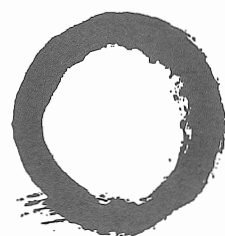
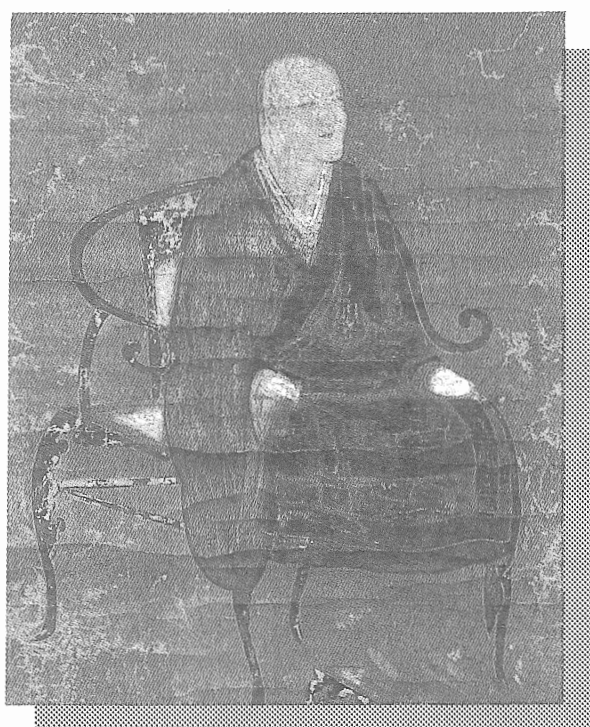


DHARMA EYE



法眼

NEWS OF SOTO ZEN BUDDHISM TEACHINGS AND PRACTICE IN NORTH AMERICA



SPECIAL EDITION FOR DOGEN ZENJI SYMPOSIUM

OCTOBER 23-24, 1999

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, CA

The 800th Anniversary of Dogen Zenji's Birth

Gengo Akiba

General Director of Soto Zen Administrative office of North America

Dogen Zenji was born in 1200 and died in 1253 at the age of fifty-three. In the year 2000 we will celebrate the 800th anniversary of his birth and in 2002 we will observe the 750th anniversary of his death. These anniversaries of his birth and death at the juncture of the 20th and 21st centuries will be observed widely in Japan.

In the United States, at Stanford University in California, the first Dogen Zenji Symposium and Conference will take place October 23 through October 26, 1999 to commemorate these events. At this time we might ask what is Dogen Zenji's place within world history? When we view his contemporaries, we find he lived in an age of radical upheaval, in both Japan and Europe, which was heralded by the rising of new

philosophies and cultures. It is interesting to note that both St. Francis and Thomas Aquinas were Dogen Zenji's contemporaries.

Dogen Zenji came back to Japan from China in 1227 after receiving dharma transmission from Tendo Nyojo Zenji. In Japan, an island in the Far East isolated from the rest of the world, Dogen expressed his Buddha Dharma paradoxically saying, "I have no Buddha Dharma at all." Yet for the next thirty-six years, living in a remote place, he wrote much about his practice of zazen. Besides his major work the Shobogenzo, he wrote Hokyoki (Journal of the Hokyo era), Fukanzazengi (The Universal Recommendation of Zazen), Gakudoyojinshu (Points to Watch In Practicing the Way), Eiheishingi (the Pure

Standards for Eihei-ji Monastery), among others. His disciples also recorded his sayings in *Shobogenzo-Zuimonki* (Record of Things Heard) and *Eiheikoroku* (The Extensive Record of Eternal Peace). In these writings, Dogen Zenji presented his understanding of Zen Buddhism in which religion, philosophy, poetry and practice are integrated into one entity. His thought explored the nature of all beings, not just human existence. What follows is a brief description of his holistic view of all beings.

Our usual cognitive process is based on separation and the correlation between the subject of our thinking and its objects. When the subject cognizes objects, whether the objects are something abstract or concrete, the subject is fixed as something that cannot be recognized by the subject itself. Dogen Zenji goes beyond this way of thinking by eradicating the separation and correlation between subject and object, then dropping the notion of the subject as a fixed entity. Dogen Zenji completely negates the common sense relationship between subject and object. The essence of Zen abides within this way of thinking. He endlessly clarifies the world beyond our separation of subject and objects and points to the existence of our present reality as the world that is revealed within the present moment. Therefore, the subjectivity of Dogen Zenji himself as the one who is clarifying reality is dissolved into the world that is revealed right now and right here: subject is unified with the world. In other words, his subjectivity becomes the world itself and continues to seek the source of the world. And finally he understood the absolute equality of all beings, which affirms each and every being. Within Dogen Zenji's thought, each and every thing is swimming completely and freely. This is the original way of all dharmas.

Dogen Zenji said, "The entire world is one piece of bright pearl." and "Each and every being is time." These thoughts are the basic manifestation of the Buddha Dharma itself as expressed in the phrase "just sitting". This is the most beautiful and genuine expression of the reality of our life. Dogen Zenji is a Zen master who created a system of thought and practices which truly expresses Zen Buddhism.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) wrote in the *Summa Theologica* (Highest Theology): "A human being is an existence in which the intellectual soul and material body are combined. Therefore, human beings can not directly grasp the essence of reality, but we understand things through senses using active reason and abstracting things.

Faith and reason are two different functions, though these might be one within the ultimate truth. For example, the proof of existence of God can be understood by human reason instead of faith. And yet, the essence of God cannot be understood by human reason because we are finite. We only can approach God by negation and analogies. Knowledge regarding God, which can be grasped by human reason, belongs to natural theology. And the knowledge regarding God which can be grasped by revelation belongs to revealed theology"

Thomas Aquinas's understanding is still considered relevant in Catholic theology today. I am astonished by the major differences in the kind of thinking presented by these two giants

of the 13th century. One was Dogen, a religious person living in Japan, and the other was Thomas Aquinas, who was representative of the typical religious in the West. It also seems that the differences in the philosophies of Dogen and Aquinas reflect the typical differentiation between Eastern and Western thinking down to the present. Thomas's thought has connections with natural science and technology based on human reason, and Dogen's thought manifests through intuition and sensitivity based on coexistence.

The 20th century was the age in which Eastern and Western civilization truly met and influenced each other fully. As we enter the 21st century human activity is evolving in numerous ways. I hope the 21st century will be an age characterized by the integration of East and West.

According to Dr. Paul Kennedy, a student of politics and history, the gaps between population and food production, natural resources, environment and the development of industrial and technological power will be the main problems for human beings in the new millennium. These problems will be resolved only through the wisdom of human beings. Zen Buddhism as taught by Dogen Zenji is without question one of the heritages of that human wisdom.

Fortunately, in the second half of the 20th century, many people in Europe and North America study Dogen Zenji's Buddhism through the practice of *shikantaza* (just sitting) and the establishment of many Zen centers. Quite a few major teachers of Dogen's way have appeared and many scholars are studying and discussing Dogen Zenji from an academic perspective. As we enter this new century and a new millennium we have invited some of these people to the Dogen Zenji Symposium and Conference in celebration of the 800th anniversary of Dogen Zenji's birth

We will have presentations discussing Dogen's Zen and its relevance from many different aspects. In the conference to be held after the symposium on October 25th and 26th, American Dogen Zen scholars will get together and offer several academic presentations which I am sure will be very interesting.

Bringing together all of these perspectives on Dogen's Zen -- his thought and practice, and their usefulness for present and future humankind--will, I hope, help make Dogen's understanding more accessible to the wider world. In this way, the symposium will be meaningful and timely.

For the 21st century, we will need the wisdom which can save the earth and humankind. We will need the wisdom to create fresh and new paradigms as a way to guide ourselves toward a progressive picture of the world and our place as human beings in that world. Such wisdom should be innovative but deeply rooted in the traditions of our spiritual legacy. I hope it will become clear that there is such wisdom within Dogen Zenji's Zen Buddhism.

I hope this symposium will be successful and would make Dogen Zenji happy. I hope everyone will come together and share the fruit of the upcoming commemorative symposium.

The Timeliness of Dogen Zen and the Transmission of His Teachings to the U. S.

Stanley Weinstein



The first half of the thirteenth century was a period of ferment in the history of Japanese Buddhism that ultimately led to the emergence of two major Pure Land schools (Jodo and Jodo Shin), two Zen schools (Rinzai and Soto), and the Nichiren school. These five schools, later collectively referred to as the “new schools

of the Kamakura period,” primarily focused on the individual, in contrast to the older Tendai and Shingon schools, which, having been richly patronized by the court and aristocracy, regarded the protection of the state and the well-being of its elite as one of their principal responsibilities. While the newer schools did not necessarily renounce such concerns entirely, they tended to direct their teachings toward the individual. The Pure Land schools had as their goal rebirth in Amida Buddha’s Paradise; the followers of Nichiren sought to avoid misfortunes in this life and ultimately realize Buddhahood through faith in the Lotus Sutra. The Zen schools aimed at attaining a sense of freedom and awareness in one’s everyday life through the correct practice of the Dharma as transmitted through the lineages of their patriarchs.

The Rinzai lineage of Zen was brought to Japan piecemeal in the late twelfth century; the Soto lineage, by contrast, was introduced by a lone monk, Dogen Kigen (1200-1253), who had received the Dharma transmission in China from the Caodong (Japanese: Soto) Master Rujing in 1227. One of the hallmarks of the new Buddhism was the belief that their ultimate spiritual goal could be realized through a single clearly defined overarching practice. For the Pure Land schools it was belief in Amida’s vow of universal deliverance as manifested in the invocation of Amida’s name (the *nenbutsu*); for the Nichiren school the sole practice necessary was the recitation of the title of the Lotus Sutra (the *daimoku*); for Dogen this practice was “just sitting” (*shikan taza*), i. e., sitting in the manner of all the Buddhas and the patriarchs.

Viewed temporally, Dogen lived in the first half of

the 13th century as did the founders of the other Kamakura schools. In terms of his ideas, however, Dogen’s teachings have a remarkably contemporary resonance. It was a commonplace in Dogen’s time for monks to perform rituals to ward off evil, cure illness, or bring wealth and power to their patrons. In fact Nichiren maintained that the test of true Buddhism is precisely its ability to work such miracles in this life. Dogen, on the other hand, inveighed against those monks who “engage in fortune telling, astrology or numerology” and urged his followers “to practice Buddhism for the sake of practicing Buddhism, not for securing material rewards or the working of miracles.”

It is not surprising that, as an heir to the Zen tradition, Dogen, unlike the founders of the Pure Land and Nichiren schools, attached great importance to adherence to the precepts and to living the monastic life in a proper fashion. Yet Dogen realized that not everyone had the innate capacity to do so. In his view such people were not, *ipso facto*, excluded from the fruits of Buddhism. As Dogen put it, “Entrance into the Way of the Buddha and patriarchs does not depend upon whether one is a lay person or monk/nun, but rather on the intent of the individual. . . . During the lifetime of Shakyamuni Buddha there were evil men and people with false views who attained the Way. The assemblies of the patriarchs included hunters and woodcutters who experienced enlightenment (*satori*).”

Among the great monks of Japan none came close to Dogen in his unrelenting criticism of those clerics in China and Japan who regarded women as spiritually, morally, or socially inferior to men. Many Mahayana scriptures traditionally held that women were inherently encumbered by the so-called five hindrances, the last being that women, as women, could not attain Buddhahood, but would first have to undergo rebirth as men. Women were also barred from entering most of the great temple complexes on the grounds that they were lustful by nature and would inevitably corrupt otherwise pure monks.

For Dogen such outrageous bias was incompatible with the fundamental truths of Buddhism as he understood them. Dogen was uncompromising in asserting the equality of the sexes: “A nun who has attained the Way

should receive the homage of all the arhats, pratyeka-buddhas, and bodhisattvas. The four elements and the five aggregates that make up the human body are the same for a man as for a woman. Men and women alike can attain the Way. Do not make distinctions between men and women. This is the ultimate teaching of Buddhism." Dogen also argued against the stereotypical theme of women-as-temptress: "It is the height of folly to believe that women are the source of lust. If we are to despise whatever might serve as an object of lust, should we not despise men as well as women? A man, as much as a woman, may stimulate lust. Sometimes even inanimate objects such as the moon reflected in the water can arouse feelings of sensuality and lead to lascivious behavior. Should we therefore avoid looking at these as well?"

Although Dogen lived in a very different world from ours, many of the issues he raised parallel those being heatedly discussed in our own society today, some seven and a half centuries later. Probably more than any of his contemporaries, Dogen was prepared to challenge deeply held stereotypes and speak out forcefully against injustice. Dogen's ideas remain relevant at the beginning of the 21st century precisely because they reflect fundamental truths, what Dogen would call the "correctly transmitted Buddhism."

As far as we know, the first Soto monk to set foot in the continental United States--in San Francisco in fact--was the eminent scholar Nukariya Kaiten, who at the request of the Soto School spent two years studying and lecturing in this country and Europe. Nukariya reached San Francisco in October 1911 and gave a public lecture the next month. A number of other well-known Soto monks, including Hioki Mokusen, Yamagami Sogen, and Arai Sekizen, all of whom somehow managed to meet the U.S. presidents of the day (Wilson and Harding), followed in the footsteps of Nukariya. It would be comforting to think that they gave Dharma talks to sitting U. S. presidents, but, alas, the records are silent about what transpired between these distinguished Soto monks and two U. S. chiefs-of-state.

Visiting monks aside, the Soto School established a formal presence on the U. S. mainland in 1922 when the Rev. Isobe Hosen founded the North American Soto Zen Buddhist Association in Los Angeles. Four years later Isobe established a full-fledged temple in Los Angeles called the Hokubeisan Zenshuji ("The Zen School Temple of Mt. North America"), which subsequently was designated a betsuin (branch temple) of the Eihei-ji and Sojiji, the two head monasteries of the Soto School. In

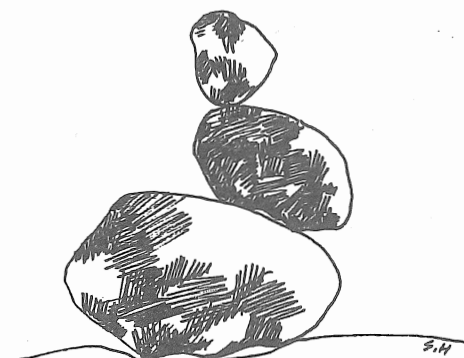
1934 Isobe moved to San Francisco, where he purchased an abandoned synagogue, which he refurbished as a Buddhist temple and named the Nichibeisan Sokoji ("San Francisco Temple of Mt. Japan-America").

Isobe Hosen in his concern for the common people and his desire to spread the Soto teaching and practices very much embodied the spirit of Dogen. Midway in his career as a Soto missionary in Korea, Isobe was asked in 1913 by the School Soto Administrative Office in Japan to move to Hawaii to establish a proper Soto temple there. Isobe subsequently was designated Bishop of the Soto Mission of Hawaii, in which capacity he--and the Soto-Hawaii Mission that he led--played a prominent role in supporting the Japanese and Japanese-American farm laborers during the turbulent six-month long Oahu Sugar Plantation Strike in 1920, a pro-labor activist stance that greatly antagonized the authorities.

A pithy comment occasionally heard in Japan, epitomizing the difference between the Rinzai and Soto traditions, is Rinzai shogun, Soto domin, literally "Rinzai is for the generals, and Soto is for the common people." This expression refers to Rinzai Zen's penchant to situate itself in the great monasteries of Kyoto and Kamakura ("the generals") in contrast to Soto Zen's sinking roots in rural areas populated by common people. Isobe Hosen, as a Soto priest committed equally to the dissemination of the Dharma and to the struggle for social justice, dedicated his life to that ideal.

* * * * *

Stanley Weinstein received his B.A. from Komazawa University, where he practiced zazen under Sawagi Kodo Roshi. He did his M.A. at the University of Tokyo and Ph.D. at Harvard University. After serving as a lecturer in East Asian Buddhism for six years at The School of Oriental and African Studies at London University, he accepted an appointment in 1968 as Professor of Buddhist Studies at Yale University, where he continues to teach.



*In Celebration of the 800th Anniversary
of
the Birth of Dogen Zenji,
1200-1253*

THE SUMMARIES FOR THE DOGEN ZENJI SYMPOSIUM

October 23

To Transmit Dôgen Zenji's Dharma

Otani Tetsuo



Dôgen Zenji studied and received the Buddha Dharma under the tutelage of Nyojô Zenji during his time in Sung China before transmitting it to Japan. Ever since, many people have been able to receive the Dharma which has continued to this day.

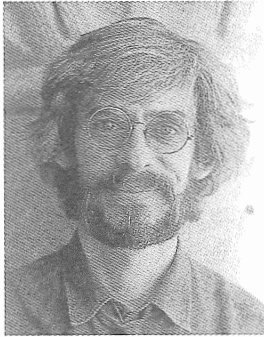
The Dharma which was properly transmitted from Nyojô Zenji to Dôgen Zenji has been able to continue till the present through a ceremony called Dharma transmission (shihô) upon which Dôgen placed great importance. The Dharma has been able to continue till this day, not only because of the doctrines passed down, but because of the very concrete practice of placing one's name after one's teacher on a "transmission document" (shisho). Although the primary task of transmitting the Buddhist teachings continues to exist for us, the ceremony marking this transmission has significance too.

In this paper, I will first discuss Dharma transmission in Dôgen's Zenji's thought. Second, I will examine the so-called "sect-revival" movement (shûtô fukko) of the early modern period which had the issues of dharma transmission at its core. And finally, I will conclude with a reflection on the significance of receiving and transmitting the Dharma today.

Otani Tetsuo was born in Tokyo in 1939. He graduated from the Department of Far Eastern Philosophy in the Faculty of Literature at Waseda University. He received his master's degree from Waseda University graduate school in the Research Institute for Humanities, majoring in Far Eastern Philosophy. Otani graduated from the Doctorate program at Komazawa University Graduate School, Research Institute for Humanities Studies, majoring in Buddhist Studies. He practiced at Daihonzan Eihei-ji in 1965. He has been resident priest of Chotai-ji in Tokyo since 1966. He has been teaching at Komazawa University since 1977 and is now a professor in the Department of Buddhist Studies. He is presently serving as the Vice President of Komazawa University. His specialty is in Zen Studies and Soto Zen Studies.

Living with Dogen: Thoughts on the Relevance of His Thought

Carl Bielefeldt



In this talk, I reflect on some characteristics of Dogen's religious thought and the challenges it presents to a modern version of Dogen Zen. I begin with Dogen's famous teaching that the Buddhist life is not merely human practice directed toward buddhahood

but what he sometimes calls the "practice of buddhahood", the expression of our nature as buddhas. I argue that, while many modern versions of Dogen Zen focus on the psychological aspects of this practice, Dogen himself preferred to emphasize its historical character and to view it as the reenactment of the historical practice of the Buddha Sakyamuni handed down in the lineage of the Zen

partriarchs. As a result, his model of Buddhist practice tends to emphasize public performance rather than private experience, and his account of the practice tends to assume a monastic life centered on the ritual of seated meditation. If the particular features of such an account pose obvious problems for a modern, lay-oriented religion, I suggest that Dogen's vision of religious endeavor as participation in an historical community may offer a welcome antidote to the isolation and social dislocation of the individual characteristic of much modern life.

Carl Bielefeldt began Zen practice under Suzuki Shunryu Roshi at Sokoji and went on to study with Uchiyama Kosho Roshi at Antaiji in Kyoto. He has been a Soto Zen Buddhist for 30 years. Bielefeldt received his M.A. in Asian Studies and Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He has been teaching at Stanford University since 1980, where he is the co-director of the Center for Buddhist Studies. Bielefeldt has held several research positions in Japan and has published many texts on Buddhism.

Dogen Zenji's Zazen

Zenkei Blanche Hartman



In Dogen's earliest writings after his return from China, he emphasized the primacy of zazen as the true Dharma gate. In Bendowa he said "to spread this dharma and free living beings became my vow". This is an explicate expression of his devotion to zazen since the

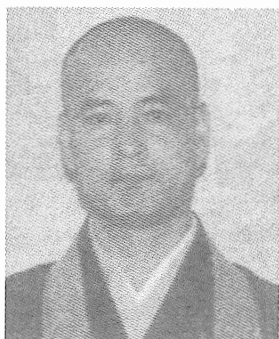
word devote literally means to vow. From this we can see his boundless faith in and dedication to upright sitting. "...all Buddha Tathagathas together have been simply transmitting wondrous dharma and actualizing anuttarasamyaksambodhi for which there is an unsurpassable, unfabricated, wondrous method. This

wondrous dharma, which has been transmitted from Buddha to Buddha without mediation, has as its criterion jijuyuzanmai. For disporting freely in this samadhi practicing zazen in upright posture is the true gate." Using a wide variety of sources Zenkei Hartman intends to explore Dogen's faith in zazen and devotion to its propagation as the essential expression of practice.

Zenkei Blanche Hartman began sitting in 1969 at the Berkeley Zen Center with Rev. Sojun Mel Weitsman and in San Francisco with Suzuki Shunryu Roshi. She was ordained as a priest in 1977 by Rev. Zentatsu Baker and received Dharma transmission with Rev. Sojun Mel Weitsman in 1988. She trained at Zenshinji Tassajara and Soryuji Green Gulch Farm. She became Abbess of San Francisco Zen Center in February of 1996. She is married to Shuun Lou Hartman; they have four children and five grandchildren.

Dogen Zenji's Standards for Community Practice (Eihei-shingi)

Okumura Shohaku



In *Shobogenzo-Zuimonki* (6-9), Dogen Zenji talked about a Chinese legend that fish become dragons by crossing the Dragon Gate. In the same way, he said, if people enter a monastic community, they become buddhas-ancestors without fail. He said, "You eat

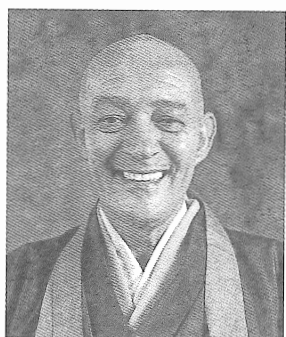
meals and wear clothes as usual; thus you stave off hunger and keep off the cold just the you same as other people do. Still, if you shave head, put on a kesa, and eat gruel for breakfast and rice for lunch, you will immediately become a monk of patched-robe. Do not seek afar to become a buddha-ancestor. Becoming one who either passes through the Dragon-Gate or not depends only on entering a sorin (monastery), just the same as fish." The standards of the community life in Zen Buddhism called Shingi (pure

standards, or standards for pure assembly) were established in China in the 9th century by Zen Master Hyakujo. Dogen Zenji also wrote the Eihei-shingi to maintain Hyakujo's spirit. Shingi (Standards for Community Practice) is a very important aspect of Dogen Zenji's teachings and practice. Within the rapid current of the thorough social and cultural change we are experiencing, how can we find relevance in Dogen Zenji's standards for community practice for our time?

Okumura Shohaku was born in Osaka, Japan in 1948. He was ordained as a Soto Zen priest under Uchiyama Kosho Roshi in 1970 and trained at Antaiji, Kyoto, Japan. He practiced at Pioneer Valley Zendo in Massachusetts from 1975 to 1981. He taught at Kyoto Soto Zen Center from 1984 to 1992 and Minnesota Zen Meditation Center from 1993 to 1997. Currently he is the Director of the Soto Zen Education Center and Head Teacher of Sanshin Zen Community. He has been working on translations of Soto Zen texts: "Shobogenzo Zuimonki", "Dogen Zen", "Zen Teachings of Homeless Kodo", "Shikantaza-an introduction to zazen", "Wholehearted Way", and "Opening the Hand of Thought".

Dogen's 300 Koans and the Kana Shobogenzo

John Daido Looi



Zen Master Dogen's definitive work, the Kana Shobogenzo, has been available in English and other Western languages for a number of years. Western scholars and philosophers as well as Buddhist practitioners have been fascinated by Dogen's profound insights into the

Buddhadharma, his unique metaphysics, and creative use of language. The Kana Shobogenzo has gained Dogen a reputation as one of Japan's greatest thinkers and religious figures.

A lesser known, but equally important work by Dogen is his *Mana Shobogenzo*, originally written in Chinese. *Mana Shobogenzo* is a collection of three hundred koans culled from

Sung Dynasty texts, koans used by Dogen as "seeds" in composing the Kana Shobogenzo, and in the compilation of his recorded sayings, the Eihei Koroku. Since Dogen was a proponent of zazen only, an outspoken critic of koan study, his authorship of the *Mana Shobogenzo* was in doubt for many centuries. Recent scholarship, however, has put these doubts to rest.

This paper examines the relationship between the two Shobogenzos, with a particular emphasis on Dogen's unique way of handling koans, especially as compared to the traditional treatment they received in classic Sung discourses. Contrary to conventional conclusions about Dogen's methods of instruction, he not only used koans freely in his teachings but did so in a radically different way from his predecessors in China. By interweaving the "Five Ranks of Master Tozan," creating dialectical tensions, and using multilayered poetic language, Dogen brought a fresh and insightful perspective to traditional koans.

This paper presents several of the cases that appear in the three hundred koan collection and are also used by Dogen

in the Kana Shobogenzo. Their treatment by Dogen is compared with the discourses on the same cases as they appear in The Book of Equanimity and The Blue Cliff Record. Although these varied ways of expounding the truth of the koans may on the surface appear to be radically different, they are intrinsically identical and consistent with the transmitted truth of the Buddhadharma as handed down from the time of the historical Buddha. In conclusion, the paper also discusses the value of using Dogen's alternative way of seeing into koans as an adjunct to traditional koan study and training.

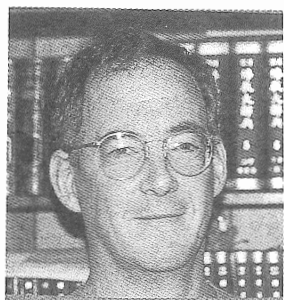
Daido John Loori is abbot of Zen Mountain Monastery (Doshinji) in Mt. Tremper, New York. He began his Zen

practice in 1968 and trained in the subtle teachings of Dogen's Zen and the koan introspection of Rinzai Zen. He received Shiho from Maezumi Hakuryu Roshi and Inka from Rev. Genpo Merzel Roshi. He is the author of 12 books on Zen and is currently translating, with Tanahashi Kazuaki, Dogen's 300 Koan Shobogenzo and adding commentary and verse. Daido John Loori is abbot of Zen Mountain Monastery (Doshinji) in Mt. Tremper, New York. He began his Zen practice in 1968 and trained in the subtle teachings of Dogen's Zen and the koan introspection of Rinzai Zen. He received Shiho from Maezumi Hakuryu Roshi and Inka from Rev. Genpo Merzel Roshi. He is the author of 12 books on Zen and is currently translating, with Tanahashi Kazuaki, Dogen's 300 Koan Shobogenzo and adding commentary and verse.

October 24

History of the Soto Zen School

T. Griffith Foulk



The earliest histories of Soto Zen, which date from the Tokugawa period (1603-1868), are collections of hagiographies of eminent patriarchs belonging to Dogen's line of Dharma transmission. It was only in the twentieth century that scholars

began to treat the Soto school as an institution, founded by Dogen, that evolved over time in response to changing social, economic, and political circumstances. A theme that recurs in a number of modern histories is the idea that the Zen initially established in Japan by Dogen was a pure form that the Soto school failed to preserve in subsequent generations.

I embrace the methods of the modern scholarship, but avoid making normative claims about any set of beliefs or practices that might be presumed to represent the original, pure, or essential nature of Soto Zen. My definition of the Soto school is one that starts from a simple delineation of its membership, past and present, and leaves the question of its characteristic institutions, practices, and doctrines entirely open to historical investigation. Focusing on the place that

the Japanese Soto school has held historically within the broader East Asian Buddhist tradition, I address the question of the relationship between Zen and Buddhism. I argue that we are too quick to proclaim the independence and uniqueness of the former and all too ignorant of the ways in which it has been embedded in the latter in East Asian cultures. We imagine that Zen is somehow a complete doctrinal, ethical, and spiritual system, and do not avail ourselves of the broader Buddhist resources - scriptural, ritual, and institutional - that Zen monks in China and Japan have often taken for granted.

Griffith Foulk teaches Asian religions at Sarah Lawrence College. He holds a Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from the University of Michigan, where he also taught from 1985-1995. He has trained in both Soto and Rinzai monasteries in Japan and received shukke tokudo (priest ordination) in the Soto School in 1983. He is a member of the board of the Kuroda Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Human Values and was elected to the steering committee of the Buddhism Section of the American Academy of Religion from 1987-94. He has received Fulbright, Eiheiiji, and Japan Foundation fellowships, and grants from the American Council of Learned Societies and National Endowment for the Humanities. His research and publications focus on philosophical, literary, social, and historical aspects of the Ch'an myths and realities in Medieval Chinese Buddhism and Histories of Zen.

The Soto Zen School in Modern Japan

Nara Yasuaki (Komazawa University)



The Sôto Zen school in modern Japan includes approximately 15,000 temples, which make it the largest traditional Buddhist organization in Japan. By modern Japan I mean the post-Meiji (1868-1912) period, which brought about a host of

new issues for the Sôto Zen school. This paper will examine several interrelated issues that have emerged.

1] The status of abbots. This issue includes the question of abbots holding other jobs, abbot's academic training, and marriage. The survey found in the 1995 Sôtôshu Shûmucho publication "Sôtôshu shûsei sôgo chôs a hôkokusho" will serve as a database for this section of the paper.

2] The two most pressing issues faced by the Japanese Sôto Zen school: Human rights and the environment. In terms of human rights, the problem of temple priests having discriminated against the "buraku" (marginalized villager) population, especially through the issuance of discriminatory "kaimyo" (posthumous Buddhist name), has been a major concern. There has been doctrinal reflection on this matter through a reexamination of the Buddhist doctrines of karma and original enlightenment as theoretical sources of discrimination.

In terms of the environment, a number of concrete projects to protect the environment (the "Green Plan") have been supported by general lay members. Although in the past, Japanese Buddhists have focused on the doctrine of "all things have Buddha-nature," this worldview has been insufficient to tackle the environmental problem. To make progress while including traditional Buddhist formulations, the Sôto Zen school has been actively trying to develop new environmental ethics and methods to protect the environment.

3] The creation in April 1999 of the Sôtôshu Center for Buddhist Studies in Tokyo. Up until the recent past, the Sôto Zen school had three institutes that addressed issues such as outlined above. The new center has intentionally

tried to develop clearer lines of communication among the three institutes and encourage an interdisciplinary approach to these questions. To realize this goal more concretely, collaborative research themes have been instituted (the first being the theme of "funerals").

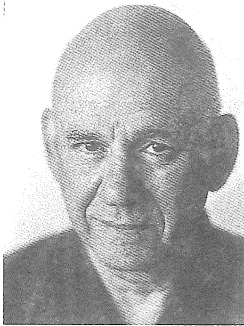
The issue of funerals in contemporary Japan is not a problem faced solely by the Sôto Zen school, but is a pressing issue for all the Buddhist schools. This is, in part, due to the decline of the traditional social function of funerals in village life, but also because alternative models to think about after-death rituals (such as the scattering of cremated ash or non-religious funerals) and the rethinking of the significance of posthumous Buddhist names (with all the ranking implied) have been increasingly prevalent. Despite the facts that funerals are held at temples throughout Japan and that the income derived from this ritual constitutes the Sôto Zen school's financial base, there has been comparatively little doctrinal reflection on the theme of funerals. This is particularly true of subthemes within the topic of funerals such as precept-giving at the funeral, the giving of tonsure to the deceased (by giving priestly precepts to the deceased), and the practice of calling the deceased person an "enlightened spirit" after the funeral. There is therefore a great need for further clarification and discussion of this theme.

4] Finally, the place of Sôto Zen centers outside of Japan and their relationship to the Japanese Sôto Zen school is an ongoing issue.

Nara Yasuaki studied in the Department of Indian Philosophy and Sanskrit Literature, Faculty of Letters at Tokyo University, receiving a B.A. degree in 1953 and M.A. in 1956. From 1956 to 1958, Nara studied in the Department of Comparative Philosophy at Calcutta University in India. He received a Doctor of Literature from Tokyo University in 1973. Nara has been lecturing at Komazawa University in History of Buddhist Culture since 1961. From 1983 to 1986, he was Vice President of Komazawa University and served as President from 1994 to 1998. He has been a visiting Professor at Vishva Bharati University in India from 1982 to 1983. Some of his publications (in Japanese) are "History of Buddhism : India and South-east Asia", "Ramakrishna", "Dialogue with Sakyamuni Buddha", "Buddha's Way and Man-Spiritual Approach".

ZEN IN AMERICA

Sojun Mel Weitsman



With the arrival of such Soto Zen teachers as Shunryu Suzuki in San Francisco and Taizen Maezumi in Los Angeles, Japan's "Square Zen," the disciplined practice of Zen monks supported by centuries of development in Asia, met "Beat Zen," the American counterculture's popularized philosophy of Zen. Throughout the 1960s Americans from a wide spectrum of society came to learn from these teachers who offered them Dogen's Zen, the formal practice of zazen, or shikantaza, just sitting; these teachers conveyed Master Dogen's Zen through their own practice.

A dynamic expansion of Zen centers took place during the '70s and '80s. The rapid growth led to some difficulties due to leadership errors, which were ultimately resolved satisfactorily. The heart of Dogen's Zen is practiced at residential and nonresidential centers, including extended meditation retreats (sesshins), lectures, and study. At the

same time, American Zen students have put more emphasis than did our Japanese forebearers on: Offering the Dharma to women and men equally; opening up a lay practice comparable in intensity and strictness to the practice of ordained people in Asia; supporting social action in such areas as the environment, racial equality, peace, and other issues of civil justice; and devoting attention to matters of family practice. Notwithstanding these worthwhile innovations, the unique and most valuable gift of Dogen's Zen to America has been and remains the practice of zazen.

Sojun Mel Weitsman began practice at the old Sokoji Temple in San Francisco in 1964 with Suzuki Shunryu Roshi. He received priest ordination from Suzuki Roshi in 1969 at Berkeley Zendo, which he founded in 1967 with Suzuki Roshi's blessing. He was shuso at Tassajara in 1970 with Tatsugami Roshi and Director of Tassajara in 1972-1973. In 1984, he received Dharma transmission from Suzuki Roshi's son Rev. Suzuki Hoitsu. In 1985, he was installed as Abbot of Berkeley Zen Center. In 1988 he was installed as Co-abbot of San Francisco Zen Center; his tenure ended in January 1997; he is currently a Senior Dharma Teacher.

Vowing Peace in an Age of War

Hozan Alan Senauke



Meditating on peace, I hear Dogen. In Bodaisatta Shisho-Ho (Bodhisattva's Four Methods of Guidance) Dogen writes, "You should benefit friend and enemy equally. You should benefit self and others alike." In the same fascicle he explains, "The mind of a sentient being is difficult to change." Dogen's radical thought

and language cut to the heart of peace, even in his own age of bitter civil strife and political manipulation. His thirteenth century world is different from our own, but the conflicts and twisted karma of suffering beings is much the same.

In this talk I offer three approaches to Buddhist peacemaking: Giving, Fearlessness, and Renunciation. The essential practice of peace is giving, dana paramitta. Giving one's attention, friendship, and material aid. Giving spiritual teachings, community, and organization. The practice of peace is fearless. Fear itself provides an opening into the unknown.

If we make peace in awareness of our own fear, there is room for everyone's fear to fall away and turn to respect. Renunciation or relinquishment is also inseparable from giving. Dogen writes, "If you study giving closely, you see that to accept a body and to give up the body are both giving." But renunciation is a difficult principle for Zen people. The path of Zen as it exists in the today's materialist world gives mere lip service to the meaning of renunciation.

Bearing witness is the Bodhisattva's act of complete acceptance and non-duality. It also leads us to active resistance and social transformation. We vow to bear witness where violence unfolds. We vow to recognize the human capacity for violence within our own minds, bowing to conditions of greed, hatred, and delusion. We vow never again to raise a weapon in anger or complicity with the state or any so-called authority, but to intervene actively and nonviolently for peace, even where this may put our own lives at risk.

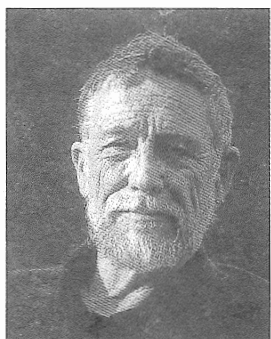
In this spirit Engaged Buddhists and people of all the faith traditions want to create a nonviolent army of peace. In the midst of local, regional, religious, and national conflicts and wars, this peace army could replace armed soldiers, land mines, tanks, and jet fighters. A peace army might sit down on the battlefield, right in the lines of fire in order to save others, enduring the same danger as combatants and civilians. It is

necessary to take risks in Zen practice. It is just as necessary to take risks in peacemaking.

It is stretching a point to characterize Dogen or Shakyamuni Buddha as engaged Buddhists. But buddha ancestors teach us that the Dharma is exactly our own experience. Wake up to what is wholesome in the world. Remake Buddhism for this time, this place, this circumstance. Bodhisattvas walk among us. In any single breath each of us can become an enlightening being. In the next breath we might fall into old habits of thoughtlessness and violence. Zazen reveals that this choice is always with us. Our most deluded and hurtful actions contain seeds that can flower as either wondrous peace or terrible harm.

Mountains Hidden in Mountains

Gary Snyder



In my presentation I want to speak of how Dogen's extraordinary multi-faceted Dharma insight might come to contribute to the contemporary worldwide dialogue regarding the human impact on the rest of the natural world.

From earliest times almost all East Asian thought and religion has held nature, and non-human beings, in high regard. Buddhism in particular calls us to be mindful and respectful in our relation to nature and teaches that we are not separate from it.

Nonetheless, the Buddhist landscapes have suffered serious environmental damage in recent centuries – though there have been some bright spots in their histories. Today the whole world grapples with massive environmental and social problems. The teachings and lessons of Buddhism seem more relevant than ever before.

Dogen Zenji, as an expositor of the deep Dharma, does not put forth a simplistic view of our relation to phenomena. His teachings provide no simple "nature piety", no naive dichotomy between the flawed works of humans and some pure world of nature.

Hozan Alan Senauke has been Director of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship since 1991. He also serves on the Executive Committee of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, where he works closely with lay and ordained Buddhist activists from Asia, Europe, and the United States. Alan is a Soto Zen priest in the family of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, having received Dharma transmission from Sojun Mel Weitsman Roshi in September of 1998. He lives with his wife, Laurie, and their two young children at the Berkeley Zen Center in California. In another realm, Alan is well known as a student and performer of American traditional music for more than thirty five years.

Dogen has recently been described by some modern thinkers as "deconstructive" – interpreting his thinking according to their own models. I will suggest that Dogen's knotty (but not necessarily complicated) teaching is a needed extension and correction both to nihilistic deconstructionism, and to naive – if well-intentioned – hopeful ecological philosophies. I mean to illustrate some of these points with poems.

Gary Snyder has published seventeen books of poetry and prose including his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, "Turtle Island", in 1975 and "No Nature", which was a finalist for the National Book Award in 1992. Currently, as professor of English at the University of California at Davis, he has been instrumental in starting the "Nature and Culture" program. In the late 1950's, Snyder along with Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac were prominent in the Beat Generation movement. In the 1960's, he studied in a Zen monastery in Japan which powerfully influenced his thought. Snyder is a founding member of the Ring of Bone Zendo in the Sierra Nevadas and was awarded the Buddhism Transmission Award for 1998 by the Japan-based Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai Foundation. He is the first American literary figure to receive the award, being honored for distinctive contributions in linking Zen thought and respect for the natural world across a lifelong body of poetry and prose. His latest book is called "Mountains and Rivers Without End".

My Zazen Sankyu

(san = to participate humbly; kyu=to inquire or explore)

Notebook (4)

Rev. Issho Fujita

with assistance from Tansetz Shibata

Fragmentary Thought XII <"Head" and "Life">

Meditation practice emphasizes something psychological and perceptible of which one can be aware, and its methodologies and results are no exception. Since advanced mental activities such as our perception, feeling, thinking, and volition are corticocerebral functions, let's categorize these as "Head" for the sake of discussion here. In short, I think meditation tends to be a work that focuses on "Head".

When I started practicing zazen, I also learned the basics of Oriental medicine from Shingu Ito and Kanpu Yokota. One of the things I found interesting was that, in Oriental medicine, harmony among internal organs is the most important, and issues associated with "Head" were regarded as something merely derived from that. This was a thought-provoking suggestion to me because at the time I was a psychology major graduate student who was unconsciously inclined to a prejudiced view like "human being = psychology = Head". I thought, "The functions of "Head" tend to be unbalanced because of losing harmony among internal organs which are the bases of our life. We seem to struggle to solve the problems created by unbalanced "Head" with still unbalanced "Head". If so, until the harmony among internal organs is regained and "Head" starts working properly, there will be no resolution." Because of our developed corticocerebral functions, human beings can have self-consciousness, that is, the sense of "I". And we are living as if "Head" (= "I") is the main character and the body is the servant following orders from "Head". However, from Oriental medicine's point of view on life, this view is not only the conceit of "Head", but also a total misconception of life. "Head" is just a small part of whole life and should not hold a privileged position.

In order to maintain its existence by adjusting itself to the environment, life must perform two tasks. First, identify external enemies and stay away from them. Second, identify food and eat it. Our "Head" was the fruit of these abilities highly developed for a long time. As a certain part is highly developed out of proportion to other parts, negative impacts from this viewpoint of whole life might

start emerging. There are many cases like this found in the history of evolution. Then, is the development of human corticocerebral functions one of these cases? I must say it is up to us.

"Head" left uncorrected might behave like a tyrant without control. Yet, since we are destined to have such "Head", we have no choice but to accept it. Why do only humans engage in activities such as meditation or zazen that do not contribute directly to our survival? It might be interesting to study the meaning of meditation and zazen from perspectives of humans who have the problem of overgrown "Heads" in their evolutionary process.

I have no intention to get into this issue here. Let me just point out that, while meditation tends to take an approach focusing on "Head" and trying to resolve the issue within its framework, zazen focuses more on our living whole body-mind, the basis which allows "Head" exist as it is. If untreated, split and unbalanced life will be dragged by over-functioning "Head". But if we give "Head" to the posture of zazen, it will take its naturally place. The "Head" will take its appropriate place and the harmonized whole life will work as a unified whole.

As "Points to Watch in Buddhist Training (Gakudo-Yojinshu)" mentioned: The "Way may be entered only through the harmonization of body and mind." I believe that zazen is a practice rooted in the same deep notion of life as that of Oriental medicine.

Fragmentary Thought XIII

<Zazen and Functions of Internal Organs 1>

This seemingly strange title is taken from "Children's Mind and Functions of Internal Organs" written by Shigeo Miki (1925-1987), a comparative anatomist. This book, written primarily for childcare workers, is a precious reference for me to think about zazen.

Soon after I entered into Antaiji in Japan about 18 years ago, Misao Hatori (who studied Noguchi Exercise for years closely under its founder, Sensei Michizo Noguchi, and recently published her own book "Noguchi Exercise - Sensation is Power") sent me this newly published book. In her attached letter, she encouraged me by saying "I believe your lifetime will never be wasted by dedicating yourself in just sitting - to observe and capture yourself in visceral system by calming down your "body-wall" system. If you can really feel the existence of your whole self through breathing, don't you think that it is a monumental work for mankind = nature = universe?"

Although I had stopped counting-breath-method during sitting I learned from Rinzai Zen teachers and practiced Shikan-Taza (= just sitting) wholeheartedly, I was at a loss - beginning to ask myself "What does it mean to just sit like this?" repeatedly. Then, this book with the letter came at just the right moment like providential help. I felt as if

my field of vision suddenly opened up.

In this book, there are a lot of thought-provoking comments and metaphors. For example, "Avidya (= fundamental ignorance), which is deemed as a root cause of human sufferings in Buddhism, originally means uncomfortableness of internal organs." Other interesting concepts from this book are "life memory", "life vibration", "Functions of internal organs are supported by resonance with far-reaching universe." I feel these are comments connected directly to Buddhism and zazen.

Parts of the human body can be categorized roughly into the "body-wall" system (such as skin, nerve, and muscle) and visceral system (such as digestive system, blood vessels, and kidney). The former controls "animal functions" such as sensation, transmission, and movement. The latter controls "plant functions" such as respiration, circulation, and excretion.

"The main character of life is the visceral system controlling the appetite for food and sex. "Body-wall" system controlling sensation and movement serves merely as the "arms and legs" of the visceral system. However, if we look at our daily life, we tend to pay most of our attention to eye-catching "body-wall" system and neglect visceral system. This means we are literally failing to put first things first." Following the above comments, Shigeo Miki appeals for "reevaluation of guts = revival of internal organs". Isn't this an important issue in the field of childcare and education as well as a fundamental issue on our whole living?

Let me jump here to the story of the Buddha. It is said that although the Buddha practiced thoroughly meditation and asceticism, which were typical practices in India at the time, he could not satisfy himself with these methods, and later abandoned them. He chose a unique way of practicing zazen under the bodhi tree, and eventually attained enlightenment. I am pondering what this shift in Buddha's practice really means. Isn't it possible to interpret this as a "shift from "body-wall"-system-oriented practice to visceral-system-oriented practice", borrowing Mr. Miki's theory?

In "body-wall"-oriented practices, we either aim at attaining a spiritual tranquility where body is separated from mind (= meditation), or gaining spiritual freedom through restraint of the body by hurting and tormenting the body (=asceticism). These patterns are based on the dualistic notion created by the brain which is the center of the "body-wall" system. Therefore, the "rhythm of food and sex" inside of the visceral system is something that should be abandoned because it disturbs and restrains spiritual tranquility and freedom.

On the contrary, visceral-system-oriented practices first release tensions in the "body-wall" system, prepares conditions for the visceral system to regain its original rhythm, and the "body-wall" system refrains from

disturbing such rhythm. If Buddhism was born from this kind of visceral-system-oriented practice, I guess I might be able to say it is the way of "reviving internal organs". Is this just my too farfetched interpretation?

Fragmentary Thought XIV

<Zazen and Functions of Internal Organs 2>

Shigeo Miki said, to distinguish between "Head" and "Heart", "We say "sharp Head", but don't say "sharp Heart". We say "warm Heart", but don't say "warm Head". "Head" thinks, and "Heart" feels." By questioning why Chinese characters, "Head" and "Heart" were assigned to the original Japanese words "atama (= head)" and "kokoro (= heart)" respectively, he reached the conclusion that, according to their actual physical feeling, ancient Japanese positioned "atama" to the head, and "kokoro" to the heart. In other words, the following formulas stand - "atama = brain = body-wall system" and "kokoro = heart = visceral system".

If I reexamine zazen using these formulas, I think it must be a practice emphasizing visceral system. Since it is said that Buddha reached enlightenment by zazen and zazen is called "right gate of Buddha way" ("Bendowa" ("On Endeavoring the Way")), I drew the conclusion that we might be able to say Buddhism is the way of "reviving internal organs = reviving heart" in the last fragmentary thought. The distinction between "Head" and "Heart" in our daily living is quite ambiguous and often used in a confusing way. The reason I felt shallowness in psychology when I was studying it might be the suspicion that psychology actually covers only problems of the "Head" and refrains from those of "Heart". Though I will not get into this issue further here, let me point out that, when he used the word "Heart", its dimension was reaching to a majestic scale such as symphonies with the universe/nature.

When I read the following passage -- "Plants rooted deep in the ground are devoting themselves to the harmony with cosmic rhythms. Their bodies are like capillary vessels of the gigantic circulatory systems connecting heaven and earth."-- I recalled the words of Kodo Sawaki Roshi such as "Zazen is to tune in to the universe." "Zazen is a method to have a switch to the whole universe." They are talking about the same thing!

Visceral system controls "plant functions" which shift phases of "food and sex" by corresponding with various cycles in the universe. It is zazen where our internal "plant functions" are revealed vividly. If so, it was no coincidence that the place Buddha sat was under a plant called bodhi tree and the thing which lead him to an enlightenment was a bright star at dawn. What is the "picture of Buddha's enlightenment" telling us? They are plants (zazen, bodhi tree) and cosmic rhythms (a bright star at dawn). It is the picture of resonance and symphony between "macro-

cosmos" and "micro-cosmos (= body)", and that of responsive communion (kan-no-ko-do) if Zen terms are used.

We should never overlook the "majesty" kept in zazen that is often seen as tiny practice at a glance. I have been recommending "Childrens' Mind and Functions of Internal Organs" to the friends involved in childcare, because I wish them to feel that the work of childcare has cosmic expanse, and therefore, is serious as well as worth doing. From the same wish, I would like to recommend this book to the people who practice zazen.

I often see people who think zazen is a solution to personal sufferings and problems or the cultivation of an individual. Since these people are simply pulling zazen down to the levels of an "act of a mere person" "small talk" "Head", its "majesty" "cosmic scale" "Heart" are left outside of their fields of view. I think that reexamining zazen through the theory of Shigeo Miki provides us an extremely effective clue to the problem that zazen tends to be taken with a petty view.

In another book, Miki criticized civilization and warned about the destiny of mankind. "The center of human life is shifting gradually from the "Heart" to the "Head". This can be a tendency in the history of human thought evolution - the shift from "life-centered thinking" (= the "Heart" listening to the voices of the heart) to "logos-centered thinking" (= "Head" failing to listen to the voices of the heart). On the other hand, we should not forget a possible danger that the original relationship between "animal" and "plant" organs can transform to that of controller and controlled." Can't we say that the posture of "the Head listening to the voices of the heart" is zazen, and the path indicating to recover the relationship between "animal" and "plant" organs is Buddha way? I think that the time has come for us to think the meaning of zazen and Buddha way at much bigger perspective, such as the histories of civilization, mankind, and evolution.

Many interesting themes were touched off by Miki's writing such as "ordinary logic = logic of the mind = discrimination (vikalpa), logic of Buddhism = logic of the heart = non-discrimination (nirvikalpa)?" "life memory = store-consciousness (Alaya-vijnana)?" "the interrelationship between mind and heart", "sensitivities of internal organs and the formation of language". Let us depart from the "world of Shigeo Miki" for now, until the next occasion.

DOGEN ZENJI'S GENJO-KOAN LECTURE (5)

By Rev. Shohaku Okumura
Soto Zen Education Center

(Text: section 6)

To study the Buddha Way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be verified by all things. To be verified by all things is to let the body and mind of the self, and the body and mind of others, drop off. There is a trace of realization that cannot be grasped. We endlessly keep expressing the ungraspable trace of realization."

In sections 4, 5, 6 and 7, Dogen Zenji discusses delusion and realization, buddhas and living beings on the basis of practice. This time, I talk on section 6.

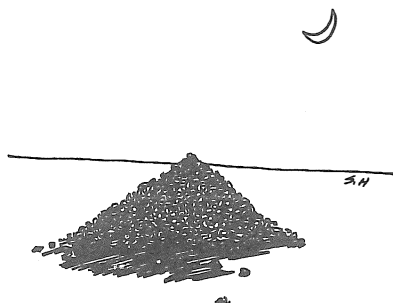
"To study the Buddha Way is to study the self."

This is the most essential point of Dogen's as well as Buddha's teaching. In the Dhammapada, one of the earliest scriptures in Buddhism, Shakyamuni Buddha said, "The self is the only foundation of the self."

But, what does this really mean? When we say that we study the Buddha Way, we think "I", this person, studies some objective thing called the "Buddha Way". "I" is the subject and the "Buddha Way" is the object. This person called "I" wants to understand it and make it my "possession". This is our common understanding of "I" "study" "something".

The original Japanese word Dogen uses for "study" is "narau". The Japanese word "narau" came from "nareru" that means "to get accustomed", "to become familiar with", "to get used to", or "to become intimate". This is not simply intellectual study.

The Chinese character for "narau" is "習". The upper part of this kanji (羽) means bird's wings. The lower part of this kanji (白) refers to "self". This study is like a baby bird studies or learns how to fly with its parents. By nature, a baby bird has the possibility to fly, but a baby bird does not know how to fly. So the baby watches its parents and learns how to fly. It tries again and again, and finally it can fly like its parents. This is the original meaning of to study here. This is not simply intellectual study. Of course, intellection is included in the case of a human being, in the capacity of studying or learning, but only accumulating knowledge does not allow us to fly (to live out ourselves in its true meaning). As flying is the essential thing for a bird (except birds like a penguin or an ostrich), to be a bird, to study the self is the essential thing for us human beings to be human. A human being is a living being that needs to study the self to become the self.



This is the meaning of “to study” here. When we study the self, we cannot see ourselves as object. We have to live out ourselves. We have to practice with this body and mind to study the self. Intellectual investigation is only a small part of it, though it is not less important.

Even when we say, “I study the Buddha Way”, still there is a subject “I” and an object (the Buddha Way). When we speak in that way, “I”, “study” and “the Buddha Way” are separate. In the case of the Buddha Way, this is a mistaken way of thinking. This creates a basic problem for us human being to see actual reality as it is. When we practice the Buddha Way or study the self, there is no separation between “I” and “the Self” or “the Buddha Way” as well as the action of “study” or “practice”. When we study the self, “I” is the “self”, and there is nothing called “I” beside the action of “studying”. Subject, action and object are completely the same thing. But, as soon as we start to think or speak using words and concepts, we have to say, “I study the Self.” or “I study the Buddha Way.” The important point here is just study or practice. Within the action both “the self” and “the Buddha Way” are manifested. Keep studying, practicing, manifesting. This is what Dogen Zenji said in the previous section. When buddhas are truly buddhas, they don’t need to perceive that they are buddhas. However, they are enlightened buddhas, and they continue actualizing buddha.” Sawaki Roshi elucidated Dogen Zenji’s expression, “jijuyu-zanmai”, when he said, “In zazen, the self does the self by the self.”

In our daily lives, we say, “I drink water.” That works within the sphere of our daily lives. That is the way to communicate with people using language. We can transmit what we want to communicate with others speaking in this way. When I say “I want to drink a cup of water”, some one may bring a cup of water. And we have no problem about this on the ground of conventional living in the human society.

But when we talk of Buddha Dharma, it does not work. This is the point where our language or our way of thinking using words and concepts starts to be a problem. We need to go beyond words, concepts, language, and logic to be free from the problem of separation. But this does not mean we have to stop thinking and see things in some mysterious way beyond our usual way of thinking.

What I am saying is that the reality of our life is a very obvious ordinary thing, but once we start to talk about it, we lose the vivid, immediate reality.

In our practice we just sit with this body and mind on a cushion in the zendo. Or we do various things outside the zendo, but when we practice the Buddha Way there is no separation between the “self” that is studying the self and the “self” that is studied by the self. Self is studying the self. And the action of studying is also the self. There is no such thing called the self outside of our action. There

is no runner beside the action of running. Runner and running are exactly the same thing. If there is a runner outside of “running” then the runner is not running. That is, the runner cannot be called a runner because the runner is not running. This is one point of discussion made by Nagarjuna to show emptiness and negate the existence of a fixed ego that is permanent and the owner of our body and mind.

We run. This is a very ordinary thing, just like we sit, we eat, we drink, or we breathe. But when we say, “There is no I besides running” or “running without a runner”, we feel that we are discussing something mysterious. But that is not a correct way to understand the discussion by people like Nagarjuna or Dogen. They are trying to express the very ordinary thing in the truly realistic way without fabrication. They use language in a way that words negate the words themselves and show the reality beyond our thoughts.

When we practice the Buddha Way, there is no self, no Buddha Way, no others. Self and all others are working together. The working done by self and all others are called our actions. When we drive a car, we think “we” are “driving” “a car”. We are operators (subject) and the car is operated upon (object). But, actually, we are operated by the car also. Depending upon the style or quality of the car, we have to drive in a different way. Depending upon whether we drive a cheap old truck carrying junk or a luxurious brand-new car carrying a VIP, our feelings and attitude are totally different. In a sense the car is driving us.

We are owned by the car. I and the car work together and the action of driving is manifested. This is not only about a special practice done by a group of people called Buddhists. This is the actual way all beings are working within the circle of interdependent origination.

The Buddha Way includes both self and objects. The Buddha Way includes both people sitting and sitting done by the people. It is one thing actually. This is very difficult to explain but it is really an obvious, plain reality of our lives. This is not some special state or condition accomplished by only certain so-called enlightened people. Even when we don’t know, the self, others and action are working together as one reality. We don’t need to train ourselves to make those three into one thing. If those are really three separate things, they cannot become one. They are always one reality.

“To study the self is to forget the self.”

When we study ourselves as the Buddha Way, we find that there is no such self that is separate from “others”. The self is connected with all beings. We see that the self does not really exist. It is like a dream, a phantom, a bubble, a shadow, a drop of dew, or a flash of lightning as the

Diamond Sutra says. The self is in its self-being empty. So, we need to forget the self. Even the self that is studying the Buddha Way should be forgotten. The self forgets the self in studying the self. This is what we do in our zazen by opening the hand of thought. We let go of whatever thoughts, feelings, or emotions, etc. come up from our selves in our zazen. Letting go is complete negation of everything coming up from egocentric karmic self. We let go not only of selfish ideas but also our understanding of the Dharma. Just sitting (*shikantaza*) is the complete negation of the self. And at the same time, in letting go everything is accepted. Nothing is negated. Everything is just as it is. Letting go of thought is not killing the thought. Thoughts are coming up moment by moment, but we just let go. Thoughts are there, but in our zazen we don't think. We just sit. Within just sitting everything is just as it is. Nothing is negated and nothing is affirmed. This just sitting is the *prajna* (wisdom) which sees emptiness without separation of subject and object. Zazen is not a kind of contemplation as a "method" through which "I"(subject) can see "emptiness" as object. Practice of just sitting is itself *prajna*. This is why Dogen Zenji said in *Shobogenzo Zanmai-O-zanmai*, "Sitting is itself buddha dharma." In *Shobogenzo Zuimonki*, Dogen Zenji said, "Sitting is itself the true form of the self."

"To forget the self is to be verified by all things."

"To be verified by all things" is the same as "all things coming and carrying out practice/enlightenment through the self." By totally just sitting, we put our whole being on the ground of interdependent origination. We do nothing but just sitting with whole body and mind. Dogen Zenji's zazen (*shikantaza*) is a unique practice even within different kinds of meditation practice in the various traditions of Buddhism. We don't meditate. Meditation is done by our mind. But in zazen, we don't do anything with our mind. We don't count breath. We don't watch breath. We don't chant mantra. We don't contemplate anything. We don't try to concentrate our mind to any particular object. We have no techniques. We really just sit with both body and mind. We sit in an upright posture, breathe through the nose quietly, deeply, and smoothly from our abdomen. We keep our eyes open. Even when we sit in this posture, our mind is functioning. Our heart is beating; our stomach is digesting food we ate even as we sit. Each and every organ in our body continue to function. There is no reason that our brain stops working in our zazen. The function of our brain is secreting thoughts. Thoughts well up in our mind moment by moment. But, we refrain from doing anything with our thoughts. We just let everything come up freely and go away freely. We don't grasp anything. We don't try to control anything. We just sit.

This is such a simple practice. To be simple does not

mean to be easy. It is very difficult and it is very deep practice. In zazen, we accomplish nothing. As Sawaki Roshi said, zazen is good for nothing. But, zazen is itself Buddha Dharma. Refraining from doing anything, the self is illuminated and verified by all things. Just sitting is not our personal practice. But we let go of our karmic self that always wants to be satisfied.

"To be verified by all things is to let the body and mind of the self, and body and mind of others, drop off."

Dropping off body and mind is a translation of "*shinjin-datsuraku* (身心脱落)". This is one of the key words in Dogen Zenji's teachings. Originally this is the expression used by Dogen's teacher Nyojo Zenji. In the *Hokyoki*, Dogen Zenji recorded his conversations with Nyojo Zenji while he was practicing at the Tientong Monastery. This expression, *shinjin-datsuraku* was one of the topics Dogen Zenji discussed with his teacher repeatedly.

Nyojo said, "Sanzen is dropping off body and mind. We don't use incense burning, prostration, *nenbutsu*, practice of repentance, reading sutras. We only just sit (*shikantaza*).

Dogen asked, "What is dropping off body and mind?" Nyojo said, "Dropping off body and mind is zazen. When we just practice zazen, we part from the five desires and we get rid of the five coverings." Dogen asked, "If we part from the five desires and get rid of the five coverings, that is the same as the teaching taught in the teaching schools. Thus we are the same as the practitioners of Mahayana and Hinayana."

Nyojo said, "The descendants of the Ancestor (Bodhidharma) should not dislike the teachings taught by Mahayana and Hinayana. If a practitioner is against the sacred teachings of the Tathagata, how can such a person be the descendant of buddhas and ancestors?" Dogen asked, "In recent times, some skeptical people say that the three poisonous minds are themselves buddha dharma and the five desires are themselves the way of the ancestors. If we get rid of them, it is nothing other than like and dislike. Such practice is the same as the Hinayana."

Nyojo said, "If we don't get rid of the three poisonous minds and the five desires, we are the same as the non-Buddhists in the country of the King Binbisara and his son Ajatasatthu (at the time of Shakyamuni Buddha). For the descendants of buddhas and ancestors, if we get rid of even one covering or one desire, that is a great benefit. That is the time we meet the buddhas and ancestors."

Nyojo Zenji said that sanzen is dropping off body and mind and dropping off body and mind is zazen. He also said that dropping off body and mind is being free from the five desires and getting rid of the five coverings. The five desires are desires caused in our mind by contacting the objects of the five sense organs. When we see, hear, smell,

taste and touch some pleasurable objects, we enjoy them, we attach ourselves to them, and we want them more and more. Or if the objects are not pleasurable; we dislike them and try to keep away from them. But they often come toward us, so we hate them and become angry. Greed and anger are caused by the five desires.

The five coverings refer to hindrances that cover our mind and prevent it functioning in a healthy way. Those are coverings of (1) greed, (2) anger (hatred), (3) sleepiness or dullness, (4) distraction and (5) doubt about the principle of causes and conditions. These five desires and five coverings are discussed originally in the Daichidoron (a commentary on the Prajna Paramita Sutra by Nagarjuna) as obstacles in the meditation practice. And Tendai Chigi, the great philosopher of the Chinese Tendai School, mentioned them in his manual of meditation practice the *Makashikan* (Larger book of Samatha and Vipassana). Chigi said that a practitioner should part from the five desires and get rid of the five coverings in the meditation practice called shikan (samatha and Vipassana). Dogen Zenji was originally ordained as a Tendai monk in Japan and was familiar with the teachings and meditation practice in the Tendai tradition. Dogen was not satisfied by Tendai practice and began to practice Zen. That was why Dogen asked Nyojo if he should part from five desires and five coverings, Zen practice is not different from Tendai teachings. Until then, Dogen Zenji was looking for something that is different from the teachings he learned in the teaching school. But Nyojo said that our practice of zazen should not be different from the Buddha's teachings recorded in the sutras and systemized in philosophical teaching schools. The next conversation on the same topic between Nyojo and Dogen was as follows.

Nyojo said, "The descendants of the buddhas and ancestors, should first get rid of the five coverings and then the six coverings. Adding the covering of ignorance to the five coverings makes six coverings. Even if a practitioner only gets rid of the covering of ignorance that makes the practitioner free from the five coverings. Even if a practitioner gets rid of the five coverings, if ignorance is not gotten rid of, the practitioner has not yet reached the practice of the buddhas and ancestors."

Dogen immediately made a prostration and expressed gratitude for the teaching. He put his hands in shashu position and said, "Until today, I have not heard of such an instruction as that which you have given me now, teacher. Elders, experienced teachers, monks and dharma brothers here do not know at all. They have never spoken like this. Today, fortunately, specially I have received your great compassion and have heard what I have not heard before. This is fortunate for me, because of the dharma connection from the previous lives. And yet, is there any secret method to get rid of the five or six coverings?"

The teacher smiled and said, "Where have you been putting your whole energy? That is practicing nothing other than the dharma to part from the six coverings. The buddhas and ancestors have not set up any classification in practice. They directly point out and singularly transmit the way of departing from the five desires and six coverings and getting free from the five desires. Making effort in just sitting and dropping off body and mind is the method to depart from the five coverings and the five desires. Beside this, there is nothing at all. Absolutely there is nothing else. How can it fall into two or three?"

This is Tendo Nyojo Zenji's explanation of dropping off body and mind. Since Nyojo was the original person who used this expression we should understand based on Nyojo's teaching. To drop off body and mind is to be free from the six coverings, basically that is, the three poisonous minds that are the causes of samsara. In just sitting zazen, we let go of the three poisonous minds. This is why Dogen Zenji said zazen is not a practice of human beings but the practice of buddhas.

Dogen and Nyojo talked about dropping off body and mind one more time in the Hokyoki, as follows.

Nyojo said, "the Zazen of arahats and pratyekabuddhas does not have attachment and yet lacks great compassion. Therefore it is different from the zazen of buddhas and ancestors in which they put primary importance on great compassion and the vow to save all living beings. The non-Buddhist practitioners in India also practice zazen. And yet, non-Buddhists have three sicknesses. That is, attachment, mistaken views, and arrogance. Therefore, their zazen is different from buddhas' and ancestors' zazen. Sravaka also practice zazen, and yet their compassion is weak. They don't penetrate the true reality of all beings with wisdom. They try to improve only themselves and cut off the seeds of Buddha. Therefore, their zazen is different from buddhas' and ancestors' zazen. In buddhas' and ancestors' zazen, they wish to gather all buddha dharma from the time they first arouse bodhi-mind. Within zazen, they don't forget living beings. They don't abandon living beings. They offer a compassionate heart to even an insect. They vow to save all living beings and they dedicate all merits to all living beings. Therefore, buddhas and ancestors practice zazen within the world of desire. Even within the world of desire, they have the best connection with this jambudvipa. They practice many virtues generation after generation and allow their mind to be flexible.

Dogen made a prostration and said, "What do you mean by allowing the mind to be flexible?"

Nyojo said, "Affirming buddhas' and ancestors' dropping off body and mind is the flexible mind. This is called the mind-seal of buddhas and ancestors. Dogen made prostrations six times.

The above are the conversations about dropping off body and mind between Dogen and Nyojo recorded by Dogen himself.

Traditionally, many people think that Dogen Zenji had an enlightenment experience when Nyojo scolded a monk sitting next to Dogen saying, "Zazen is dropping off body and mind. Why are you just sleeping?" This story originally appeared in Dogen Zenji's biography written by Keizan Jokin Zenji in Denkoroku (Transmission of Light).

Today, some Dogen scholars --for example, Prof. Sugio Genyu of Yamaguchi University and Prof. Ishii Shudo of Komazawa University-- think this is a made-up story by Keizan. Otherwise, Dogen Zenji's criticism against the practice for attaining kensho experience becomes contradicted by his own experience. Prof. Ishii said this is the worst made-up story in that it causes misunderstanding of Dogen Zenji's teachings. Dogen Zenji himself never wrote of such a one-time experience in any of his writings. In his lecture on Bendowa (in the magazine Sansho published Eihei-ji, in July, 1999), Suzuki Kakuzen Roshi agreed with Sugio and Ishii and said, "In the case of Dogen Zenji, his religious experience is not attaining some sudden and special psychological satori experience. Dogen never talked about such an experience in Shobogenzo. In his teachings, realization is a deep awareness of the fact that the existence of the self is not a personal possession of the self."

I also agree with these people. Since Dogen Zenji himself recorded his own conversations about dropping off body and mind, we should trust his own writing instead of a made-up story by a later person. Nyojo Zenji said, "Sanzen is dropping off body and mind." And also said, "Dropping off body and mind is zazen." Dropping off body and mind is not some special condition of our psychology caused by a certain experience caused by zazen practice. But zazen is itself dropping off body and mind.

About thirty years ago, when I was a student at Komazawa University, I read, "*Kobutsu no manebi* (Imitation of Ancient Buddhas)", in which Dr. Takasaki Jikido raised a question that when Nyojo said "*shinjin-datsuraku*" Dogen misunderstood the Chinese expression. What Nyojo said was "心塵脱落" (Dropping off mind dust) instead of "身心脱落" (dropping off body and mind). Dogen misunderstood Nyojo's words because both are pronounced shinjin. Some scholars counter argued and said, 心塵 and 身心 has a different tone in Chinese, so Dogen Zenji would not make such a mistake. I think, if Dogen Zenji heard Nyojo Zenji's words only once such as in the made-up story in Denkoroku, it might be possible to misunderstand. But Dogen Zenji discussed the expression shinjin-datsuraku with Nyojo at least three times in Hokyoki and he himself recorded them. Within his conversation, Dogen must have pronounced the expression and if Dogen

made a mistake, Nyojo must have corrected it. I don't think it was possible to make such a mistake. Anyway, many people discuss this expression in their own way because it is an essential point in Dogen Zenji's teachings and practice.

What does *shinjin-datsuraku* mean in our practice? The literal meaning of the Chinese character datsu (脱) means "to take off" or "slough off" and raku (落) means "to drop off", "cast off" or "fall down". Professor Carl Bielefeldt translates this expression "slough off body and mind". This translation puts emphasis on the first half of the compound, "*datsu*". "Dropping or casting off" puts emphasis on the second half, "*raku*".

We always wear clothing from the time of our birth until our death. Clothing indicates the class or occupation of a person in society. Monks wear a monk's robe. An emperor wears an emperor's garment. Soldiers wear a soldier's uniform depending upon their position. Farmers wear farmers' clothes. Rich people wear luxurious garments. Poor people wear cheap clothes. Clothing also shows the national, cultural or religious background of a person. Chinese wear Chinese clothes. Japanese wear Japanese clothes. Americans wear like American, and Indian's wear an Indian costume. When we see people's clothing we see who people are in society.

It is not only clothes that we put on to cover our selves. We wear costumes that show us as rich, poor, or middle-class. Occupations such as a doctor, lawyer, mechanic, priest, students, and teacher, etc are also a kind of clothing. But when we sit facing the wall and let go of thought and let go of any association with others, we take off all the clothing. When we just sit facing the wall, and let go of thought and association, at that time I am not a Japanese Buddhist priest. We are neither Japanese nor American. We are neither rich nor poor. We are neither Buddhist nor Christian. We are Japanese or American, Buddhist or Christian, man or woman, only when we compare ourselves with others. When I compare myself with Americans, I am a Japanese. Until I knew that there are some people who are not Japanese, I didn't know that I was a Japanese. When we just sit, we are neither deluded living beings nor enlightened buddha. We are neither alive nor dead. We are just as we are. That's it. We take off all the clothes and become a naked being in zazen.

Since our birth, we have had many different experiences. In the process of experiencing billions of things, we create a self-image such as, we are capable or not. We are superior or inferior. We are rich or poor. We are honest or not. This is how we define ourselves. And we grasp ourselves as, for example, rich, superior, capable person or a poor, inferior, stupid person. These are the selves created by karma. When we sit in zazen and let go, all these self images are ungrasped. When we open our hands, all these concepts drop off. Our body and mind are

released from karmic bands. This is what *datsuraku* means.

As Nyojo Zenji said, when we just sit and let go of thought, we are released from the five desires and six coverings. We are not pulled by objects. We are released from the three poisonous minds that bind us within samsara. This just sitting zazen is itself the practice of nirvana.

I am a Buddhist priest. I am my wife's husband. I am my children's father. When I am with my family, I am a father. So, I try to play a role of a father at home. When I give a lecture, I am a teacher. So, I try to do my best to talk on Dogen Zenji's teachings in the most understandable way, though I don't know whether I am successful or not. These are the costumes I put on in each situation. And I define myself as a father or a teacher, and I try to do my best to play the role in each situation. But when I sit facing the wall, I am not a father. I am not a Buddhist priest. I am nothing. I am empty. I am just who I am. This is liberation from my karmic life.

To be verified by all things is to let the body and mind of the self and the body and mind of others drop off." This means that the separation between self and others is dropped off. Zazen reveals the total reality of interdependent origination. When we let go of thought, we put our whole being in the reality of interpenetrating reality. This is how we are verified by all beings.

"There is a trace of realization that cannot be grasped."

The original expression Dogen Zenji uses for "cannot be grasped" is "*kyukatsu*". *Kyu* (休) means to be in rest. It is not working, not in action. *Katsu* (歇) means to stop. Trace of realization and *kyukatsu* are contradicted. *Kyukatsu* means to be traceless. Trace of enlightenment is to rest and stop being. This sentence means that there is a traceless trace of realization. Dogen is saying, "there is" and "there is not" at the same time. As soon as we grasp it we miss it. We just keep going on practicing without grasping the trace of realization. When we think that now, I am verified by all things, we already miss it. Just practice, then the trace is there and yet isn't. This trace is like the trace of a birds flying. It is there but we cannot see it. Trace is there but we cannot grasp it. When we try to grasp it we miss it. When we open our hands, it is there.

"We endlessly keep expressing the ungraspable trace of realization."

In our practice of zazen and the activities of our daily lives, we try to express this traceless trace of realization. We need to make an effort to find how we can express the reality of interdependent origination. This is the point

of Dogen Zenji's teaching in Genjokoan. When we actually practice in this way we can truly see that practice and realization are one. Without practice there is no such thing called enlightenment. We usually think practice is one thing and enlightenment is another; that practice is the means and enlightenment is the reward. This is not correct. In truth, realization is within the process of practice moment by moment.



SOTO ZEN JOURNAL is published semiannually
by

the Soto Zen Education Center.
Shohaku Okumura, Editor

Sojun Mel Weitsman, Assistant Editor
Please address all inquiries or comments
to:

Soto Zen Education Center
1691 Laguna Street, San Francisco, CA 94115
Phone: 415-567-7686
Fax: 415-567-0200

NEWS

FROM THE SOTO ZEN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE AND EDUCATION CENTER

The Soto Zen Education Center has been moved from Los Angeles to San Francisco at the end of July, 1999. The new office is located at Sokoji Soto Mission.
The address is: 1691 Laguna Street, San Francisco, CA 94115.
Telephone 415-567-7686 / Facsimile 415-567-0200

Rev. Egyoku Nakao was installed as the Abbess of Zen Center of Los Angeles.
Her installation ceremony was held on June 12, 1999.

SOTO ZEN EDUCATION CENTER ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

September, 1999 to March, 2000

DHARMA STUDY GROUP

On Sundays - September 12, October 10, November 28, December 12, 1999

On Sundays - January 9, February 13, March 12, 2000

8:30 am Zazen, 9:10 am Morning Service,

9:30 am Work Period, 10:00 am Lecture

(Nov. 28 and Dec. 12 study groups will offer a lecture at 11:00 am)

Led by Rev. Shohaku Okumura in English at Sokoji Temple, San Francisco, CA.

Text: Shobogenzo: Buddha Nature

For more information call Sokoji: (415) 346-7540

LECTURE SERIES ON BUDDHISM

At Sokoji Temple, San Francisco, CA

On Fridays - September 10, October 1, November 5, December 3, 1999

6:30 pm Zazen, 7:10 pm Lecture

Led by Rev. Taigen Daniel Leighton in English

Text: Lotus Sutra

For more information call Sokoji: (415) 346-7540

On Fridays - January 7, February 4, March 3, 2000

6:30 pm Zazen, 7:10 pm Lecture

January 7: Led by Rev. Myo Lahey, Chief Financial Office of San Francisco Zen Center

February 4: Led by Rev. Kokai Roberts, Abbots, Assistant of San Francisco Zen Center

March 3: Led by Rev. Barbara Kohn, President of San Francisco Zen Center

SESSHIN

December 1 ~ 7, 1999 (Rohatsu Sesshin)

At Milwaukee Zen Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

For more information call Milwaukee Zen Center (414) 963-0526

February 18 ~ 25, 2000 (Nehane Sesshin)

At Zen Community of Oregon in Corbett, Oregon

For more information call Zen Community of Oregon (503) 282-7879