So for them it is necessary to give pretty hard discipline, stick or scolding, or voice or something like this, so that they can give up their worldly thinking or worldly way of practice. But you have some difficulty. The difficulty I notice is...it is good, but it may be for a beginner it may be...this difficulty will be...some element to encourage your practice. But if you always retain that kind of idea of practice, it may be difficult to attain the pure stage. What I mean by your difficulty is...you...when you practice something...zen...I think you expect some mystical experience. Mysticism is good. It is not bad because mysticism is something which cannot be put in word, or something beyond our intellectual understanding is mystic idea. But that mystic idea should not be completely separated from our understanding. It should be the source of our faculty. It should not be completely different from our everyday life. This is, I think, the...your difficulty. But in our understanding, the goal we attain is not some ultimate goal which will be attained as a result of effort. Our goal is always...when you do something our goal is always there. That is our understanding. This is something different from your understanding. Even though your practice is not perfect, the goal is there. Even though you have some pain on your leg, your practice when you practice, is perfect. Having the difficulty, like even though, bamboo sprout is small, that is bamboo. It is perfect. It is not bamboo after it grow up..... (end of this lecture cut short by lack of tape)

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