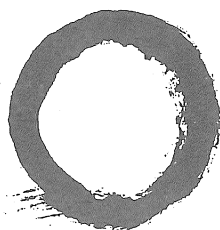


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Carrying Out Bodhidharma's Intention In Coming From The West



Ekiho Miyazaki

Sotoshu Kancho
Abbot: Daihonzan Eihei-ji

I am very pleased to learn that the first Newsletter of the Soto Zen Education Center is now published. On this auspicious occasion, I would like to express my own thoughts from deep in my

heart to the people who are working at the front-line for the teaching of our founder Dogen Zenji's Way.

In April, 1997, the Soto Zen Education Center was established on the occasion of the celebration of the 75th anniversary of Soto Zen propagation in North America. This was truly an epoch making event in the history of overseas propagation of the teaching of Sotoshu.

Now, we are living in the age in which the world is "globalized", or rather "internationalized". In the case of "internationalization", the existence of borders among nations is assumed. At this time, without being fascinated by the flowery sound of the word, we should think about "globalization" as our own personal responsibility. To do so, we must deeply contemplate the relationship between the universality of Dogen Zenji's Way and the particularity of the place where the universal Way is concretely actualized.

The True Dharma that Dogen Zenji searched for and transmitted during his whole life, is the Great Dharma of the buddha-ancestors that has been transmitted from Shakyamuni, and that is nothing other than the truth beyond time and place.

However, the truth is actualized through particular individual persons and inside the history and society in which those persons live.

When we contemplate the entire life of Dogen Zenji who wholeheartedly yearned for the Great Dharma of the World Honored One, we cannot help being amazed that as the result of his practice, without holding dear his bodily life and completely without private mind, he created his own unique world that no one else can reach.

When the sincere search for the universal truth becomes concrete unquestionable teaching, the teaching that comes forth is always endowed with outstanding, unique characteristics and originality.

Therefore, I sincerely expect people who study and practice Dogen Zenji's Way in various countries to, first of all, depart from one's own personal views and practice following your teachers without compromise. Although, in the beginning, it seems simply an imitation of Japanese traditional practice style, we cannot deny the fact that Dogen Zenji's Way was actualized within the soil of Japanese culture. I want to encourage all followers of Dogen Zenji's Way to have patience with the traditional forms of Soto practice which include letting go of one's personal views, following ones teacher wholeheartedly, and deeply studying the particular form in which this practice has been handed down. I feel that in this way, one can be assured of seeing the essence of Dogen's Zen. Naturally once this is done, the process of finding a way to nurture and grow the Founder's Zen in their own countries will be actualized. This is the way Dogen Zenji studied with Nyojo Zenji in China.

It goes without saying that genuine or false practice does not depend on nationality. However, Buddhadharma's or Dogen Zenji's Way does not exist as an abstract entity in the

air. Since Bodhidharma's intention in coming from the West has to be carried out by particular human beings, that is, those who are living in a particular historical and social setting, it is absolutely necessary to deepen our awakening of who the teacher actually is, and what is most important for us to study.

A teaching can truly take a root only in our own awakening. For Dogen Zenji's Way to truly be globalized, it must be the uniqueness of Dogen Zenji's Way in each culture, in each country, and in each person.

I sincerely hope that the establishment of the Soto Zen Education Center together with the efforts of all kaikyoshi, dendokyoshi and other people, will bear the fruit in a unique and creative evolution of Dogen Zen within each culture through practice without compromise. This is the true "globalization" of Dogen Zenji's Way.

"This Way is inherent in each of us; still, gaining the Way depends upon the help of co-practitioners. Though each person is brilliant, still, our practicing the Way needs the power of everyone in the Sangha. Therefore, unifying your mind and concentrating your aspiration, practice and seek the Way together."

When we face the new age, we should deeply and carefully appreciate this teaching of Dogen Zenji.

I hope all people who are engaging in the propagation of Dogen Zenji's Way are in good health and work diligently.

Expectations For The Soto Zen Education Center Of North America

Hozui Narita

Abbot
Daihonzan Sojiji

The Soto Zen Education Center was established in Los Angeles on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the propagation of Soto Zen in North America. For the sake of the Dharma, nothing gives me greater pleasure than this.

A long time ago, I also experienced and engaged in the overseas propagation of the Dharma for thirteen years. I know very well that missionary work in a foreign country is really difficult. People who engage in this work need to have bodhi-mind without holding dear one's life and also must cooperate in harmony with other people, to accomplish even a little bit.



This is really demanding work.

In the beginning of the history of missionary work of Soto-shu in America, Kaikyoshi mainly worked with Buddhist groups of Japanese American people. With help from both Honzan (Eiheiji and Sojiji), Zenshuji was established in Los Angeles. In the past few decades, generations of Japanese

American have greatly changed, so that now teaching and services in English are more important than in Japanese. Also, the late Shyunryu Suzuki Roshi, founder of San Francisco Zen Center, the late Dainin Katagiri Roshi, founder of Minnesota Zen Meditation Center, and the late Hakuyu Maezumi Roshi, founder of Zen Center of Los Angeles all taught Soto Zen to many American people who were not necessarily of Japanese origin. And each went through many difficulties, at the cost of their lives. As the result of their devoted work, American people have attained deep understanding of Soto Zen. Among the students of those teachers, eight people have become dendokyoshi. And under those dendokyoshi, there are many Soto Zen priests.

I have heard that there are many zazen practice centers which haven't yet been registered at Soto-shu. When we overlook such a situation of Soto Zen in America, as a whole, I feel how difficult it is to transmit the true Dharma.

Rev. Shohaku Okumura was appointed Director of the Soto Zen Education Center at the time of its inauguration. Rev. Okumura speaks fluent English and he has been working on translations of Dogen Zenji's writings including part of Shobogenzo. Several books translated by him have been published. I think Rev. Okumura is suitable for the position. At the same time, Rev. Gengo Akiba was appointed as the General Director of the Soto Zen Administrative Office. He is also a spirited person who is capable being the support and driving force of this age. In this age of upheaval that has had many difficult struggles with harmony among the various teachers including kaikyoshi, dendokyoshi and others, I earnestly hope that all people involved in Soto Zen strive for enhancement of Soto Zen, that is, faith in Shakyamuni Buddha, Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji, and practice of Shikantaza (just sitting) and teaching of "the mind is itself buddha (sokushin zebutsu)".

Beginning Of A Full-Scale Propagation Effort



Ryoei Otokawa
Director General:
Administrative Headquarters of
Soto Zen Buddhism

This year, the Soto Zen Education Center of North America was established and the first issue of the newsletter, Soto Zen Journal: Dharma Eye is now

published. I express my heartfelt congratulations.

When we reflect on the long history of Soto Zen teaching in North America, the propagation work so far has been like scattered dots, and yet, the continuous line of Soto Zen promotion activities has been long overdue. The establishment of the Center is an answer to our long wait. Although, such a Center as the main base of propagation should have been established much earlier, I hope this Center can be the beginning of a full-scale ongoing effort to spread Soto Zen. The office of the Soto Zen Education Center is located within the Zenshuji temple grounds, which is the American branch of both Eihei-ji and Sojiji; the two major monasteries in Soto Zen. We have employed a few full-time staff members who will be continuously engaging in education activities. This is the purpose of the Education Center.

All of Soto-shu has great expectations of the Education Center to carry out teaching activities in the English language, educate priests including kaikyoshi and dendokyoshi for the coming generation, and educate members of the various temples and Zen centers as well.

I strongly wish that, in the soil of America, the teaching of zazen can be offered to all people and that this Soto Zen Education Center will watch over this period correctly, and carry out the propagation work to fit each type of situation. I ask all the people involved to please work together to support the Soto Zen Education Center and allow it to be a genuine seed which will bear a big flower. I hope you are all in good health.

Getting Together And Working Together



Myogen Otake
Former Director General:
Administrative Headquarters of
Soto Zen Buddhism

I am very happy that I can express congratulations on the occasion of publishing the first issue of the Soto Zen Education Center's Soto Zen Journal.

As you know, we just celebrated the 75th anniversary of the propagation of Soto Zen in North America. We had grand ceremonies and various commemorative events. On this auspicious occasion, with deep understanding and support from many people, the Soto Zen Education Center was established as a central base of Soto Zen in North America.

I deeply want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the kaikyoshi and their families, and also thank the dendoshi and dendokyoshi who I know are strongly inspired by Soto Zen and the deep understanding and support of members, and the board of directors of each temple and Zen center.

We have come to the age of borderlessness where people strongly are seeking true peace and spiritual stability. In the 21st Century, I hope this Soto Zen Education Center will be able to make a contribution to create an equitable society in America, peace in the world including Japan and America, and promote a good, healthy environment for all living beings. Please work together with the people in the various sanghas in this country as the center of propagation for Soto Zen in this country. This is what I want to say to the General Director of the Soto Zen Administrative Office and the Director of the Education Center.

I also hope that the teachings of Soto Zen can be disseminated not only in the Japanese American community but also in the larger society in America. I promise to support this mission.

Creating A Vigorous Framework of Soto Zen Sanghas



Dogai Bunryu
Director-in-Chief :
Department of Mission
Administrative Headquarters of
Soto Zen Buddhism

This year, the Soto Zen Education Center was established and the first issue of the newsletter has been published. I am very pleased about it. I want

to express my gratitude to all the people involved who gave help to bring it about.

Seventy five years have passed since Soto-shu began its propagation work in North America. In the beginning, the missionary work was for the Japanese people who went to the West Coast of North America, seeking the new world. Those people left their native country and started to live in a foreign country where climate, customs and everything was different from their homeland. They missed their mother country and thought of their ancestors and their own religions. Buddhist missionaries from Japan worked mainly with those people.

Today, overseas propagation of Soto-shu has grown and extended to include a much larger part of American society, as well as the Japanese American community; Soto Zen began to put forth buds. Many Kaikyoshi, Dendokyoshi and Dendoshi are working for the promotion of Soto Zen. Many Zen centers have been established, and a great number of American people who are not necessarily of Japanese descent earnestly practice Zazen.

Now, we have established the Soto Zen Education Center. The mission of this Center is to serve the many people who have aspired to practice Soto Zen Buddhism. It also exists to make a contribution to create peace in the world which is the goal of Zen Buddhism. In order to do this, the Center will carry out propagation work, educate priests, and serve to fulfill the needs of the members of temples and Zen centers throughout North America.

I would like to see the staff of the Soto Zen Education Center, kaikyoshi, and dendokyoshi get together to create a vigorous framework for the Soto Zen sangha as a whole and

make it the central base of promotion activities in the USA. I promise to support their mission through cultural exchanges and translation projects.

Pioneering Effort For The Twenty First Century



Satoru Ryosho Kawai
Vice President:
Los Angeles Buddhist Church
Federation

On behalf of the Los Angeles Buddhist Church Federation, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate the North America Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism in inaugurating the

Soto Zen Education Center as a means of interacting and communicating with all the Soto Zen Centers located throughout the United States.

I commend the North America Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism in its pioneering effort to centralize all the knowledge and information in the field of Soto Zen through the Education Center so that others may learn of Zen's great religious teachings.

The Los Angeles Buddhist Church Federation looks upon this effort with deep admiration, knowing that the challenges of the twenty-first century will be met by the Education Center. It seems especially appropriate at this time when hundreds of people all over the United States are awakening to the teachings of the honorable Dogen Zenji, founder of Soto Zen Buddhism. The young adults of today are eager to learn more about how the religious teachings begun hundreds of years ago can be made relevant to the spiritual needs of today and tomorrow. What better way to meet this challenge than through the pioneering effort of Soto Zen Buddhism in creating the Education Center!

Each member of the Los Angeles Buddhist Church Federation joins me in congratulating the North America Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism on this auspicious occasion. We hope that this initial step will pave the way for more and more centers to be opened for all followers of Buddhism, not only in the United States, but all over the world.

When A Flower Opens, The World Has Fragrance.



Rev. Gengo Akiba

General Director :
Soto Zen Administrative Office
Abbot: Kojin-an Zendo

Introduction

Recently the Soto Zen Administrative Office established a new center - the Soto Zen Education Center. The purpose of this new center is to support and

continue the dialogue recently established between Zen Buddhist priests trained in Japan and those trained in America. In addition, the center is committed to sharing the experience and heritage of Zen Buddhist practice among the two groups. This newsletter is being published as an important part of moving this dialogue forward.

Some Observations

There is a famous koan in Zen Buddhism. Toward the end of Shakyamuni Buddha's life, he had been lecturing to his disciples at the top of Ryojusen (Vulture Peak) near the castle of Rajagrha. One day his disciples were waiting for his lecture, but the Buddha said nothing. Quizzically, they looked at his face. The Buddha said nothing. He picked a *komparage* flower from the ground, and held it in front of them. His disciples were puzzled by his actions, but one disciple, Makakasho, smiled and nodded. Then the Buddha spoke, saying, "I have picked this flower and shown it to you. Beyond the flower, beyond its life, and its form, there is something beyond words. Birth and death are one. That which is beyond birth and death, or form and no-form cannot be expressed in words. There is a Dharma gate of truth beyond words and thoughts, accessible to you through your own inner experience."

Shakyamuni Buddha had lectured for forty years. Some 84,000 sutras of his teachings remain as Buddhist texts. His holding of the flower before his disciples was his essential teaching. We ourselves are like stems of flowers. Through our awareness of the moment and being completely in our environment, we sense the truth which is beyond ourselves. When we realize this truth, we live the Buddha's teachings in our daily actions.

When Makakasho smiled, and nodded, he was one with the Buddha. The Buddha's teaching was transmitted. There are many Makakashos in America.

In another episode, Buddha and his disciples took a walk after their meditation. They came to a green, grassy field and a grove of trees. It was a lovely, quiet and cool place. The Buddha stopped, then pointed at a place in the field. "Someone should build a temple here," he said. The disciples were puzzled. Then Taishakuten picked a long-stemmed wild flower and set its stem into the ground. "I have constructed a sacred temple at this place," he said. Buddha smiled, his eyes compassionate, and said, "Good."

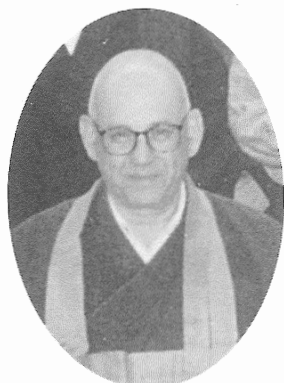
Isn't this a heart-warming episode between Buddha and his disciples? The Chinese character for America means "a lovely country". There have been many flowers planted and swayed by the gentle winds, that have become sacred temples in the lovely place called America.

Buddha held up the flower, and Makakasho smiled with understanding. Buddha pointed at the grassy spot, and Taishakuten planted the wild flower. Many Zen masters have studied and thought about the Buddha's teachings, and have always returned to those two Koans. These two flowers, the Dharma and the temple, were planted in America by the founding Zen Masters. We have in America, and in Japan, the same founding teachings. Let's not separate America and Japan. Let's not just look at each other's flowers as if they were in vases. We should plant these flowers, tend them, and help them to grow strong roots. As disciples of the Buddha, we can work together intelligently, and manifest the teachings of the Buddha in our every day actions.

Dogen Zenji says, "When a flower opens, the world has fragrance."



Shining light in all directions



Rev. Sojun Mel Weitsman

Abbot : Berkeley Zen Center
President : Soto Zen Buddhist
Association

I began Zazen practice in 1964 with my teacher Shunryu Suzuki Roshi at the old Sokoji temple on Bush Street in San Francisco. The Japanese congregation generously let the

American Sangha use the upstairs zendo. But even though we were cordial to each other there was no interaction between the two groups. The cultural differences were too wide and the activities were very different.

At that time, during the 60's and 70's, several Japanese teachers came to the U.S. and started practice places with American students. Each practice place developed its own style, consolidated around the teacher. There was almost no interaction between the students of the various groups. There was likewise no interaction between these groups and Soto Zen in Japan. But the one thing that all the American Sanghas had in common was the practice of Zazen, and to one degree or another, Koan study.

Our teachers discouraged "shopping around", they wanted to bring up their American students in their own environment, concentrating on Zazen, and studying Dogen's way. Suzuki Roshi wanted his students to be confident enough in their practice to stand on their own feet before interacting with the older, more established school in Japan.

In the mid-eighties, American students from the various Sanghas slowly started to interact, visit and meet with each other. This has led to annual teacher's meetings that include individuals from all parts of the country. These meetings provide a forum for discussing the many concerns we all have in common.

But Americans like to act independently; they value their independent sanghas and are wary of the beauracracy which comes with large organizations.

In the mid-eighties, the Soto-shu Shumicho extended themselves to foreign priests by organizing the Tokubetsu Sesshins in Japan every other year as a way of working toward recognition of ordinations and teachers outside Japan. In 1995 at the last Tokubetsu Sesshin at Green Gulch Zen Center in

California, eight American priests were granted the title of Dendokyoshi. We assume this to be the equivalent of Kaikyoshi in Japan (missionary).

The questions we face now are: "Should the Kaikyoshis and Dendokyoshis merge as one group, or remain independent?" "How would that affect our relationship with the Soto-shu in Japan?" "What can we actually do together?" "What is the best we have to offer each other and how will that effect our independence?"

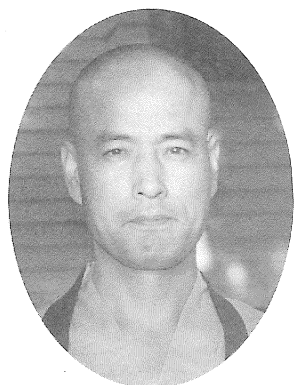
Right now, the Dendokyoshi organization, called the Soto Zen Buddhist Association (SZBA), is just being formed. Now that we have incorporated the next move is to bring together the potential members; those who have legitimate Dharma Transmission. When this has been established, we can decide as a group what our relationship will be with the Soto Zen Kaikyoshi center.

I think it is important to remember how easy it is to misunderstand each other, given the extreme differences between our two cultures. Do we both want the same things? But for me it is a wonderful challenge to make the effort to understand each other without being discouraged by these differences and to find common ground in the true practice which is evolving from Dogen Zenji's way.

American Zen, while being rooted in the formal traditional practice which we have inherited, is at the same time a growing and transforming entity. Its vitality and interest depend upon having enough room in which to grow. My teacher, Suzuki Roshi, always treated us with utmost respect. He only saw the Buddha nature in each one. He wanted nothing. Therefore, we felt free to give him everything. He didn't need to control us because we never doubted his leadership.

At the present time there is a new generation of Kaikyoshis who are attuned to American culture. They are open-minded and respectful of our small accomplishments and seem quite dedicated to co-operating with American practitioners. I believe that the trust that must be established will come through individuals on both sides, whose main interest is in working together to help guide this practice that we share into the twenty-first century. To do this we must not be attached to the idea of American or Japanese. My hope is that by remaining open and straightforward with each other, shining light in all directions so that there are no corners and no shadows, we can establish that confidence. In this way the benefits can flow both ways without hindrance.

Relating A Dream Within A Dream



Shohaku Okumura

Director : Soto Zen Education
Center

(1) A History of my practice with American people

I first sat 5-day sesshin at Antaiji, Kyoto in January of 1969. I was a twenty year old university student. I was surprised because there were so many foreigners

sitting at a small zendo in an unknown temple in Kyoto, Japan. But since then, it has been very natural for me to practice zazen with westerners.

I was ordained by Kosho Uchiyama Roshi at Antaiji, on December 8th of 1970. I graduated from Komazawa University in 1972 and started to practice at Antaiji. Uchiyama Roshi asked me to study English because he thought it was important to have people who could explain Zazen practice in English for people outside of Japan, and who could translate texts on Zazen from Japanese to English. I couldn't say no, so I began to study English at a Language Center in Osaka run by a person from England who was a student of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi of San Francisco Zen Center.

In 1975, when Uchiyama Roshi retired from Antaiji, I went to Massachusetts to establish a small Zen Community called Pioneer Valley Zendo. I practiced and worked to create the zendo with two other monks from Antaiji. I stayed at that Zendo until 1981.

When I went back to Japan from Pioneer Valley Zendo, Uchiyama Roshi asked me to work on the translation of texts on Zazen from Japanese into English with Daitso Tom Wright. We worked and practiced together for three years at a small temple near Antaiji's former location in Kyoto. Antaiji moved to Hyogo Prefecture in 1976.

In 1984, Tom Wright and I began to practice and do translation work at Kyoto Soto Zen Center supported by Koho Watanabe Roshi (Uchiyama Roshi's successor at Antaiji) and Yuho Hosokawa Roshi of Sosenji Temple in Kyoto. I practiced mainly with people from foreign countries and worked on translation. Five books were published with the financial support from Sotoshu Shumicho.

In 1993, I was invited to be the Head Teacher of Minnesota Zen Meditation Center in Minneapolis founded by Dainin

Katagiri Roshi. I practiced there for three years until August, 1996. In September of the same year I founded Sanshin Zen Community.

In April of 1997, I was appointed Director of the Soto Zen Education Center. Since I sat first sesshin when I was twenty years old, I have been continuously practicing mainly with westerners, particularly American practitioners. Uchiyama Roshi always said, "My vow is to educate true zazen practitioners and make good texts on zazen." As one of his dharma successors, I wanted to continue his vow so I have been practicing Zazen with western people and translating Dogen Zenji's and Uchiyama Roshi's writings.

When I was asked to be the Director of the Soto Zen Education Center, I thought I was not the right person for the position because I know only Zazen. The missionary work of Soto-shu must be much broader. I know nothing about other activities taking place at Soto Zen temples and Zen centers. However, because of my vow, finally I could not say no again. I feel I have many things to learn from people who have been engaging in missionary work at Soto temples mainly for Japanese American people, and also people who have been practicing at various Zen centers and Zen groups.

(2) Independence and interdependence

I wrote my personal history because my experience is one example of the way Soto Zen sanghas in the US were in the seventies and eighties. Although I have been practicing Zazen with mainly American people almost thirty years, I haven't had much of a relationship with the American Zen Centers or the ethnic Japanese Buddhist sangha. As Rev. Sojun Mel Weitsman wrote in his essay, there was not much interaction until the mid-eighties between the Japanese Soto sangha in America and the various American sanghas; I think the same is true between the American sanghas. Each group or lineage is, in a sense independent or, to put it differently, isolated. When I first came to the US with my dharma brother, we avoided being Kaikyoshi because we didn't want to be missionaries sent by Japanese Sotoshu. Rather we thought we were establishing a branch of Antaiji. We didn't want to interact with other American Zen Centers because we believed our practice was the most genuine, and the American Zen Center's practice was somewhat questionable. We tried to stay away from the whirlpool of the Zen Boom. When I heard of the many problems at various Buddhist sanghas in the US in the mid-eighties, I thought we were right in this decision. However, after the mid-eighties I began to make more friends from the various Zen centers. I participated the Symposium

of Overseas Propagation held at Soto-shu Shumicho in Tokyo 1984. After that I had a chance to participate in the Dendoshikenshusho Tokubetsu sesshins sponsored by Soto Headquarters held three times in Japan at Shuzenji, Daijoji, and Koshoji temples, and once at Green Gulch Zen Center in the US. I also had a chance to visit various Zen Centers to lead retreats and to give lectures four times, from 1988 to 1991. Occasionally people from various Zen Centers would visit Kyoto Soto Zen Center when they came to Japan and would share practice and work together with me on translations. When I was in Minneapolis, I practiced with many of Katagiri Roshi's dharma heirs and students and I also had many opportunities to visit different small Zen groups too. Through these opportunities to share practice with people from various lineages, I got acquainted with the many teachers and students in the various groups. They were sincerely continuing to practice with the difficulties after the many problems in the eighties.

Through those encounters, I learned many things and my view of American Zen practice became open and broader. I found many sincere people who studying dharma and practicing zazen although each person and group had different style. Now, I think the attitude I had toward other groups in the seventies and early eighties was not open and constructive. I think independence is important but isolation is not necessary. I believe what we have to do is to find a way for us to come together and create a place where we can share our study of dharma and practice, and where we value and respect the uniqueness of each other. Without healthy independence there is no way to have healthy interdependence. And when independence becomes isolation, interdependence is not possible.

I believe the basic mission of the Soto Zen Education Center is to promote an atmosphere and create a network, where each person or group can be independent and equal, and also allowed to be unique, and where we can be flexible enough to learn from and about each other as Soto Zen Buddhists.

Rev. Sojun Mel Weitsman raised questions in his essay such as: "Should the Kaikyoshis and Dendokyoshis merge as one group, or remain independent?" "How would that affect our relationship with the Soto-shu in Japan?" "What can we actually do together?" "What is the best we have to offer each other and how will that affect our independence?" We cannot easily find final answers to these questions. Rather I think it's better not to reach conclusions in a rush. I believe

now is a good time to get together and begin to discuss and to express our thoughts, and try to understand each other. Making decisions without understanding is a bit dangerous.

For example, kaikyoshi and dendokyoshi cannot simply separate as one group of Japanese and the other of Americans. Right now, we have 21 kaikyoshis. Seven of them are American citizens; of those people only two are Japanese American. Four other kaikyoshis are from Zen Centers. One American kaikyoshi was ordained and trained in Japan. These five kaikyoshis practiced in Japanese monasteries and received teacher qualification from the Shumicho.

Thirteen kaikyoshis are working with American sanghas. Their main activities are not different at all from those of Zen Centers' led by dendokyoshis. Only six kaikyoshis work at temples for Japanese American people.

The sanghas led by kaikyoshis are newer and smaller than Zen Centers led by dendokyoshis. So in that sense Dendokyoshis' centers are older and more established in the US. Probably the next generation of those kaikyoshis' sanghas will be very similar to the dendokyoshis' sanghas. As Rev. Weitsman once said to me, we are all in the same boat.

Also, right now, the American government is changing the immigration laws. It has become more and more difficult to get permanent visas. Recently the American government has canceled the special category for religious workers. We cannot expect many more Japanese teachers coming to teach in this country as permanent residents in the future. American Soto Zen must become more and more American and independent from Japanese Sotoshu. I suppose that Japanese Sotoshu will not be able to either control or support American Soto Zen.

Based on this situation, it is difficult for me to find any logical or actual reasons why we should have two separate Soto Zen associations in this country; one for kaikyoshi and one for dendokyoshi. My hope for the future generation is that the American Soto Zen sangha will become one independent entity and have an equal and friendly relationship with Japanese Soto Zen Buddhists.

(3) The Mission of Soto Zen Education Center

According to the regulations of the Soto Zen Education Center, the tasks of the Center are as follows:

1. To promote propagation of and education in Soto Zen in North America.
2. To collect available information and data of the Soto Zen temples and Zen centers in North America.
3. To prepare educational materials in English including translations.

4. To conduct sesshins, lectures and study groups.
5. To research and study the situation of Soto Zen temples and Zen centers in relationship with social conditions in North America.
6. To provide information from Japan.
7. To introduce and distribute the publications from Shumicho.
8. To consider any miscellaneous issues that come up.

The major activities we would like to carry out, in the near future based on the above mission statement, are as follows:

(1) We have invited Shundo Aoyama Roshi, the abbess of Aichi Senmon Nisodo in Japan, in October 1997, to have a lecture tour and lead a retreat. Aoyama Roshi is one of the most respected among the contemporary women Zen teachers in Japan. There are many women Zen teachers in the US, but because there are not many women ancestors recorded in the history of Zen, the role of women in Zen is often unclear in this country. I believe Aoyama Roshi's visit can be very helpful for those interested in women in leadership roles in Zen.

We also would like to do teachers exchange projects in this country, to ask Soto Zen teachers to visit groups from different lineages or districts and give lectures or lead retreats. This kind of exchange between Japan and America and among different groups in this country will be helpful to mutual understanding and respect.

(2) We would like to have sesshins at various practice centers. In 1997 and 1998, we plan to have four sesshins: at Zenshuji, Zen Mountain Center and Tassajara in California, and Hokyoji in Minnesota. We would like to invite priests and lay students from all lineages both Japanese and American, to participate in these sesshins. We think having sesshin together is a great opportunity to share practice and improve mutual understanding and friendship.

(3) We will publish a newsletter "Soto Zen Journal: Hogen

(Dharma Eye)" twice a year. We hope this can be a means to promote dialogue between Japanese and American Soto Zen Buddhists by offering information from both sides.

(4) We would like to work on translation and publication of Soto Zen texts from Japanese to English. There are many Soto Zen texts which would be attractive and helpful for American Soto Zen Buddhists. Our translation work will not be scholastic but rather practical for all people.

Our power is still small. We need help and support from all Soto Zen Buddhists from Japan and the US.

(4) Relating A Dream Within A Dream

When I think of what I did and what I thought twenty years ago, I feel I was in a dream. And what I am doing now is like a dream compared to what I did in the seventies.

When I think of the twenty years in the future, it's a dream. And I am sure, twenty years from now, I will feel what I thought and what I did today will also be like a dream. Our life is like relating a dream within a dream.

In Shobogenzo *Muchu-setsumu* (Relating a dream within a dream) Dogen Zenji said:

"This place of relating a dream within a dream is the land of buddhas and ancestors and the assembly of buddhas and ancestors. Buddhas' land, buddha's assembly, ancestors' way and ancestors' seat are enlightenment within enlightenment, that is, relating a dream within a dream. When you hear this saying and teaching, do not think we are not within the Buddha's assembly. This is Buddha's turning of the dharma wheel. Since this dharma wheel pervades all ten directions, the great ocean, Mount. Sumeru, all nations' lands, and all beings are manifesting themselves."

What I think Dogen Zenji is saying is that when we are talking of a dream and actually working for making the dream come true, we are already within the dream. With this faith, let us to make effort to keep the Buddha's dream alive in this world for the 21st century.

Soto Zen
Administrative Office,
Education Center Staff



Dogen Zenji's Genjo-koan Lecture

by
Shohaku Okumura

(1) Introduction

Genjo-koan is one of the most well-known chapters of Dogen Zenji's *Shobogenzo*. This is the best text to start to study Dogen's teachings. *Genjo-koan* is really important if one wants to understand the meaning of zazen practice and daily activities as bodhisattva practice. As a practitioner, intellectual understanding alone is not enough. That's why Dogen wrote many instructions about how to practice daily. In order to show how to sit Zazen he wrote *Fukanzazengi*, (Universal Recommendation of Zazen), in order to show how to eat in the Zendo he wrote *Fushokuhanpo* (Dharma for taking meals), and to show how to work in the kitchen he wrote *Tenzo Kyokun* (Instruction for the Tenzo or cook in a Monastery). There are many such very concrete instructions about how we have to behave, how we have to work, and what kind of attitude we should maintain toward our own lives. Not simply for practice in a Monastery, but even for us modern people, his teachings are relevant. There are many concrete ways of practice he taught his students, and the basic philosophy is expressed in *Shobogenzo*. And *Genjokoan* is the first chapter of *Shobogenzo*. The basic philosophy of our day to day lives as practice in bodhisattva way is very precisely and also concentratedly written in this short writing, *Genjo -koan*.

Today I'd like to talk about what is the position of *Genjo-koan* within Dogen Zenji's writings and also on the meaning of the title "Genjo-koan".

(2) Position of Genjo-koan in Dogen Zenji's writings

Dogen Zenji was born in the year 1200 A.D. in Kyoto, Japan. Three years from now we'll have the 800 year anniversary of his birth. He was ordained as a Tendai monk when he was thirteen years old at Mount Hiei near Kyoto.

According to his biography, it was said he had a question about Mahayana teaching, particularly the Tendai teaching at his time. At the time the *tendai-hongaku-homon* (Tendai teaching of original-enlightenment) doctrine was very popular and people often said, "All beings, have buddha nature and so actually those beings are Buddhas; they are all enlightened from the very beginning." Dogen's question was then why Buddhas had to arouse way-seeking mind, study Buddha's teaching and practice before they became buddhas. Why would they have

to practice if all beings are already enlightened; if they are already, by nature, Buddhas?

He visited many teachers at the time but no one gave him an answer that satisfied him. So Dogen left the Tendai School and started to practice Zen when he was seventeen years old at Kennin-ji with Eisai's disciple Myozen.

Later, Dogen and Myozen went to China together because Zen was something so new in Japan at that time; like Zen is in America today. So they wanted to go to China together and study authentic, traditional Chinese Zen. Dogen stayed in China for five years until he was 27. He practiced with Soto Zen master Nyojo, and received Dharma transmission from him.

He came back to Japan in the year 1227. Right after returning from China, he wrote *Fukanzazengi* (The Way of Zazen recommended universally) to show how to practice zazen and the essential meaning of zazen. He wrote *Bendowa* (Talk on the Wholehearted Practice of the Way) when he was thirty years old. In *Bendowa* he discussed the meaning of zazen further in the context of Buddhist teachings, and he made eighteen questions and answers.

In 1233 he founded his own monastery; Kosho-ji. In the same year he rewrote *Fukanzazengi*. During the first summer practice period, he wrote *Maka Hannya Haramitsu* (Maha Prajna Paramita). This short writing is Dogen's comment on the Heart Sutra. In the fall of the same year he wrote *Genjo-koan*. I think these two short writings expressed his own basic understanding about Buddhist teachings. For him the practice of Zazen is the practice of Prajna Paramita, and in *Genjo-koan* he expressed the same philosophy, in his own very poetic way. Dogen Zenji stayed at Koshoji for ten years and moved to Echizen to found Eihei-ji in the year of 1243. He lived another ten years to establish his own monastery in the remote mountains. He produced many writings until the end of his life in 1253.

As it is said in the postscript of the text, *Genjo-koan* was compiled in the fourth year of Kencho, that was 1252. Some scholars have discussed what this word "compile" (*shuroku* in Japanese) means; some scholars think, this was the time when Dogen Zenji put *Genjo-koan* as the first chapter of *Shobogenzo*. *Shobogenzo* has about ninety five chapters and there are several different versions; such as the 75-chapter version, a 12 chapter version, 60 chapter version, 28 chapter version, and a 95 chapter version. Traditionally the seventy five-chapter version was considered to be Dogen Zenji's original collection. Scholars thought that he wrote another twelve chapters after he compiled the 75 chapter version of *Shobogenzo*. In the Tokugawa period,

Soto Scholars added several more chapters and published the ninety five chapter version of *Shobogenzo* (Honzanban version).

There is another school of scholars who think Dogen Zenji was not satisfied with what he wrote in the 75 chapter version and began the 12 chapter version as a fresh start to rewriting *Shobogenzo* in which he planed to include 100 chapters. Anyway, the first chapter of the 75-chapter version *Shobogenzo* is *Genjo-koan*. Although *Genjokoan* was written when he was very young, Dogen probably rewrote it in the year before his death.

The expression "Genjo-koan" is used many times particularly in the 75 chapter version *Shobogenzo*. Someone counted how many times Dogen used this expression and it is said he used "Genjo-koan" twenty five times in various chapters, and in the case of "Genjo" alone, he used it more than 300 times in sixty three chapters. So this word, "Genjo" is a key word to understand Dogen Zenji's teachings in *Shobogenzo*.

(3) The meaning of the title "Genjo-koan"

Next I'd like to talk on what "Genjokoan" means. This is Genjokoan (現成公案) in Chinese character; Kanji.

This is the Chinese character for Gen(現). Gen means to appear, and to be in the present moment. In Japanese, genzai (現在) means "present moment"; and another expression gendai (現代) means "modern times." Basically gen has these two meanings; to appear, to show up, something we couldn't see and now we can see it; so it means manifestation or actualization, something which was potential becomes actual; that is *gen*.

Jo (成) means "to become", "to complete", or "to accomplish". Genjo as a compound term means, as a verb, "to manifest" or "to actualize" (to appear and become). As a noun it implies the reality actually and presently happening.

Ko (公) means to be public. The problem is *an*. (按 or 案). Koan is a very famous word in Zen particularly in the Rinzai tradition. The practice of Rinzai Zen is called "koan practice". In the case of koan practice, koan implies recorded stories, or sayings of ancient Chinese masters. Those stories or sayings are expression of truth or reality.

Beginning in the Sung Dynasty China (11th-13th century), koans were used as a method to educate students. Zen masters gave a koan as a question with which students had to work.

Japanese Rinzai masters, particularly Hakuin Zenji (18th century) developed a system of Koan practice. The Rinzai tradition of Koan practice was introduced to the Western world

by D.T. Suzuki. In koan practice, a koan is an expression of the truth or reality; and also a question practitioners have to wrestle with. In the common usage the kanji for koan is 公案.

The upper part (安) means "to place" or "to be peaceful". The lower part (木) means wood or tree. The original meaning of this kanji is a desk. A desk is a place where we think, read and write. This "an" also means a paper or document on the desk.

There is another kanji used in koan, that is 按. In the case of this kanji (按), the left side part means "hand". The literal meaning of this kanji (按) is to press, or to push with a hand or a finger. For example, in Japanese, massage, is "an-ma (按摩)". So this "an" is to press to give massage for healing. This kanji also means "to make investigation" to put things in order when things are out of order.

These two Chinese characters can be used as alternatives to each other because they have the same pronunciation. We may interpret both 公案 and 公按 as the same word. Actually, even in a Dictionary of Zen words like *Zengaku-dai-jiten*, these two are considered to be one and the same word. So, it might not be appropriate to make distinctions between them.

The common understanding of this word koan (公案) is public document that is on the desk of a government office. That means a law issued, in the case of ancient China, by the Emperor. Once a law was issued with the name of the Emperor, it was absolutely unchangeable and all people had to observe it. No one can question or complain about it. In Zen, people thoughts koans were like a government document in which laws or regulations are written. Koans express the unchanging truth or reality.

However, in the oldest commentary of Dogen Zenji's *Shobogenzo* made by his direct disciple Senne, the word "koan" is interpreted with the kanji 公按. Senne was Dogen Zenji's disciple who was his attendant at one time and compiled volume one, nine and ten of the *Eihei-koroku*; the collection of Dogen Zenji's formal lectures. Senne founded Yokoji temple in Kyoto after Dogen Zenji's death, and with his own disciple Kyogo, made the oldest commentary of 75-chapter version of *Shobogenzo*. The commentary is commonly called the *Okikigakisho* or just *Gosho*. Since the Tokugawa period (17th Century), the *Gosho* has been considered to be the most authoritative commentary of *Shobogenzo*.

In the beginning of their commentaries on *Genjo-koan*, Senne and Kyogo interpreted the word "koan" based on this kanji (按): "Ko (公) means to be equal. An (按) means to keep one's lot. *Hei-fu-hei* (平不平; equalize inequality) is *ko* (to

be public). Keeping one's lot is *an*."

Ko (to be public) means to equalize inequality. When there are some unequal and unfair situations, the duty of a government officer is to equalize the unfair situation for all people.

An is to keep one's lot. Each person has different responsibility depending on their occupation in the society. Each profession such as Emperor, ministers, high-class officers, low-class officers, merchants, farmers, teachers, doctors etc. has its own lot. Each person has different personality, capability and occupation. Each of us is unique and cannot be replaceable with anyone else.

Ko is equality of everything and *an* refers to uniqueness or particularity of each and every thing.

Gosho says, "Koan refers to the Shobogenzo itself." Shobogenzo is the true-dharma-eye-treasury that has been transmitted from the Buddha through ancestors in each generation. Shobogenzo is another name of the true reality of all beings (*shoho-jisso*).

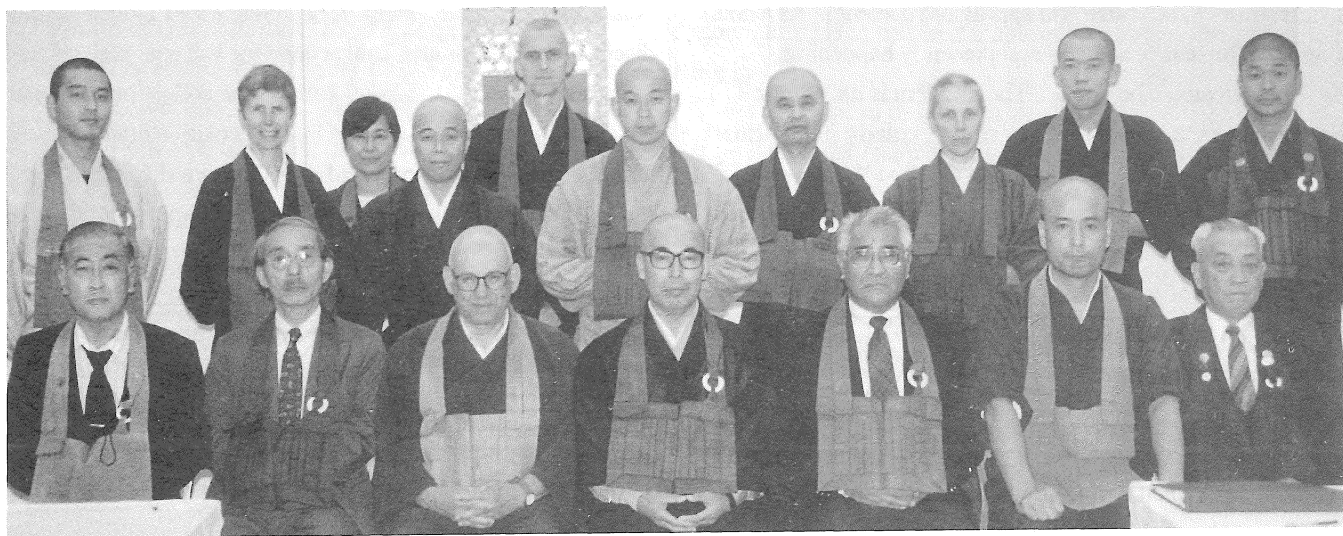
According to the *Gosho*, the word koan expresses the reality of our own lives. That is, we are the intersection of equality (universality, unity, oneness of all beings) and inequality (difference, uniqueness, particularity, individuality). Emptiness includes both unity and difference.

Everything in the world has differences; nothing is actually equal. Also, in society there are many kinds of discrimination, inequalities, unfair situations. To equalize such inequality is to be public. "Public" is the opposition of private. As a private person, each person is different. For example a person who has a public position has to think all people are equal. That's the meaning of "to be public". A public officer should think how we can all become equal.

"*An*" means each person should take care of his/her own responsibility. *Ko* and *an* are in opposition within this dynamic. *Ko* is to be public, we should think of all people as equal, and *an* means, as a private person each person has a different and unique personality and each person takes care of different things.

I often use the example of a hand: this is one hand and each hand has five fingers. This one entity can be called one hand and also a collection of five fingers. When we think this is a collection of five fingers each finger is independent and has a different shape and function. The thumb has its own shape and function. A little finger has its own shape and its own function. We cannot exchange. Each finger has its own unique way of being. And yet, as one hand, all five fingers function together and there's no separation. This is really "one" hand.

We can see this as only one hand and also as a collection of five fingers. Not only a hand but each one of us is the same. We have both sides of universality and individuality. And these are not two separate aspects. Each side is absolute. One hand is 100% one hand. Five fingers are 100% five fingers. When we call this one hand, there are no five fingers. And when we call this five fingers, one hand is hidden. In *Genjokoan*, Dogen Zenji express this, "When one side is illuminated another side is dark." This whole universe is one universe, there's no separation within it. And yet, when we see it from another aspect, this universe is a collection of billions of different, unique and individual beings. Nothing can be the same; everything has its own position in particular time and space. Each and everything is completely independent. And yet, this whole world, whole universe and all time-from beginningless beginning to endless end-is just one. Dogen Zenji said in *Bendowa*, "Even if only one person sits for a short time,



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because this zazen is one with all existence and completely permeates all time, it performs everlasting buddha guidance within the inexhaustible dharma world in the past, present, and future.” We cannot separate. It’s really only one time and one space.

There are two ways of viewing this one reality: One is to see things as a whole, the other is to see things as independent. These two ways of seeing things are really important in understanding Mahayana Buddhist philosophy. In Mahayana Buddhist philosophy the two aspects of this one reality of our life is called “the two truths”, one is absolute truth and another is conventional truth.

For example, in the *Heart Sutra* emptiness is considered to be absolute truth, there’s no separation; there’s no eyes, no ear, no hand, no nose, no tongue, no anything because this reality is just working as one; emptiness. Yet, from the other side, each has form; eyes are eyes, nose is nose, tongue is tongue; this person, Shohaku is Shohaku; I’m not you and you are not me. Even when you eat delicious food my stomach is not filled or vice versa. So we are completely different individual people. And yet, as a whole, we are living the same life; as living beings, we are interconnected completely together with all beings. This whole universe is just one thing, as five fingers are just one hand.

In Zen this reality is called *sabetsu* (distinction, inequality) and *byodo* (equality). Everything is different and independent on the one side, and everything is equal and interconnected on the other side. To see one reality from those two sides is the basic view point of Mahayana Buddhism including Zen.

As a form, everything is different. Everything has different form and yet those forms are empty; empty means no discrimination and separation. And yet this emptiness is form. We see one reality as an intersection or merging of equality and uniqueness.

In Chinese Zen literature, such as the *Sandokai* (Merging of difference and unity) composed by Zen master Sekito Kisen, says these two sides are called difference and unity. This difference and unity should merge. In *Sandokai*, Sekito expresses this side of oneness or unity as dark, and the other side is light. When it’s bright outside we can see things and different forms, different colors, different names and different functions; when it’s completely dark all beings are there but we cannot distinguish them. As a whole, it’s one darkness. These are two aspects of one reality.

This is the basic way we see reality in Buddhism and Zen. It’s important to understand this point to understand any Zen

literature or Buddhist philosophy.

In the case of Dogen, however, to see one reality from two sides is not enough. We should express both sides in one action. For example, in the *Heart Sutra* two sides are expressed as “form is emptiness and emptiness is form.” But, Dogen Zenji said in *Shobogenzo Makahannya-haramitsu*, “Form is form. Emptiness is emptiness.” When we say form is emptiness and emptiness is form, there is still separation of form and emptiness. If form is really emptiness and emptiness is really form, we can only say form is form and emptiness is emptiness. When we say form, emptiness is already there. And when we say emptiness, form is already there. If we understand this basic point we can understand the first three sentences (paragraphs) of *Genjokoan*.

When we study and practice according to Dogen Zenji’s teachings, it’s important not only to understand with our intellect those two aspects; actually we should aim at actualizing these two different sides within one action. That’s a really important and yet difficult thing. For example, Dogen Zenji wrote Instructions for the tenzo (cook). As a person who is cooking, each action is a personal action. We have 100% responsibility in how we work and the result of our work. Each person must receive the result of one’s own karma.

Yet this personal practice also has a function within the community. It’s not only a personal action, we cannot say “This is my practice. I just do whatever I want to do”. This is my personal practice and yet this is also part of the practice of the whole community. There is a certain way and a certain time food should be ready. The food cooked by the tenzo nurtures all the people’s practice.

The actual action in the kitchen is the person’s own and yet this one person’s action has influence on the whole community. As a person who lives with this body and mind we have to aim at how we can manifest or actualize those two aspects of our lives. One is “this is my own practice, no one can do my practice for me” and yet this practice is really not for me, but this practice, or work, is for the whole community. We have to think how we can serve the whole community in the best way, and yet we should do it as our own personal action with our own responsibility. We are completely independent persons and yet we are 100% part of the community. How can we actualize both sides within one action? That is the really basic point of our lives. Not only for human beings but particularly for human beings, because we think we are independent beings. Particularly in modern society we put emphasis on independence and individuality. However when we only think

of ourselves as independent persons without considering others, we cannot live together with others.

For example in traditional Japanese society, family or communities, as well as schools or companies, are more important than the individual persons. Countries are more important than the people. I think that is one extreme. That is called wholism. I think that it is really unhealthy. But if we only see our independence, and think "I can do whatever I want to do", we become really isolated and egoistic. These two are sicknesses caused by a misguided view of reality. We are actually living as independent, unique persons, and yet we are living as a part of the whole community. When we cling to only one aspect and put emphasis we become sick; either way, through wholism or through individualism. Actually both sides should be there. It is the most healthy way when we are living together and yet each person is independent. We have to live together, and in order to live together we have to, in a sense, put aside our uniqueness, otherwise we have to always fight against other people. I think the most important teaching of Buddha is to find the middle way. We need to avoid either extreme and practice the reality as a middle way. We have to create our own way because there's no certain fixed middle way. We have to see the whole situation and find the most healthy and joyful way of life for both each one of us and for the community as a whole. And we should do this with our own responsibility. I think this is the essential point of Buddha's and Dogen Zenji's teachings.

In the *Genjo-koan*, Dogen Zenji expresses individuality as "a drop of water", and universality is expressed as "moonlight", and he said that even in a small drop of water, the moonlight is reflected. This is the reality of our life. We are individual and yet universal. The vast, boundless moonlight is reflected in us like a drop of water. The point of our practice, according to Dogen's teaching in *Genjo-koan*, is how we can keep awakening to that reality of individuality and universality together. Through our practice, we try to actualize one reality which has two sides. We go to extremes when we cling to our thinking. Thinking comes out of our experience, that is our karma. Depending upon our past experiences, we have tendency to think that this side should be important, or the other side should be more important. And we lose sight of the reality as a whole.

In our practice of zazen and also our practice in our daily lives, we awake to reality as a whole. We are free from either side and find the middle path. Both sides should be really there. This is the most vivid and healthy way of life.

My understanding of the title "Genjo-koan" is *genjo* (reality actually and presently taking place) is *koan* (absolute truth and also a question from reality to us). And *koan* is nothing other than *genjo* (things actually happening in front of our eyes). We have to answer the question from reality through our each and every action as practice.

Eiheiji International Department

Rev. Jikisai Minami
Eiheiji International Division

There are two categories of international activities at Eiheiji. One is the reception of visitors from various foreign countries. Another is to send priests to visit foreign countries.

We have three kinds of visitors. "Sanzen" is for the people who want to experience the same practice as training monks, usually for a two-night three-day stay. "Sanro" is for the people who want to practice Zen with a modified schedule for one-night two-day stay. Third is giving a special guided tour for the temple visitors.

The international Department at Eiheiji is in charge of taking care of the many guests we receive each year. Most of our guests come in the months from May to October. The international Department keeps information on the number of guests that follow our programs. Also, there are many foreign visitors who have their own guides, or who can speak Japanese, so the actual number of visitors we receive each year is not clear.

We recommend people to visit and stay at Eiheiji in the winter because we don't have many visitors, so people can experience the quieter and deeper atmosphere of a Zen monastery.

Monks are also traveling from Eiheiji to visit many foreign countries. On these trips they are attending ceremonies and conferences, experiencing temples of different schools, and practicing at various religious facilities.

Here are some details of our monks travel activities this year;
* *March*: Minamizawa *kannin* (director) and other representatives attended the 75th anniversary of Zenshuji Soto Mission in Los Angeles.

* *August*: Eiheiji sent a training monk to a Catholic monastery in France as a part of East-West Spiritual Exchange. Minamizawa *kannin* and other people attended the Religious Summit at Enryakuji of the Tendai school on Mt. Hiei.

* *October*: Amafuji *godo* and two other priests attended a meeting on "Prayer for Peace" sponsored by the Vatican.

* *October*: Minamizawa *kannin* and other people will attend the Buddhist Friendly Exchange Meeting of China, Korea and

Japan held in Kyoto.

The number of these kinds of international activities are increasing. I feel a growing trend in this age of internationalization.

750th Anniversary Of Dogen Zenji's Entering Nirvana

Daihonzan Eiheiiji
Daionki Administration Office

At Daihonzan Eiheiiji and Daihonzan Sojiji, we hold the anniversary services of the founder and second abbot of each monastery every fifty years. All Sotoshu priests and temples participate in these services. In the year, 2002, we will have the 750th anniversary of our founder Dogen Zenji's Entering Nirvana. Therefore, in November of 1995, the administration office of the Anniversary events was established within Eiheiiji and began making plans to prepare for the various memorial activities.

As part of our preparations, we are working on improvements to the monastery which involve reconstructing and remodeling some of the buildings. In order to promote Dogen Zenji's teachings, we are planning to have pre-anniversary events at temples in other countries. Other activities include making posters and leaflets, making panel exhibitions, publication of collections of essays, accepting one-day *ango* (group tours) etc. We are working on the preparation of these activities. This year we started to work on fundraising to carry out these events. We hope all Soto Zen temples in Japan and their members and people from overseas can support our efforts.

Main ceremony period April 23—April 29, 2002

September 16—October 6, 2002

Recent Activities At Sojiji

Rev. Dosho Saikawa
Guestmaster :
Daihonzan Sojiji

Daihonzan Sojiji moved from Monzencho in Noto (Ishikawa Prefecture) to Yokohama eighty seven years ago. The purpose and spirit of this move was to disseminate the teachings of Soto-shu to more people in a larger society. That purpose has been well fulfilled in moving to the present location at Tsurumigaoka in Yokohama. Sojiji has about six thousand families of temple members and another six thousand of believers. Sojiji has a

good relationship with the people of this society. Many people visit Sojiji on the New Year's Day and *Setsubun*.

Keizan Zenji, the founder of Sojiji, also made efforts for education of women. For example, he established the first woman's practice center in Japan at Yokoji. On the basis of this spirit of the founder, Sojiji has been working for women's education since it moved to Yokohama. Now, Sojiji has Sojiji pre-school, Sansho kindergarten, Tsurumi woman's middle school, Tsurumi woman's High School and Tsurumi College. Tsurumi College was originally started for women, but the Department of Dentistry now has both men and women studying together. A department of the Study of Cultural Assets will be established within a few years and also will have both men and women studying together. The building of The Institute For The Study of Zen Culture, which will be a subsidiary institution of the College is presently under construction. The building will be completed next year.

As well as the educational institutions, Sojiji runs Tsurumi General Hospital. The hospital also provides a day care facility to help local families in the area.

Since, many foreigners live in Yokohama, we also have some foreign people who come to practice zazen. In the beginning, we ask them to attend Sunday zazen-kai and later we allow them to participate in the zazenkai with a one night stay. There are some foreigners who come to sit almost every Sunday.

We are working on a plan to send monks of Sojiji to foreign countries to study. This year, we sent one monk to participate in the East West Spiritual Exchange. The monk visited a Benedictine Monastery in France and stayed there from August 20 to September 30. Rev. Tetsugen Glassman has a plan to have a sesshin at Auschwitz in November. Two people related with Sojiji will join him.

Recently we had a charity concert in front of the Buddha Hall at Sojiji. The concert was sponsored by the Soto-shu Volunteer Association to raise funds to help people in North Korea who are suffering from starvation. That evening about one thousand people gathered in front of the Buddha Hall at 7 PM. The Buddha Hall lights were lit, and all had a deep feeling that we all are living together on this planet. We donated the money from the tickets sold at the concert, and also collected enough rice to feed three thousand people for one day. Of course this was the first time in the history of Sojiji that we had a live concert in front of Buddha Hall. But I think this event allows us to reconfirm the spirit of moving to the east 87 years ago and also to think of the possibilities of Sojiji in the future. Sojiji has a lot of potential and it will keep changing along with the changes of the world. Please count on us and support us.

News From The Shumucho

The Soto Zen Text Translation Project

The initial Plan of This Project is aiming to

- 1) develop a system for computer input of the text.
- 2) develop standards and format for translations,
- 3) complete translation of *Gyoji Kihan, Nikka Gongyo Section*
- 4) and begin translation of the *Shobogenzo* in its first two - three years.

In this our second fiscal year, the following translations are in progress.

Shobogenzo course: *Zazengi, Zazenshin, Sansuikyo, Tajinzu, Butsudo*

Denkoroku course: *Sotoshu Gyoji Kihan* (The Soto Rituals),
Sotoshu Nikka
Gongyo Seiten (The Soto Liturgy)

The members of the Department of Mission under the new administration.

Kyoka Bucho (Director-in-Chief, Department of Mission):
Reverend Dogai Bunryu

International Division

Kokusai Kacho (Director of International Division):
Reverend Fukuzawa Shinzen

Administrative Secretaries :

Reverend L. Shunten Yoshinami - Hitachi
Reverend Kato Shuten
Taki - Koizumi Rika

SOTO ZEN EDUCATION CENTER ACTIVITY SCHEDULE (October, 97 ~ March, 98)

October 5:

LECTURE ON BUDDHISM IN GENERAL at Sozenji-Temple in Montebello, California from 3:00pm.

October 12:

DHARMA STUDY GROUP (Shobogenzo Genjokoan) led by Rev.Shohaku Okumura at Zenshuji-Temple in Los Angeles, California, from 10:30am.

October 16 ~ 28:

LECTURE TOUR OF AOYAMA SHUNDO ROSHI

(Author of Zen seeds, Abbess, Soto Zen Women's Monastery)

Oct.16 Thurs.Zen Education Center, Zenshuji Temple
& Zen Center of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA
Oct.18 & 19 Sat & Sun. Mt.Equity Zendo, Muncy, PA
Oct.21 Tues. Smith College, Northampton, MA
Oct.23 Thurs. Bean Town Sangha, Boston, MA
Oct.24 Fri. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
Oct.26 Sun. Green Gulch Farm, Sausalito, CA
Oct.28 Tues. Tassajara Zen Mt.Center, CA &
Sokoji-Temple, San Francisco, CA

November 2:

DHARMA STUDY GROUP (Shobogenzo Genjokoan) led by Rev.Shohaku Okumura at Zenshuji-Temple in Los Angeles, California from 10:30am.

December 1~8:

ROHATSU SESSHIN at Zenshuji-Temple in Los Angeles, California

1998

January 11:

DHARMA STUDY GROUP (Shobogenzo Genjokoan) led by Rev.Shohaku Okumura at Zenshuji-Temple in Los Angeles, California at 10:30am.

February 8 ~ 15:

GATHERING OF SOTO SANGHA

SESSHIN at Yokoji Zen Mountain Center in Mountain Center, California

February 22:

DHARMA STUDY GROUP (Shobogenzo Genjokoan) led by Rev.Shohaku Okumura at Zenshuji-Temple in Los Angeles, California at 10:30am.

March 8:

DHARMA STUDY GROUP (Shobogenzo Genjokoan) led by Rev.Shohaku Okumura at Zenshuji-Temple in Los Angeles, California at 10:30am.

SOTO ZEN EDUCATION CENTER BUSINESS PROJECT 1998

- 1) Lecture series on Buddhism. (Every Month)
Lecture series on Soto Zen. (Every Month)
- 2) Teachers Exchange Project (June & November)
- 3) Sesshin : Gathering of Soto Sangha
Sesshin at Hokyoji in Minnesota (June)
Sesshin (September or October)
Rohatsu Sesshin (December)
Nehane Sesshin (February ' 99)
- 4) Publishing the Newsletter (April & October)
- 5) Steering Committee Meetings (May & October)
- 6) Planning Committee Meetings (Every Month)
- 7) Kaikyoshi and Family Conference (August)
- 8) North American Soto Zen Ministers Conference (May)
- 9) Research and make educational materials for propagation including:
A Guide book for Zazen (Revise SHIKANTAZA)
A Kaikyo Center Brochure
- 10) Collecting information, brochure, and other data of Temples, Zen centers and Zen groups in North America.

Editor's Note

We would like to thank the authors of each essay as well as the many people who gave us help in editing this inaugural issue. Working on this project has been a great encouragement for all of us here at the Education Center. The Dharma Eys is published twice a year by the Soto Zen Education Center. Please send your comments about this newsletter to the Center.