

## Lecture 2

## Zazen Retreat 1996

*(Nishijima Roshi outlines the life of Master Dogen, the 13th century Buddhist priest and philosopher and discusses the four main principles of Master Dogen's most famous book, the Shobogenzo.)*

Master Dogen was born in Japan in the year 1200 and died in 1253. At the time Master Dogen was born, Japanese society was in an extremely unsettled period. This was because the warrior classes had just obtained political power to govern Japan from the emperor's government. Before that time, Japanese people believed that Japan should be governed only by the imperial family. But in 1192, the head of the warrior classes, Yoritomo Minamoto, obtained complete power to govern Japan. Consequently, Japanese society at that time was very confused, and it was in this period that Master Dogen was born.

Master Dogen's family life was not so joyful. He was the son of a very famous politician who was a minister of the royal court. Master Dogen, however, could not live with his father. This was because his mother was not the first lady of his father. Instead, Master Dogen lived alone with his mother in a place called Uji, in the suburbs of Kyoto. Furthermore, when he was two years old, his father died and there was a rumour that his father had been killed because of a political problem. Then when he was seven years old, his mother also died. Therefore, as well as having a very lonely childhood, he also lost both his parents when he was very young. In that situation, he had a strong will to find out what is the truth. Thinking about his situation, it is very natural that he wanted to know the truth which is perfectly reliable.

By the time he was twelve years old he had decided to become a Buddhist monk. However, his family did not agree with his idea. So one day Master Dogen left his house secretly at night and went by foot to Enryaku temple on Hiei Mountain. He stayed there as a novice and became a Buddhist monk when he was thirteen years old. He stayed in Enryaku temple for three years. He was very intelligent and therefore very good at understanding Buddhist sutras.

But he had one question in his study of Buddhism. Enryaku temple belongs to the Tendai sect, and in the traditional teaching of the Tendai sect they insisted that human beings are innately excellent and the human body is naturally splendid. Listening to this theory Master Dogen had the following question; If human beings are so innately excellent, why do we have to train ourselves in Buddhism? He asked this question to many of the older Buddhist monks in the temple, but strangely, no Buddhist monk could answer his very simple question.

The reason why no-one at the temple could answer his question comes from the Tendai sect's method of studying Buddhism at that time. The Tendai sect liked to study Buddhism

theoretically, therefore they read many Buddhist sutras and they understood the meaning of each word. So they understood Buddhism theoretically. However, their understanding was not practical. Master Dogen's question, however, was very practical. His question was related with his own life. He wondered, if human being are so excellent as the Tendai sect said, why do we need to train ourselves in Buddhism? His question was very natural, but unfortunately there was no Buddhist monk in the temple who could answer it. Therefore, he went to another temple which was located opposite Enryaku temple. This temple is usually called Mii-dera, and was formally called Onjyoji.

Master Dogen asked the same question to the abbot of Onjyoji. The abbot of Onjyoji could not answer his question either, but he said, "Recently I heard a Buddhist monk called Eizai has come from China and established a temple in Kyoto called Kennin temple. If you visit Master Eizai there is some possibility that you can find an answer to your question."

So Master Dogen went to Kennin temple and met Master Eizai, and at that time Eizai said, "I do not know whether Buddhas in the past, present and future exist, but I know cats and white oxen exist." This reply struck Master Dogen because Master Eizai's answer was so concrete, so practical, and Master Dogen noticed that Buddhist teaching is very practical, very concrete, very realistic. Then he moved to Kennin temple and studied Buddhism and especially the practice of Zazen for nine years.

Kennin temple belonged to the Rinzai sect, therefore in the temple they wanted to attain the so-called "enlightenment". In the Rinzai sect they think that there is a so-called "enlightenment" which is different from the state in Zazen, and is reached after practicing Zazen for a long time. Therefore they practice Zazen to obtain this so-called "enlightenment". Master Dogen also followed the same training, but after nine years he could not obtain the so-called "enlightenment". The temple master at that time, called Myozen, also had the same experience, and wanted to go to China to study Buddhism further. So Master Dogen followed the temple master and they went to China to study Buddhism more.

For the first two years in China Master Dogen visited many Chinese temples, but those temples all belonged to the Rinzai sect so the training in those temples was almost the same as the training at Kennin temple. Master Dogen was a little disappointed and wanted to return to Japan. Just at that time however, he met an old Buddhist monk who said, "recently Master Tendo Nyujo succeeded to the position of master at the Tendo Keitoku temple, and Master Tendo Nyujo is a very excellent Buddhist monk, so it is better for you to visit him."

Master Dogen had lived in Keitoku temple once before, but after hearing that information he went to Keitoku temple again and met Master Tendo Nyojo. When they met, Master Tendo Nyojo felt that the young monk from the south-east island called Japan had excellent ability to pursue the truth. Master Dogen also felt that this master may be the master which he had been looking for for such a long time. So Master Dogen stayed at Keitoku temple and studied under Master Tendo Nyojo for two years.

Under Master Tendo Nyojo the most important teaching was that to practice Zazen is getting rid of body and mind. These words suggest that the practice of Zazen is forgetting consciousness of body and mind. We are just sitting in Zazen. Therefore, in that situation we just act. In other words, the practice of Zazen is just action. So getting rid of body and mind suggests, forgetting consciousness of mind, forgetting consciousness of body, and just sitting. This is the practice of Zazen.

This teaching was very important for Master Dogen. When he was in Japan he practiced Zazen for nine years in Kennin temple to obtain an enlightenment which is different from the practice of Zazen, and he studied the same type of practice in China for a further two years. But then Master Tendo Nyojo said, Zazen is just enlightenment, we should not look for anything else other than practicing Zazen. Practicing Zazen is just enlightenment, practicing Zazen is just the truth, practicing Zazen is just Buddhism. Listening to this theory, Master Dogen was very satisfied. Therefore he studied for two more years under Master Tendo Nyojo, and then returned to Japan.

After returning to Japan someone asked him, “what have you brought back with you to Japan?”. Master Dogen said, “I have not brought anything to Japan”, and he added, “if I dare say, I brought soft flexible mind, I brought soft flexible mind. This is the centre of Buddhism.”. So the reason why we practice Zazen is to get the soft flexible mind, and relying upon this teaching Master Dogen established the new Buddhist lineage in Japan.

After returning to Japan, Master Dogen stayed in Kennin temple for a few years, and then moved to the suburbs of Kyoto where he established a small temple and built the first Zazen hall in Japan. There he taught Buddhism to Buddhist monks and lay people. Many people came to the temple to study Buddhism and practice Zazen. He stayed there for about ten years.

But as Master Dogen’s fame spread, Enryaku temple started to become more and more hostile towards him. They hated Master Dogen’s popularity and started to attack his temple. Because of these attacks by Enryaku temple, it was impossible for Master Dogen to stay near Kyoto. At that time, a very powerful sponsor of Master Dogen, called Yoshishige Hatano, recommended him

to move to Fukui prefecture where Eiheiiji temple is now. Master Dogen followed his sponsor's recommendation and he went to Fukui prefecture and established Eiheiiji temple.

He stayed at Eiheiiji temple for ten years to teach his disciples and practice Zazen. But when he was fifty-two years old he felt that he was sick. So he transmitted the position of temple master to his disciple named Kon Eijyo, and came back to Kyoto and died there.

That is an outline of Master Dogen's life.

Master Dogen wrote many books, among them a very famous book entitled *Shobogenzo*. "Sho" means right, "bo" means Dharma, "gen" means eyes, and "zo" means warehouse. Therefore "Shobogenzo" means the warehouse of the right Dharma viewpoint. "Shobogenzo" suggests the practice of Zazen. In Master Dogen's teaching, the main centre is practicing Zazen. He noticed that Buddhism is not only theory, but that Buddhist philosophy emerged from the practice of Zazen, therefore without practicing Zazen there is no true Buddhism. Before Master Dogen there was no true practice of Zazen in Japan, therefore Master Dogen believed that he was the only person to bring true Buddhism to Japan.

Master Dogen was very diligent to spread the practice of Zazen and to hold many lectures. Those lectures were recorded precisely by his disciples, and as a result, we can read his books even today. The book entitled *Shobogenzo* is his main work. In *Shobogenzo* he described Buddhist theory very exactly. Therefore, even though *Shobogenzo* is a rather difficult book, if we read it we can understand Buddhist theory very clearly. So now I would like to explain briefly the main principles of *Shobogenzo*.

The first principle is to establish the will to the truth. He revered this principle very much. In Sanskrit, the will to the truth is written "Boddhichitta". "Bodhi" means truth, "chitta" means mind. We usually translate it as "Bodhi mind". Master Dogen insisted the necessity of establishing the will to the truth. When we begin to study Buddhism we do not know what Buddhism is, but even in that situation we can have the will to the truth. Master Dogen revered this attitude very highly. Without having the will to the truth we can never begin to study Buddhism.

The reason why he insisted the importance of the will to the truth comes from the fact that Buddhism is just to pursue the truth. In human societies there are two fundamental criteria of value; One is fame, and the other is economic profit. We human beings work to achieve these two aims, fame or social position, and economic profit. But Master Dogen noticed that if we make our efforts in studying Buddhism for fame or for profit we can never arrive at the truth, because if we study Buddhism to get fame or to get economic profit, our Buddhist efforts can

never be begun. Master Dogen wrote in *Shobogenzo*, in the chapter entitled *Ju-Undo-Shiki*, “we should know that if we establish the will to the truth our mind to fame and profit disappears suddenly”.

When we study Buddhism it is very important to think about whether we want to get the truth, or, fame or profit. We do not study Buddhism to obtain fame or profit. But, in many cases, people study Buddhism to obtain fame or profit. Therefore, Master Dogen tells us to be careful regarding this point. So, the first principle of Master Dogen is to establish the will to the truth.

The second principle is the rule of cause and effect. In Buddhism we believe in the rule of cause and effect. But in some lineages they take this rule lightly, because they have become a little arrogant in studying Buddhism, and believe that if we acquire excellent Buddhist ability we can transcend the rule of cause and effect. Master Dogen, however, criticized this idea very strongly. He believed that we should maintain the rule of cause and effect throughout our Buddhist life, and even if we become very arrogant we should never lose belief in the rule of cause and effect, because this universe is governed by the rule of cause and effect completely.

Particularly now in the modern age, we have acquired excellent scientific knowledge, and relying upon scientific knowledge there is nothing which is outside the rule of cause and effect. This fact is very important, but many religious people sometimes violate this important rule. They sometimes become too arrogant and believe they have the ability to transcend the rule of cause and effect. But that fact can never exist, we can never live outside the rule of cause and effect. This principle is also a very important principle in Buddhism.

Master Dogen revered the principle of the rule of cause and effect very much. In *Shobogenzo*, he wrote a chapter entitled, *To believe in cause and effect profoundly*. In the chapter he said, “a person who does good goes upward, a person who does bad goes downward. These rules have absolutely no exception”. Therefore, in his idea the rule of cause and effect also relates to human moral behavior. So the rule of cause and effect governs not only the material world, but all of human life is governed by the rule of cause and effect. This principle is very important for thinking about Buddhist theory.

Looking at human societies for 76 years, I have noticed his insistence is very true. Looking at many situations of my friends and acquaintances and looking at the changeable streams of human societies, I notice always the existence of the rule of cause and effect. So even though Buddhism is a kind of philosophy, we should never forget the existence of the rule of cause and effect.

In the third principle, Master Dogen insists, like Master Nagarjuna, that our life is just action at the present moment. This is also the fundamental Buddhist philosophy. In our daily life, if we have made some serious mistake it is impossible for us to go back to the past and correct that wrong behavior. Thinking about this fact, it is clear that we can never live in the past. We usually think that we can remember the past, therefore we can live in the past, but this is wrong. Even though we can remember the past, we can never live in the past really. This is a very clear fact.

Likewise, when we hold a beautiful dream about the future we sometimes have the idea that we can live in the future. But actually, because the future has not arrived at the present, we can never live in the future. Therefore, human beings can never live in the past, and human beings can never live in the future. The time when human beings can live is only the present, and the present is a very short time which is called “moment”.

So the real time human beings can live is only the moment at the present moment. Therefore Master Dogen insisted the third principle, action at the present moment. His expression is “Instantaneousness of this world”. So the idea that our life is just action at the present moment means also, the world where we live is existence at the present moment. So the “World” or “Universe” or “Dharma” is also instantaneous, it is not eternal. It exists at the present moment, now, now, now. Relying upon this idea, he explained that our life is just action at the present moment. This is another very important principle in Buddhism.

The last principle is the practice of Zazen. Buddhism is based on the idea of action at the present moment, but to experience this fact is difficult. When we read Buddhist books it is impossible for us to experience the action or the situation at the present moment. So thinking about this situation, Gautama Buddha established the training of Zazen in ancient India, and relying upon this practice we can experience what action is. Action is the basis of Buddhist philosophy. Relying upon the practice of Zazen, we can experience action itself, we can experience reality itself, we can experience Dharma itself. So the practice of Zazen is the fourth principle of Master Dogen.

Are there any questions?

**Q.** Would you say that the universe is only now, only happening now? Only action?

**A.** Yes, that is true.

**Q.** So, if it's only action now in this present moment, what was the cause and effect? What caused it?

A. Buddhism has the layers of the four philosophies, and in the second philosophy we think of all phenomena on the same basis as science. In that situation, time is a series of past, present and future. In this series of time we can find cause and effect. But action at the present moment belongs to the third philosophy. The third philosophy is based on the present moment, so the principle where the rule of cause and effect works and the principle where action at the present moment works are different.

Q. But the reality is that there is only this moment? I can say, “We just passed one moment and we’re going into another moment” and in this way we store moments up, but they don’t exist?

A. Yes, so according to the Buddhist idea real existence is just at the present moment.

Q. I still can’t understand where cause and effect comes in if there’s only this moment.

A. After the passing of the present moment, when we think about past, present, and future, we can clearly notice the existence of the rule of cause and effect.

Q. That’s when we think about it. But if we didn’t think about it there wouldn’t be any cause and effect? These are the two systems you’re talking about?

A. There is a rather important Buddhist theory regarding this point, which I would like to explain. In western thoughts there is a very serious and difficult problem which hasn’t been solved yet. That is the contradictory situation of human freedom and cause and effect. In western thoughts human freedom is based on idealistic philosophy, and cause and effect is based on materialistic philosophy. So these two philosophies are perfectly contradictory. If we believe in human freedom we can never believe in the existence of cause and effect, and if we believe in cause and effect we can never believe in human freedom. So spiritual people think, “we have freedom, we have the ability to do good and bad”. But materialistic people think, “we are governed by the rule of cause and effect, therefore we do not have any freedom, we do not have the ability to do good or not to do bad”.

These two insistences have been contradictory for thousands of years in western thought, and this contradictory situation hasn’t been solved yet in western philosophy. But in Buddhism, relying upon the instantaneousness of this world, we solve this contradictory problem. I would like to explain the situation using the following simile: Imagine a razor with a very sharp edge. If we put a pearl on the edge of the razor, the edge is so narrow that the pearl will fall down. The pearl will sometimes fall down on the right side, and sometimes fall down on the left side. Human freedom is like this. Sometimes we go to the right side and sometimes to the left.

Because the present moment is so short, relying upon this situation human beings can have freedom. So even though we are governed by cause and effect totally, just at the present moment we can be free. This theory solved the contradiction between the two principles which hadn't been solved for thousands of years. Relying upon this theory, Buddhism solved the problem. So this theory is very important for thinking about human life, for thinking about philosophical problems.

**Q.** This is how we live now?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** So we live on the razor's edge.

**A.** We act at the present moment, therefore we can be free.

**Q.** But that suggests that on the razor's edge we always have a choice which way we go.

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** Who is the chooser?

**A.** The person decides whether to fall to the right side or to the left side. Just at that moment we can decide what we should do. For example, we can steal other people's property or refrain from doing so. That comes from the structure of the present moment. Action exists just at the present moment, therefore we can be free.

**Q.** So you are saying that I am the actor, doing the action?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** So there are two things happening in duality?

**A.** In the present moment there is no separation between actor and action.

**Q.** There is only the perception and action?

**A.** Yes. There is one simple fact.

**Q.** So the stealing is the action. If I take something it causes an effect, so I don't touch it?

**A.** Yes, so the cause and effect is later remembrance or reflection. When we think about the series of past, present and future we can find cause and effect, but just at the present moment

there is the simple fact, and that simple fact exists like the pearl on the edge of the razor. Therefore just at the present moment human beings can have freedom.

**Q.** If you fall on one side of the razor and steal something from someone, the repercussions of cause and effect are endless.

**A.** Yes, cause and effect is endless, but just at the present moment we can change it. Therefore, human action is extremely valuable.

**Q.** There's no problem in the present?

**A.** Yes, to do something, to work something, that is our life. It is not necessary to worry about anything.

**Q.** To worry is the cause and effect?

**A.** Worry is a mental function, the movement of brain cells.

**Q.** If I'm acting with pure freedom in the present moment, does that mean that that action is not caused?

**A.** We can cut the cause at the present moment by action.

**Q.** So that action is not the effect of a cause?

**A.** We can become free at the present moment.

**Q.** If I do that and then later I reflect on it?

**A.** After the fact, when we reflect on the situation we have to notice that we are governed by the rule of cause and effect.

**Q.** So then it appears later. It appears that my action was a caused effect?

**A.** Yes, the existence of the rule of cause and effect comes from the reflection of scientific research.

**Q.** So even though it appears that my action was caused, it's not really true?

**A.** Our present is also influenced by the past, but at the same time, at the present moment we have the choice of what we do, and we can choose some preference. But afterwards, if we think about the fact, it is unavoidable that we notice the existence of the rule of cause and effect. At

the present moment we can be free, but thinking about the fact in terms of the past, present and future, it is necessary for us to notice the existence of cause and effect.

**Q.** The cause and effect is not really a determined process, but even though we act with freedom, later when we look at it the cause and effect all works out. It works into the system of cause and effect, although at that moment we were free?

**A.** In Buddhism we use four kinds of philosophies. One is the philosophy which is based on mind, this is called idealistic philosophy. The second is the philosophy which is based on matter, this is called materialistic philosophy. However, Buddhist philosophy is a philosophy which is based on action, so Buddhist philosophy is different from idealistic philosophy and materialistic philosophy.

In our civilized situation we have only two fundamental philosophies, one is idealism and the other is materialism. But Buddhism insists that we are living in reality, we are not living in ideas or sense perception. So relying upon the fact that we are living in reality, Buddhism established the third philosophy. The third philosophy is the philosophy of action. So even though Buddhism was established two thousand five hundred years ago, Buddhism is a rather new philosophy in the world today.

**Q.** We live in ideology. It appears that any decision we make about the future is based on the past, so we are carrying the past forward all the time and always getting it wrong?

**A.** We are living with a large amount of miscellaneous ideas, but those ideas are a kind of dream, they are like bubbles. If we blow them away there is nothing, and then we can find reality. It is necessary for us to find reality, but nowadays our brain is full of miscellaneous ideas. That is the problem.

**Q.** Can we say that the past is actually the future?

**A.** The future does not appear. We have no ability to touch the future. What we can touch is just the present, just action. For that reason, to think about the future is not so important. But many people worry about the future, for example, if there is a big earthquake what should we do, etc.. This kind of worrying is unnecessary, just to live at the present moment, that is human life.

**Q.** But living in the present moment means thinking about the future.

**A.** I don't think so.

**Q.** I notice that you sometimes say things about a day which didn't come yet, next week or next year, or for instance you say the world is going towards the one point.

**A.** The future is always undecided so to live at the present is our life.

**Q.** So living at the present is accepting that we think about the future?

**A.** I think the present moment is too busy to think about the future. We are occupied by the present moment.

**Q.** When you talk about your philosophical system, I don't think that you mean to say so but sometimes you give the impression that we should deny what's in front of our eyes. You don't mean to say that, do you?

**A.** According to Buddhism, to look at what is in front of us exactly is the most important point.

**Q.** So if the person in front of us is talking about, for instance, what we are going to do this afternoon?

**A.** The talking is at the present moment but the object which is being discussed belongs to the future. Talking is at the present moment.

**Q.** Regarding freedom, you said that at the present moment we are free because we can choose our action. But because of the relationship of cause and effect, what I did yesterday has a consequence today. That means in fact, that even if I am free in the present moment I am not free in the long term, because what I did in the past has a consequence now.

**A.** Yes that's true. So we are born in some country, and we are brought up by parents and these facts in the past influenced us. That is true. But just at the present moment we can select what we should do.

**Q.** Previously, you said that thought and action are different. Sometimes I understand this because we can say. "oh I will do this, and I will do that", but we never do. So it does seem they are different.

**A.** The situation is like this: I place a stick on the table, and I think about whether I will pick it up or not. That is thinking. But, (picking up the stick) this is action. So that is the difference. People sometimes think that to worry about whether or not to pick up the stick is the fact, is reality, but it is not reality.

**Q.** But we have to think about it before acting, before acting we have the thought, “I will pick up the stick”.

**A.** That is the tendency or principle in western thoughts. Since the Greek age when idealistic philosophy was established by Plato, people have revered thoughts very much. Therefore, thought is very powerful in the western tradition. But Buddhism thinks that to think about whether to pick up the stick or not is not so important. Whether we do the action or not is life. That is the Buddhist idea.

**Q.** Once you said these things like thoughts or planning or thinking are a tool, we use them as a tool, we utilize them before we make the decision or do the action. So they’re just a tool.

**A.** Yes, like a map or trip guide.

**Q.** When you were talking about earthquakes, did you mean we’re not supposed to worry about it like, “oh, what am I going to do, what am I going to do”, but in the present moment we can only do what we can do, so if we need to save water we save water, if we need to get an emergency food kit we should stock something and make preparation. Is that right?

**A.** Making preparation is useful but the most important matter is, if this building shakes very strongly what do I do. That is the most important matter. So, even though we imagine many situations before the earthquake happens, these situations are usually different from the real situation when the building shakes.

**Q.** But when a building shakes, whether it falls on your head or not is important. Therefore the people who are constructing a building will think about the future, and they’ll think what shall we do to make this building strong. Based on their thinking they will construct the building, and that will have some effect on the present.

**A.** Yes, I do not think that those kind of efforts are unimportant. Of course they are very important and useful. I do not take scientific knowledge lightly. I revere scientific knowledge very much.

**Q.** If the building shakes in an earthquake, we don’t think about it, we act straight away.

**A.** Yes, so sometimes we run out of the building, sometimes we stand still. When the fact occurs, then we need intuitive ability. That is called “*Prajna*”.

**Q.** If we thought about it in advance, perhaps we would act better. For example, if we train ourselves to run under the table each day, then when an earthquake actually occurs we will have the reflex to do this. So it's important also to think about it.

**A.** Yes, so thinking is also a kind of action. However, freedom is not idea, but fact. Sometimes people think that freedom exists in our brain, and because they think freedom only exists in our brain they are prone to think that people are perfectly free. But this idea is not real. Therefore we should divide what exists in our brain and what exists in our real life. To distinguish those two parts is the main point of Buddhism. Freedom has many choices in concrete situations.

**Q.** Is it like you have two sides of a sheet of paper with human freedom on one side and cause and effect on the other side, and it's not so easy to see both of them together? It seems difficult to get the two ideas together?

**A.** In history, for thousands of years human beings couldn't solve this contradictory situation. This is a historical fact.

**Q.** They solved it with Christianity because they said God intervenes in cause and effect on behalf of human beings, so everyone was happy then.

**A.** Yes, that is one solution, but whether that solution is reliable or not is another problem.

**Q.** What do you mean when you say humanity is converging to the same point?

**A.** We have many accumulated thoughts from our past, but recently people are noticing whether or not those accumulated thoughts are really useful in our daily life. People want to know the real fact. This tendency exists in many divisions of science, literature, the arts and so forth.

**Q.** So you mean there's a common theme in many places?

**A.** Yes, I think so.

**Q.** Sometimes I agree with you and I feel that we are coming closer together in our thinking, but in our brains for every choice we make we have a myriad more, and often it seems we are diverging.

**A.** Yes, it's true. So it is very important to notice which tendency is fact. We may think that human beings are going to separate widely, or, we may think that human beings are moving

more and more towards the one direction. Which of these tendencies we believe is true has a very serious effect on our life.

For example, if I am fighting in Eastern Europe and using a gun, if I believe that human beings do not have a peaceful situation and that to fight against each other is human fate, then I have to shoot the gun. But if I have the idea that human beings are going to the same point, and therefore it is not necessary for me to shoot the gun, then I can stop shooting.

So our actions differ according to the ideas we hold. That is the situation. Therefore, to have the true theory is very important. It decides our life completely. That's why we study the true theory. However, many people are disappointed because they feel that there is no truth, and that it is impossible for us to get the truth. But, I notice that there is just the truth in this world. So to study the truth and to rely upon the truth is very important for human beings. That is my idea.

**Q.** Sometimes science says that, for example, to see a piece of paper we need some light, but the fact of seeing the paper is modified because we need light, so we don't see the paper as it really is. Therefore, to see the paper as it is we reduce the light more and more, and more and more we can see the paper as it is without modification, and the point where there is no light is when we see the truth. But in this case, at that point we cannot see the paper anymore. Then we have no method to see the truth in this case. And sometimes even when we practice Zazen, we just have an apparition of the truth, through our mind or through our five senses and it is a kind of modification of reality. How can we reach this reality by practicing Zazen.

**A.** So to study that kind of situation is one aim of Zazen. During Zazen we have many ideas, we have many experiences, so among those experiences and images we have to select the real situation.

Shall we finish now. Thank you.