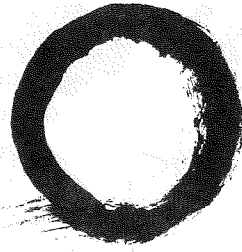
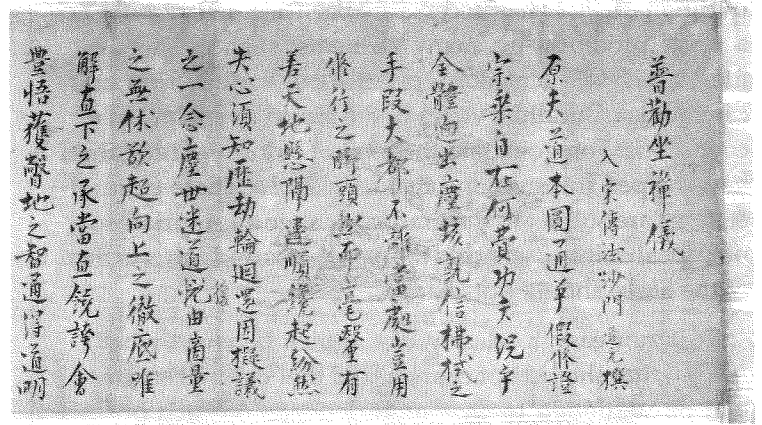
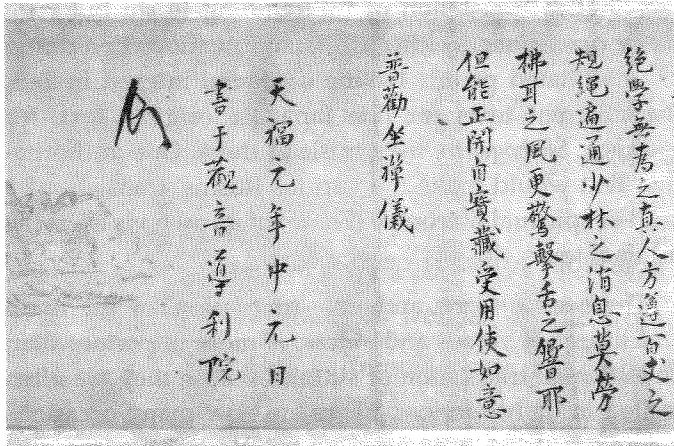


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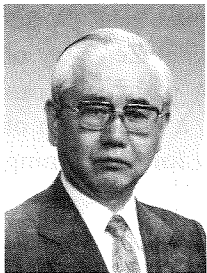
News of Soto Zen Buddhism: Teachings and Practice in North America



Dogen Zenji's autograph of *Fukanzazengi*  
(National Treasure, Courtesy of Daihonzan Eiheiji)

## The Significance and the History of the Soto Zen Text Project

Dr. Yasuaki Nara  
Chair, Editorial Board of the Soto Zen Text Project  
(Edited by Mark Lancaster)



I.

Without knowing it, we live, work and have a being in reality, which we call *Buppo* (buddha-dharma) or *Shobo* (true-dharma). To open our mind to, be aware of and live dedicating the whole of our body and mind to *Buppo*, is the essential teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha and the Zen patriarchs. Zen is neither a philosophy nor a system of doctrine. It is perhaps easier to understand what Zen really is by quoting the words of Dr. Suzuki Daisetsu: "Zen is not a philosophy but there is a philosophy in Zen".

Zen is a culture as well. I mean here culture as a lifestyle, not the very refined works of the talented people

represented by art, music, literature and other creative efforts of mankind. In terms of the Zen tradition, historical and cultural as well, it could not have become part of the soil of each locality, if it was left only as a "pure culture" in the form of doctrine and just a small group of practitioners secluded from society. Zen has been handed down to us by taking root in society with close relation to the social customs, ways of thinking and the ethos lying in the depths of the emotion of people. Therefore, Zen Buddhism will never be accepted and develop as a sangha in America, unless it is changed and acculturated, so that it appeals to the American religious mind and mentality.

Here is however a very important problem, that there is that which can be changed and that which should not

be changed.

On the occasion of the first Joint Sesshin sponsored by the Administrative Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism inviting leaders of Zen centers in America and Europe, I once used a simile of *Shobo* and egg. The most important quality of an egg, without which it ceases to be an egg, is the yolk, like *Shobo* in Zen. The yolk is maintained as a soft and fragile entity with the protection of the white and the chalaza, so that it can be carried anywhere. In the case of bringing Zen to a new soil, it is no other than *Shobo* that should be transmitted. However *Shobo* cannot travel by itself alone, by an airplane for example. The practice and tradition of *Shobo* has necessarily been associated with, in a sense protected by, many elements: such as monastic life, *zazen*, *zafu* (cushion), priest robe, various rites and ceremonies, Buddhist views of the world and many other conditions. Foregoing are the kind of cultural setting that have helped transmit and maintain *Shobo*. These cultural settings are subject to the gradual change appropriate to a new local culture, whereas the awareness and the practice of the *Shobo* should not change.

It is not easy to clearly distinguish between what is "*Shobo*" that should not change, and the "cultural settings" that are permitted to change. It depends on each practitioner. My opinion is that what is most important, is the basic understanding of the world view of Zen, and the daily life as the practice which makes *Shobo* function in our day-to-day lives with *zazen* as its center. Some rites and ceremonies, like those of worshipping Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Patriarchs should be included. Therefore, Dharma discourses, the treatises of the successive patriarchs, *Shobogenzo* as one of the highest representatives, and the Zen monastic codes (*Shingi*) along with some Buddhist texts like *The Heart Sutra* or *The Lotus Sutra*, are also essential to impart to us the necessary guidance and knowledge in our practice. *Shobo* and Soto Zen will not spread in the new land without the help of these texts.

Notwithstanding of the importance of these texts, the situation in America is far from satisfactory. In the Japanese tradition of study almost all works of the patriarchs are written in Japanese. Buddhist texts, though not Japanese, have been studied directly from the Chinese originals. They are the "original texts" from which Japanese scholars and priests start their study and to which they always come back, whenever they have doubts and problems to solve. Zen masters, scholars and students lay their own understanding of these original texts to support their faith, just as Christians imbibe their spiritual aspiration from the one Bible to establish their explicit faith.

Conditions in America and Europe are definitely different from Japan. Almost all texts are now translated, but many of the translations lack footnotes, supplementary notes and the materials necessary to reach a correct understanding of Zen terms. They are not academically accurate. It is true that the founding Roshis of Zen centers, made great individual efforts to translate the original texts into English during the creative and formative stages of new Zen centers. Many of them are highly valued, each having a unique spiritual understanding of its own. The situation however means a variation in "original texts". An individual Zen center can make with the English translation of its founding Roshi but with many practitioners either affiliated to various Zen center or unaffiliated people having a general interest in Zen, the different texts for one Japanese original text, for instance, *Shobogenzo*, may mislead them. One authoritative Text would make the various Roshis' translations a kind of spiritual discourse (*Teisho*) of its own vis-a-vis the original text.

The need for one authentic translation for the ritual and liturgical verses and sutras, is more important than an authentic translation of sutras, because they are often recited in daily services. There are now many occasions where practitioners and devout believers gather together to conduct a joint Sesshin or ceremonies. A common set of translated (English) texts should help the ceremony be performed smoothly and foster a sense of fellow feeling among Zen practitioners.

The necessity for the complete and annotated translation of *Gyoji Kihan* is another desideratum for practitioners of all Zen centers. Ways of behavior conduct, monastic rules, religious rites and ceremonies are primarily the FORM, *Katachi*, which represent the SPIRIT within. The form is created to express the spirit and conversely the spirit becomes stronger by taking form. Some forms are essential to our practice and it is of great help, particularly to beginners, to know and feel what Zen way of living should be. It is a fountain from which we can receive the real spirit of Zen. Therefore, a translation of *Gyoji Kihan* will provide a good reference for the training of Soto priests.

Gradually the voice for authoritative and common texts has become strong not only among Zen centers, but also in Japanese temples abroad. In Japan too, the need for these texts was felt particularly after 1991, when the centennial anniversary of the promulgation of *Shushogi* was celebrated.

## II.

Under these circumstances the Sotoshu Committee for

Promotion of Overseas Mission discussed how to implement the idea of such a project at its meeting on October 14, 1994. This was followed by the Translation Planning Conference for Soto School Treatises and Sutras held at the Administrative Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism from November 2-5, 1995 to propose the future plan of the translation project.

At this Conference the objectives were discussed and recorded as follows. "The main objective is to supply Soto Zen teachers, ordinary practitioners, and students as well as scholars with translated materials of the highest quality. It is necessary, therefore, for the Translation Planning Editorial Board to proceed with the faithful, accurate translation of representative Soto Zen treatises, sutras, discourse records, and related materials. These translations are to be spearheaded by scholars who are well practiced in the field of Zen studies. With the Administrative Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism (International Division) as the center of operations, the translations are to be carried out with the consultation and cooperation of American Soto Zen teachers and Japanese Soto Zen scholars.

The most important thing is for the translators to carry out their work on the basis of the most up-to-date research, in a manner that is consistent with the highest level of scholarship. That is to say, while remaining true to the original texts, their translations should take into account all existing annotations of the technical terms and languages, as well as traditional commentaries on their doctrinal meanings. In conclusion, the Board thinks it desirable to plan for publishing both in digital form for use on personal computers and in printed form, and to produce books with the cooperation of high-quality academic publishers (represented in Europe and America) that have broad connections internationally" ("Report on the Soto Zen Text Project", July, 2001 by Prof. Carl Bielefeldt and Griffith Foulk).

The Plan was ratified and affirmed at the first meeting of the Editorial Board on May 27, 1996 that marks the start of the real job of the Translation Project.

The Editorial Board is mainly responsible for selection of the treatises and sutras to translate, evaluate and approve the translations and determines the means of their publication and distribution. Current members are as follows.

1. Board Chair (a Japanese scholar fluent in English):  
Dr. Yasuaki Nara, Director of Research Center for Soto Zen Buddhism
2. Clerical Office Chief (Director in Chief of the Department of Mission): Rev. Shodō Danjo

3. American scholars (specialists in Buddhist studies and Soto Zen studies, includes Editors-in-Chief, who should be scholars of Zen, either native speakers of English or equipped with near-native ability in the language, who have mastered Japanese): Prof. Stanely Weinstein of Yale Univ., Prof. Carl Bielefeldt of Stanford Univ. and Prof. Griffith Foulk of Sarah Lawrence College: the latter two names work as Editors-in-Chief.

4. Japanese Scholars (2 persons who work as Advisors): Prof. Bunyu Matsuda and Prof. Kodo Kawamura both of Komazawa Univ.

5. Soto Zen teachers in America (2 persons): Rev. Tenshin Anderson • Former Abbot of San Francisco Zen Center, Rev. Shohaku Okumura • Director of Soto Zen Education Center.

6. Computer Consultant: Prof. Urs App of Hanazono Univ.

Texts to be translated are the Soto treatises, sutras, discourse records, liturgical and ceremonial verses and Soto monastic codes, all of which are listed as the Soto Texts in *Sotoshu Shusei* (Sotoshu By-law). They are divided according to the convenience of translating work, basically into two or three groups headed by two Editors-in-chief.

The first is the *Shobogenzo* group headed by Prof. C. Bielefeldt which by now has completed translating the following fascicles: Daigo, Zazengi, Zazenshin, Gabyo, Sansuikyō, Shoaku-makusa, Jinzu, Shoho-jisso, Butsudo, Tashintsu. Translation of other several fascicles such as Gyobutsu-igi, Shin-fukatoku, Kokyo, Gabyo, Keisei-san-shoku, Raihai-tokuzui are in progress.

The new translation provides an original Japanese text with Romanised script, English translation, extensive annotation on language and content, detailed glossaries on terms and other proper names, and supplemental notes on commentarial positions regarding disputed passages. The translation will be published in two editions: a fully annotated scholar's version, and a less technical version for the general readers. In future all translations and materials will be made available to the public through a web page.

The second is the *Denkoroku* group headed by Prof. G. Foulk. But the initial work was begun by translating *Sotoshu Gyōji Kihan* and Soto Zen monastic codes including *Keizan Shingi* and *Eihei Shingi*. *Tenzo-kyōkun* (The Admonition for the Chef) in *Eihei Shingi*, was already translated. The translation of *Gyōji Kihan*, which is important to the monastic life, is in progress and expected to complete in the near future.

The third group deals with the Soto School Scriptures for Daily Services and Practice (*Sotoshu nikka gongyo seit-en*). Its translation is intended not to impose a single "orthodox" liturgy on the various Soto Zen centers outside Japan, but rather to foster a greater sense of community in the Soto sangha by providing a common liturgical reference. The work, mainly taken care by Rev. Anderson, Rev. Okumura and Prof. Foulk, is completed and is expected to be published soon. This text includes such verses as Universal Dedication, Sutra Opening Verse, Repentance Verse, Bath Verse, Verse of Homage to Buddha's Relics, etc. and short sutras like *Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra* and others.

The translation work was conducted with the cooperation of participants from more than ten Zen centers. Understandably it was hard work because each Zen center had been chanting their particular translations for many years. The Zen teachers coming from various centers gathered together to create one single translation, to be used in each center. Pursuing the academic accuracy, chantability, felicity of phrasing in English, it is reported that intense debate was conducted in a cordial atmosphere. Difficulties were overcome creating a shared sense of success and the joy of mutual learning gained from the experiences of discussing matters of common interest with fellow Zen teachers.

Prof. Urs App, Computer Consultant, and Editor-in-chief, made a great contribution in setting up the mechanics and procedures designed to make the work of translation much more systematic and efficient in the long run. These created standards and models for formatting texts, writing notes, building a Glossary, and updating and sharing all of translated informations and guide easier access to shared materials for any study groups. Standardized translations will be valued by the lay person as well as scholars in general study.

As one who has witnessed the development of *Shobo* in America and is partially associated to the movement through the friendship with the late Rev. Hakuyu Maezumi Roshi. And one who is deeply concerned from Japanese point-of-view and as a member of the Sotoshu Committee for Promotion of Overseas Mission for many years, I can not help holding many and various comments and feelings on this Soto Zen Text Project. Particularly the change on the side of the Japanese Sotoshu people towards the frank evaluation in favor of the actual development of Zen in America is conspicuous. At the same time the growth of Soto Zen in America in the context of practical as well as academic levels seems to be alive and well. In one sense this project is to promote a foster a partnership between the American Buddhist movement and

Buddhists in the other countries. On the other hand, as this could only be convened and implemented because Zen people of both countries agree and are united in this single purpose.

(The present author owe much to the "Report on the Soto Zen Text Project: July 2001" of the Editors-in-Chief, Prof. C. Bielefeldt and Prof G. Foulk, for the detailed in formations and express my appreciation.)

## Dogen Translation

Rev. Shohaku Okumura  
Director, Soto Zen Education Center

In 1972, when I started to practice at Antaiji in Kyoto, my teacher Kosho Uchiyama Roshi encouraged me to study English because there were many Westerners who came to practice with him. Uchiyama Roshi's wish was to produce people who could lead zazen practice and explain Buddha-dharma as taught by Dogen Zenji.

After starting to study English at an English school, I wanted to read Dogen and Soto Zen teachings in English. At the time the only English translations of Dogen I could find were Masunaga Reiho's translation of Shobogenzo Zuimonki (Premier of Soto Zen), and his translation of a few shorter writings by Dogen Zenji such as Genjo-koan (Manifestation of Reality) and Shoji (Life and Death). Reiho Masunaga was a professor of Komazawa University. Another English book I found was Shunryu Suzuki Roshi's "Zen mind, Beginner's mind", published in 1970. I could not find anything else.

In 1975, after Uchiyama Roshi retired from Antaiji, I came to the United States to establish a small Zen practice community in Massachusetts and stayed there for about five years. While I was there, an American Zen practitioner showed me an English translation of Dogen Zenji's *Fukanzazengi* (Universal Recommendation of Zazen). I've forgotten whose translation it was. When I read it, I felt that this could not be what Dogen wrote. So I made my own translation of *Fukan-zazengi* and used it as the text of our discussion group during weekly Sunday sesshin. Ever since, I have worked on translation of Dogen Zenji's and Uchiyama Roshi's writings.

We now have many translations of Dogen Zenji's writ-

ings and both academic and practical books on Soto Zen. I am deeply grateful to those teachers who made such great efforts to transmit Dogen Zenji's teachings and practice in such a condition. Even so, I believe we need many more translations to study Dogen and the 800-year tradition of Soto Zen Buddhism.

For example, Dogen's *Shobogenzo* is very difficult, even for Japanese. Depending upon the translators' ability to read the original text, their translations must vary. It is meaningful to have different possible translations, but still it is desirable to have a standard translation by expert scholars. I deeply appreciate Soto Zen Text Projects, sponsored by Sotoshu Shumicho, that will produce translations of Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji's writings as well as *Standard Rites of the Soto Zen School (Sotoshu Gyoji Kihan)* and *Soto School Scriptures for Daily Services and Practice*. Prof. Yasuaki Nara, former president of Komazawa University and the chair of the Editorial Board of the project, explains the history and meaning of the project in this issue of Dharma Eye.

We are honored to include Prof. Carl Beilefeldt's translation of *Shobogenzo Sansuikyo* (Mountains and Waters Sutra). This translation was done as a part of the Soto Zen Text Project. Until the translation project is completed and the entire *Shobogenzo* translation is published, one fascicle of Prof. Beilefeldt's translation of *Shobogenzo* will appear in each issue of this publication.

For the feature of this issue, we asked three American Dogen translators to write about their work.

Carl Bielefeldt is a Professor at Stanford University who has been studying Dogen since the 1970's. "Dogen's Manual of Seated Meditation" is well known among Soto Zen practitioners. In his article, he describes the experience of making his first translation of *Sansuikyo* at Tassajara with Shunryu Suzuki Roshi's help.

Kazuaki Tanahashi is an artist and writer. His translations of Dogen's texts, done with several San Francisco Zen Center priests, have been published as *Moon in a Dewdrop and Enlightenment Unfolds*. These books are very popular among Zen Students in the West. Mr. Tanahashi says that Dogen was post-existentialist. To Mr. Tanahashi, Dogen's trust in a person's activities based on his insight into impermanence and egolessness was the most attractive point of Dogen's teachings.

Taigen Dan Leighton is one of the SFZC priests who worked with Mr. Tanahashi on some of Dogen's writings. Rev. Leighton translated a portion of *Wanshi Koroku*, published as "Cultivating the Empty Field". He is my co-translator of *Dogen's Pure Standard for Zen Community (Eihei Shingi)* and *Wholehearted Way* (Dogen's Bendowa

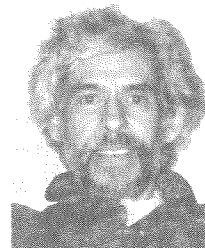
with Uchiyama Roshi's commentary). Rev. Leighton and I are now working on *Eihei Koroku*, another important collection of Dogen's formal dharma-discourses recorded in Chinese, his Dharma words and Chinese poems, all compiled by his *Jisha* (personal attendants), Senne, Ejo and Gien.

In Japan, when people study Dogen and Soto Zen, they study commentaries together with original texts. To study of Dogen and Soto Zen in-depth, we need translations of the commentaries of *Shobogenzo*. I've tried to translate *Shobogenzo Genjokoan-gosho*, the oldest commentary on *Shobogenzo Genjo-koan* made by Dogen's disciple Senne and Senne's disciple Kyogo. This was as difficult as translating *Shobogenzo* itself.

We need more translations and studies on Dogen Zenji's writings and many other texts by Soto Zen masters and scholars, ancient and modern, to develop Soto Zen study and practice in the West. I hope this issue of "Dharma Eye" promotes deeper interest in Dogen Study among Western scholars and practitioners.

## Circumambulating the Mountains and Waters

Prof. Carl Bielefeldt  
Stanford University



The publication of the Mountains and Waters Sutra in this issue of Dharma Eye marks at once a kind of home coming for me and a new departure for the Soto Zen Text Project. I first entered into the Mountains and Waters at Tassajara, thirty years ago, when I was young and foolish. After that, I wandered off, into the halls of academe, getting gradually old and foolish. And now it seems I've circled back, to start all over again. Odd how my life somehow got bound up with this old book by Dogen.

I set out to translate the book in 1971, when I was a student at Berkeley and studying Zen with Shunryu Suzuki in San Francisco. At the time, I was looking to try out my new knowledge of Japanese on Dogen, and Suzuki suggested that I take a look at the Mountains and Waters Sutra. A look convinced me it was much too hard for me,

but Suzuki said I should do it anyway and offered to help. I had one short, sweet summer at Tassajara, sitting in the sycamore shade with my books and meeting with the man to go over the text. Then, the man was gone, and I was off to classrooms in Tokyo. I figured that was more or less the end of it.

However, a few years ago, one of my students at Stanford, Mark Gonnerman, got an idea for a seminar on Gary Snyder's long poem *Mountains and Rivers Without End*. When Gary came down from the Sierras to read for us, he talked about how that old Tassajara translation had worked its way into his work on the book. Sure enough, if you follow Gary's trail through the book, you can see Dogen's mountains walking across the landscape of the poems. So Mark asked me to rework my translation and give a talk on the sutra for his seminar. And there I was, a lifetime later, back where I started -- but with a lot more books and no man to help.

Meanwhile, around the same time, the Sotoshu Shumucho had the idea of starting up the Soto Zen Text Project to translate the entire *Shobogenzo*, and somehow I got involved, even though I still couldn't understand what Dogen was talking about. I used to think that I shouldn't try to translate the *Shobogenzo* till I understood what Dogen was talking about, but recently I've come to realize that I can't wait for that anymore and should just do it anyway, as Suzuki said. I figure that he must have understood what Dogen was getting at and, if he had just lived a little longer, could have used even a poor translation of the *Mountains and Waters Sutra* to explain it to people. I figure others probably understand and may be able to use whatever I can do now to explain it to people. Anyway, with a book like the *Shobogenzo*, you can't have too many translations.

There are already several translations of the *Shobogenzo*, and more are coming out now all the time. Some of them seem pretty poor, but some are really good. I don't think my own translations will be better than the good ones, but I want to try something a little different from most of what I've seen so far. Of course, there are lots of ways to translate, each with its own virtues and vices. When the translator doesn't understand what the author is talking about, probably the safest approach is to keep as close as possible to the author's language. Every translator has to cook her text, but the trick in this approach is to try for no more than medium rare, so the reader can still taste some of the raw juices of the original words.

The chief virtue here, at least when all goes well, is that the translation will have less of the translator's own ideas. The chief vice is that the translation will be hard to read,

with a foreign feel, full of odd diction and unusual syntax. Sometimes, this minimalist approach may catch more of the author's style; other times it can distort the style, making what may originally have been smooth and flowing for the native reader into something twisted and clunky. Sometimes, it can make a passage seem more difficult or more exotic than it really is, turning what was fairly easy and idiomatic into something strange and fraught with unintended mystery; but it can also preserve some of the original strangeness and keep open mysteries that are inherent in the text.

Every translation is a bunch of trade-offs, every translator is a negotiator between author and audience. But when the negotiations get tough, as they often do with Dogen, I guess I'd rather let the reader wrestle with the difficulties of his medieval Japanese diction and syntax than make her read my own ideas in easy English paraphrase. Dogen loved his language, and he was a master of it. He had his own ways of saying things, strange, powerful ways, notoriously demanding of the reader. The language of his *Shobogenzo* has been boggling minds in Japan for almost 800 years now, and it seems only fair to let it boggle us for a while. Anyway, in another hundred years or so, today's elegant English translations will probably look just as cramped and quaint as the clunky ones that stick closer to the text.

The point of avoiding easy paraphrase and sticking close to the language of the text is not just to keep the translation as difficult for the reader as the original but to make it easier for the reader to get behind the translation to the original difficulties. And for this, I want to have as many notes as possible. Not just the usual notes on Buddhist technical terms and Zen master's names but all sorts of notes on interesting words and ambiguous phrases, on ordinary idioms and obscure allusions, on puns and word plays. Notes that warn when the translation doesn't really get it or is just a guess; notes that give other options than the one I end up choosing. I want notes that say things like, "The antecedent of the pronoun here isn't clear, but Menzan's commentary says it's X."

One of the things I like best about the Shumucho translation project is that it allows me to indulge this footnote fetish. Publishers, even academic presses, don't like a lot of notes; they make a book too bulky and expensive. But right from the start of the Soto Zen Text Project, we decided that, in addition to publishing our work as a book, we'd have an electronic version of our translations that includes all our notes on the texts. Most people probably won't care about them, but at least they'll be there for anyone who really wants to get into the *Shobogenzo*. Maybe teachers can use them sometimes to prepare lectures;

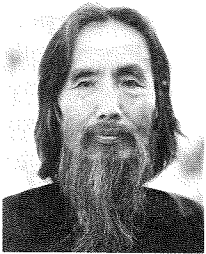
maybe people can use them to make better translations.

It's one of the great luxuries of academic life that one can while away half a day tracking down a single strange word in old books. Of course, this way of doing things means you go pretty slowly. At this point, I guess our project has about one-fourth of the *Shobogenzo* in draft form, but it will still be several years before we can go to press. Meanwhile, we wanted to start making some of our work available, in order to see how people like it and get suggestions on what we might do better. We're happy that the Education Center have offered us space in Dharma Eye to run a series of our translations. As you might guess, I'm especially happy that we're starting off the series with my old friend, the Mountains and Waters Sutra.

The translations we put in Dharma Eye can't include all our notes. But as we publish our work in Dharma Eye, we'll be putting it on the internet, together with our annotation. The Stanford Center for Buddhist Studies has kindly let us use a corner of their server to put up a Soto Zen Text Project web site, where you can find the translations, as well as news of the project and a handy e-mail form for sending us messages. Please come and visit us at <http://www.stanford.edu/group/scbs/sztp3>. And by the way, if you like Gary Snyder, you'll be happy to hear that Mark is collecting the lectures from his Stanford seminar as a book. Watch for it. Meanwhile if you want a look at my lecture on the sutra and Gary's poem, you can find a copy at <http://www.stanford.edu/group/scbs/Resources/Papers/bielefeldt.snyder/bielefeldt.snyder.html>.

## Dogen: A Thirteenth-century Post-Existentialist

Mr. Kazuaki Tanahashi



"What makes Dogen different from all other thinkers?" someone asked when I gave a talk at St. John's College in Santa Fe.

"His deep trust in action," I replied. "Facing the enormity of the problems in the world, we often become cynical, doubting that individual actions can make a significant impact. Dogen's view of the power of each individual action can be a driving force in challenging this cynicism."

Forty years ago as a beginning artist in Japan, I was searching for a spiritual guide. One day I came across these lines in the "Zenki" (Undivided Activity) fascicle of *Shobogenzo*:

*Birth is just like riding in a boat. You raise the sails, row with the oar, and steer. Although you row, the boat gives you a ride, and without the boat you couldn't ride. But you ride in the boat and your riding makes the boat what it is... When you ride in a boat, your body and mind and the environs together are the undivided activity of the boat. The entire earth and the entire sky are both the undivided activity of the boat.<sup>1</sup>*

I was blown away by this statement. What an amazing image! "Your riding makes the boat what it is." How positive Dogen's vision was!

At that time, I was under the influence of the Existentialists, in whose writings I heard a tone of helplessness, despair, and boredom. It seemed to me that Dogen had started out from the same point as the Existentialists: life is short and all things are impermanent. Yet he had penetrated the place where they were stuck, and arrived at the point of trust in action that transforms the inner and outer world.

Dogen believed in the simple act of zazen. His world view, paradoxical images, and complex language were intended to point to the function and merit of zazen authentically transmitted from the lineage of his predecessors. All activities in the monastery for him were extensions of zazen practice. He emphasized the importance of each action to maintain the community life—cooking, administration, or greeting one another. In his teaching discipline is no different from freedom and wisdom becomes inseparable from compassion. Some of his writings talk about extending the spirit beyond the monastic world. In "Bodaisatta Shishôhō" (Bodhisattva's Four Methods of Guidance) he says:

*You should benefit friend and enemy equally. You should benefit self and others alike. If you have this mind, even beneficial action for the sake of grasses, trees, wind, and water is spontaneous and unremitting.<sup>2</sup>*

He did not try to change the laws or political system of Japan in his time. He was not an environmental activist, as there was no prominent environmental destruction. Yet I believe Dogen's writing can inspire those who want to take action in this time of environmental crisis. His unequivocal positivity encourages us

to work for the future.

With members of San Francisco Zen Center, I have been translating Dogen's writings over two decades. Strangers often thank me for having helped their meditation practice with our translation. This makes our effort worthwhile. Dogen is still present and guides many of us right now.

To translate a particular piece I usually work with a partner who is an advanced Zen practitioner and excellent native writer of English. Exploring the meaning of the original lines and searching for the best possible corresponding expressions in English is a slow and painstaking yet extremely enjoyable process. In the past I referred constantly to major commentaries by Soto masters on the *Shobogenzo*. But now I feel we should ask Dogen about Dogen's words; the keys for decoding a certain passage may be found in other parts of his extensive writings. Trying to find a way to transmit his words into another language gives a new dimension to understanding Dogen. Translators in different parts of the world may be seen as members of an invisible community of expanding Dogen scholarship.

In "Gyoji" (Continuous Practice), Fascicle One, he says:

*By the continuous practice of all buddhas and ancestors, your practice is actualized and your great road opens up. By your continuous practice, the continuous practice of all buddhas is actualized and the great road of all buddhas opens up. Your continuous practice creates the circle of the way.<sup>3</sup>*

Again, this confirms his vision of the inseparableness of individual action and a community through time. If past and present dynamically interact in this way, we need to honor the past and try to listen to this master from the past as attentively as possible. It is striking again and again that we learn so much whenever we investigate Dogen's words in order to translate them. We may have more up-to-date and wide-ranging knowledge. But we lack the deep understanding that we recognize in him. We remain his humble students.

Nowadays many people including those in the Western world regard him as one of the greatest thinkers of East Asia. But regarding Dogen as a thinker, writer, poet, or even a mystic or religious figure may not represent him fully. He was all these combined. And above all, he was a master of nonthinking.

Dogen cut through the boundary of dualistic thinking and elucidated the vastness of the meditative state of body and mind—thinking beyond thinking, conscious-

ness beyond intellect. This is the state free from preconceptions and self-imposed limitations. This is where the self becomes beyond self, the small becomes not small, dreams become not merely dreams. Actions supported by the consciousness that is open to this non-dual awareness can be selfless, visionary, and vast in scale. Such actions are urgently needed today and I believe Dogen can be an indispensable resource in our pursuit of this process.

<sup>1</sup> Translated with Ed Brown, *Moon in a Dew Drop*.

<sup>2</sup> Translated with Reb Anderson, *Moon in a Dew Drop*.

<sup>3</sup> Translated with Mel Weitsman, *Enlightenment Unfolds*.

## Reflections on Translating Dogen

Rev. Taigen Leighton



Translating Dogen, like reading Dogen (in the original or in reasonable translations), is a richly rewarding art. I am grateful to have been able to make a contribution to the burgeoning body of translations of Dogen into English. My own study of Dogen has been inextricably connected with my practice of zazen. My first zazen instruction in New York from my first teacher, Rev. Kando Nakajima, was also my first time hearing dharma talk about Dogen's teaching. Something struck home. Since that time, nearly three decades ago, I have continued everyday zazen practice, as well as regular study of Dogen. I feel that the two go together, and the wealth of new Dogen material in English since then has been very helpful.

A year or so after starting formal Soto Zen practice and listening to talks on Dogen, I returned to school to study Japanese language, and Chinese and Japanese history, literature, and philosophy. I did this simply to receive some background for more fully understanding this Dogen person. Since then I have continued studying Dogen, both academically, as well as in practice contexts with my teacher Reb Anderson and other San Francisco Zen Center teachers, and later for one practice period in a Soto monastery in Japan.

The current interest in Dogen seems to come in large part simply from the power of his writings as poetic, evocative texts that yield subtle philosophic truths. Dogen has become a world figure in the history of spiritual liter-



ature. His name now shares a place for many with such luminaries as Rumi, William Blake, Rilke, Tsongkhapa, Saint John of the Cross, Hildegard of Bingen, Shantideva, Meister Eckhart, Nietzsche, Thoreau, or whichever particular dozen or so names we each might choose to suggest. But Dogen is notable in that he is not primarily interested in religious doctrine or literary virtue, but rather, is a dedicated meditation teacher. His focus is to encourage the sustaining of a specific practice tradition, that of ongoing awakening, or going beyond buddha.

It is ironic that Dogen's writing has been so meaningful to the introduction to the West of Zen (and even Buddhism generally) in the last half of the twentieth century. In terms of Dogen's importance to the historical development of Japanese Soto Zen, study of his writings was nearly insignificant. Since a generation or two after Dogen, his writings were basically unknown for many centuries except to a small number of Soto scholars and priests, until the popular revival and interest in Dogen in Japan beginning in the 1920s. In terms of the historical development of Japanese Soto Zen, Dogen was much more important, firstly, for his training of a fine core group of dedicated and skilled Soto disciples, and secondly, for his emphasis on precepts, and his introduction of the lay bodhisattva precept ceremony, which helped develop wide Soto Zen support throughout the Japanese countryside.

And yet, the rediscovery of Dogen's writings and their popularity in translation in the West seems highly appropriate to our current situation. Dogen's writings are profound and illuminating. While often poetic and provocative, Dogen's writings also present a perspective appropriate to modern spiritual concerns. His writings are both challenging, and sometimes deeply comforting. His radical nondualism offers a stimulating alternative to our sense of alienation from the surrounding "other," and to a consumerist culture that skillfully aims to turn our world and our lives into objectified commodities. His non-anthropocentric, inclusive world-view provides a fresh spiritual context for seeing our intimate connection and responsibility to our environment.

The best way I have found for myself to study Dogen has been attempting to translate him. I have had the great privilege to work extensively on translations of Dogen in collaboration both with Kazuaki Tanahashi and with Shohaku Okumura. With Kaz I have worked on several *Shobogenzo* fascicles and some of Dogen's poetry, and have appreciated and learned from Kaz's incisive and poetically elegant approach to expressing Dogen's essential meaning. With Shohaku I have translated Bendowa (in *The Wholehearted Way*), *Eihei Shingi* (as *Dogen's Pure*

*Standards for the Zen Community*), and we are currently working on *Eihei Koroku* (*Dogen's Extensive Record, forthcoming*). I have enjoyed and benefited from Shohaku's careful faithfulness to Dogen, and patient investigation of his teachings. I have also had the pleasure of working with, in various capacities, a half dozen or so other fine Dogen translators or scholars, including Norman Waddell, Steven Heine, Carl Bielefeldt, Thomas Cleary, Tom Wright, and Griffith Foulk. I have learned much about Dogen, and about translation, from each of them.

There are many challenges to translating Dogen's writings. Some of these are inherent in the Japanese language he uses, as well as in the Chinese in which some of his works are written. Often subjects are not stated, pronouns are indefinite, and singular or plural is unspecified. Sometimes these are clear in the context of what is being said. But often the translator must make a decision about what and how much to add in, just to make the English reasonably coherent. Not infrequently, even where a sentence breaks is unclear in Dogen's original, as phrases might be read either in connection with the phrase before or after.

Another main issue is how to include in English the ambiguities that are abundantly present in Chinese and Japanese. These can arise in the multiple meanings of some Chinese characters and compounds, as well as in Dogen's abundant references to Buddhist teachings and Zen lore, along with Chinese literary classics. Usually, in the more precise English language, it is difficult to suggest all the overtones or nuances that exist in some of Dogen's sentences (although footnotes can help). Often the translator can clearly sense from the context Dogen's primary intended meaning, but there are instances where a multiplicity of meanings is clearly relevant. In such cases, occasionally, I may discover a way in English to suggest the same range of ambiguities as the original. Of such are the small "victories" in translating Dogen.

Dogen is famous for his intricate play with language, turning inside-out conventional phrases from the sutras and koan collections to yield their deeper meaning. Further, many of his sentences at first may seem unnecessarily lengthy and complex. Indeed, at times a literal English reading of his Japanese style might produce something that seems childish or repetitious in a way that is not at all the case, but simply natural, in the original Japanese or Chinese. But simplified paraphrase is often an injustice to Dogen's original. Norman Waddell told me that when he was studying Dogen's writing with Kyoto School philosopher Keiji Nishitani, that Nishitani once took apart one of Dogen's long, complicated sentences to show that there was no other way Dogen could have said

what he wanted to say. Nishitani believed that all of Dogen's seemingly convoluted sentences were completely necessary to the teaching Dogen intended.

The following two sentences from the "Self-fulfillment Samadhi" section of Bendowa are examples of Dogen's intricate, precise utterances that cannot casually be condensed or simplified into short sentences:

*Therefore, this zazen person without fail drops off body and mind, cuts away previous tainted views and thoughts, awakens genuine buddha-dharma, universally helps the buddha work in each place, as numerous as atoms, where buddha-tathagatas teach and practice, and widely influences practitioners who are going beyond buddha, thereby vigorously exalting the dharma that goes beyond buddha. At this time, because earth, grasses and trees, fences and walls, tiles and pebbles, all things in the dharma realm in ten directions, carry out buddha work, therefore everyone receives the benefit of wind and water movement caused by this functioning, and all are imperceptibly helped by the wondrous and incomprehensible influence of buddha to actualize the enlightenment at hand. (The Wholehearted Way, p. 22)*

The primary questions while translating each passage of Dogen are, "What is the Dharma here? What does Dogen mean? Why is he saying this?" It is not enough to just translate the words without considering their spiritual meaning. But on numbers of occasions after a few hours of wrestling over the teaching of a particularly difficult passage, considering various possible meanings, I have found that upon returning to reconsider Dogen's original sentence structure, suddenly the meaning becomes clear. Then, of course, how to put his meaning into readable English that as accurately as possible conveys the teaching Dogen is offering, with something of the same feeling and tone as Dogen, is the next part of the challenge.

I have come to refer to my current, regular collaborative translation sessions as "Dokusan with Dogen." In encounter after encounter, Dogen presents profound nuggets, sometimes playfully twisted inside-out, that challenge both understanding and response. The only appropriate response is somehow to clearly express Dogen's Dharma in English. One can only hope that the attempts offered will be helpful to others' partaking of Dogen's insight.

I especially have come to enjoy Dogen's forthright style of proclaiming the Dharma. He does not follow what we might consider conventional logic, but his mind works and plays creatively in the connections he makes in order to express and declare the reality of awakening. In

his essays in *Shobogenzo*, but also in the short Dharma Discourses to his monk disciples in *Eihei Koroku*, Dogen interweaves connections between major themes, imagistic motifs, and the celebrated Chan figures upon whose dialogues he comments. He plays freely with this material to proclaim his own deeply experiential sense of the teachings and their expressions of wisdom and compassion.

More and more I appreciate Dogen's playfulness and joy in simply expounding and expressing the Dharma, radically going beyond any dualism his students might be caught in. Dogen's teaching is also very practical. The point of his wisdom is to encourage expression of this awareness throughout all our activity. In one of his short talks to his monks in *Eihei Koroku* (# 239), Dogen expresses how this wisdom must be applied to expression in everyday activity:

*Entering the water without avoiding deep-sea dragons is the courage of a fisherman. Travelling the earth without avoiding tigers is the courage of a hunter. Facing the drawn sword before you, and seeing death as just like life, is the courage of a general. What is the courage of patch-robed monks?*

*After a pause Dogen said: Spread out your bedding and sleep; set out your bowls and eat rice; exhale through your nostrils; radiate light from your eyes. Do you know there is something that goes beyond? With vitality, eat lots of rice and then use the toilet. Transcend your personal prediction of future buddhahood from Gautama.*

## Soto Zen Text Project

### *Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma* **Mountains and Waters Sutra (Sansui kyo)**

Translated by Carl Bielefeldt

#### **Introduction**

The *Sansui kyo* represents one of the earlier texts of the *Shobogenzo*, written at *Koshoji*, the monastery just south of the capital where Dogen lived from 1233 to 1243. According to the colophon of an ancient manuscript of the work thought to be in the author's own hand, it was composed in the autumn of 1240, the year in which he seems to have begun to work in earnest on the essays that would make up his *Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma*. This was a time when Dogen was at the height of his literary powers, and the *Mountains and Waters Sutra* is widely

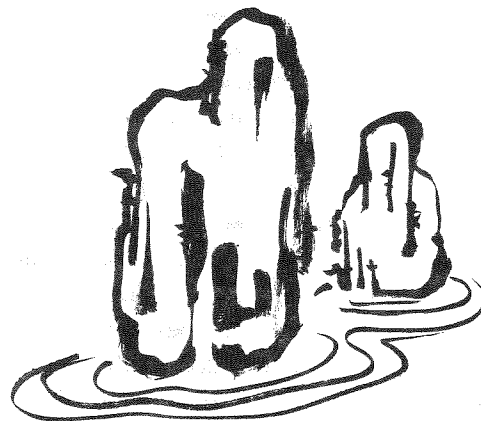
appreciated as one of the most elegant of his essays.

Several months before he wrote the *Sansui kyo*, Dogen composed another text of the *Shobogenzo* entitled *Keisei sanshoku* ("Sound of the Stream, Form of the Mountain"), inspired by a verse by the famed Song-dynasty poet Su Dongbo:

*The sound of the stream is his long, broad tongue;  
The mountain, his immaculate body.  
These evening's eighty-four thousand verses —  
How will I tell them tomorrow?*

In the *Sansui kyo*, Dogen returned to the theme of this poem, to explore in detail the meaning of mountains and rivers as the very body and speech of the buddha. As he says in his opening lines, the natural landscape that surrounds us here and now is the expression of the ancient buddhas. The term "expression" (*do genjo*) here should probably be taken in two senses: as the words of the buddha and as his practice. In the *Sansui kyo*, the mountains and waters are at once preaching a sutra that reveals the dharma and themselves putting that dharma into practice, themselves, as Dogen says in his final line, becoming wise men and sages.

This translation is based on the text in Kawamura Kodo, ed., *Dogen zenji zenshu*, vol. 1 (1991), pp. 316-328. Examples of other English translations of the *Sansui kyo* can be found at Masunaga Reiho, "Introduction to Sansuikyo and Translation of Text," *Shugaku kenkyu* 24 (1962); Carl Bielefeldt "Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Book XXIX, The Mountain and Rivers Sutra", in M. Tobias and H. Drasdo, ed., *The Mountain Spirit* (1979), pp. 41-49; Hee-Jin Kim, *Flowers of Emptiness: Selections from Dogen's Shobogenzo* (1985), pp. 295-306 (partial translation); Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dogen* (1985), pp. 97-107; Thomas Cleary, *Shobogenzo: Zen Essays by Dogen* (1986), pp. 87-101; Yokoi Yuho, tr., *The Shobo-genzo* (1986), pp. 357-368; Koen Nishiyama and John Stevens, *Shobogenzo: The Eye and Treasury of the True Law*, vol. 2, (1977), pp. 163-170; Gudo Wafu Nishijima and Chodo Cross, *Master Dogen's Shobogenzo*, Book 1 (1994), pp. 167-179. An online version of this translation with more complete annotation is available at the Soto Zen Text Project web site:



by Michael Hofman

*Treasury of the Eye of  
the True Dharma*  
Book 29  
Mountains and Waters Sutra

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These mountains and waters of the present are the expression of the old buddhas. Each, abiding in its own dharma state, fulfills exhaustive virtues. Because they are the circumstances "prior to the kalpa of emptiness", they are this life of the present; because they are the self "before the germination of any subtle sign", they are liberated in their actual occurrence. Since the virtues of the mountain are high and broad, the spiritual power to ride the clouds is always mastered from the mountains, and the marvelous ability to follow the wind is inevitably liberated from the mountains.

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Preceptor Kai of Mt. Dayang addressed the assembly, saying, "The blue mountains are constantly walking. The stone woman gives birth to a child in the night."

The mountains lack none of their proper virtues; hence, they are constantly at rest and constantly walking. We must devote ourselves to a detailed study of this virtue of walking. Since the walking of the mountains should be like that of people, one ought not doubt that the mountains walk simply because they may not appear to stride like humans.

This saying of the buddha and ancestor [Daokai] has

pointed out walking; it has got what is fundamental, and we should thoroughly investigate this address on "constant walking". It is constant because it is walking. Although the walking of the blue mountains is faster than "swift as the wind", those in the mountains do not sense this, do not know it. To be "in the mountains" is "a flower opening within the world".<sup>2</sup> Those outside the mountains do not sense this, do not know it. Those without eyes to see the mountains, do not sense, do not know, do not see, do not hear the reason for this. To doubt the walking of the mountains means that one does not yet know one's own walking. It is not that one does not walk but that one does not yet know, has not made clear, this walking. Those who would know their own walking must also know the walking of the blue mountains.

The blue mountains are not sentient; they are not insentient. We ourselves are not sentient; we are not insentient. We can have no doubts about these blue mountains walking. We do not know what measure of dharma realms would be necessary to clarify the blue mountains' walking and our own walking, including an accounting of both "stepping back and back stepping".<sup>3</sup> We should do an accounting of the fact that, since the very time "before any subtle sign", since "the other side of the King of Emptiness", walking by stepping forward and back has never stopped for a moment.

If walking had ever rested, the buddhas and ancestors would never have appeared; if walking were limited, the buddha dharma would never have reached us today. Stepping forward has never ceased; stepping back has never ceased. Stepping forward does not oppose stepping back, nor does stepping back oppose stepping forward. This virtue is called "the mountain flowing, the flowing mountain".

The blue mountains devote themselves to the investigation of walking; the East Mountain studies "moving over the water". Hence, this study is the mountains' own study. The mountains, without altering their own body and mind, with their own mountain countenance, have always been circling back to study [themselves].

Do not slander mountains by saying that the blue mountains cannot walk, nor the East Mountain move over the water. It is because of the baseness of the common person's point of view that we doubt the phrase "the blue mountains walk"; because of the crudeness of our limited experience, we are surprised by the words "flowing mountain". Without having fully penetrated even the term "flowing water", we just remain sunk in our limited perception.

Thus, the accumulated virtues [of the mountain] brought up here represent its very "name and form", its "vital artery". There is a mountain walk and a mountain flow. There is a time when the mountains give birth to a mountain child. The mountains become the buddhas and ancestors, and it is for this reason that the buddhas and ancestors have thus appeared.

Even when we have the eyes [to see mountains as] the appearance of grass and trees, earth and stone, fences and walls, this is nothing to doubt, nothing to be moved by: it is not the complete appearance [of the mountains]. Even when there appears an occasion in which [the mountains] are seen as the splendor of the seven treasures, this is still not the real refuge. Even when they appear to us as the realm of the practice of the way of the buddhas, this is not necessarily something to be desired. Even when we attain the crowning appearance of the vision of [the mountains as] the inconceivable virtues of the buddhas, their reality is more than this. Each of these appearances is the particular objective and subjective result [of past karma]; they are not the karma of the way of the buddhas and ancestors but narrow, one-sided views.<sup>4</sup> "Turning the object and turning the mind" is criticized by the Great Sage; "explaining the mind and explaining the nature" is not affirmed by the buddhas and ancestors; "seeing the mind and seeing the nature" is the business of non-Buddhists. "Sticking to words and sticking to phrases" are not the words of liberation. There are [words] that are free from such realms: they are "the blue mountains constantly walking" and "the East Mountain moving over the water". We should give them detailed investigation.

"The stone woman gives birth to a child in the night." This means that the time when "a stone woman gives birth to a child" is "the night". There are male stones, female stones, and stones neither male nor female. They repair heaven, and they repair earth. There are stones of heaven, and there are stones of earth. Though this said in the secular world, it is rarely understood. We should understand the reason behind this "giving birth to a child". At the time of birth, are parent and child transformed together? We should not only study that birth is realized in the child becoming the parent; we should also study and fully understand that the practice and verification of birth is realized when the parent becomes the child.<sup>5</sup>

The Great Master Yunmen Kuangzhen has said, "The East Mountain moves over the water".<sup>6</sup>

The import of this expression is that all mountains are the East Mountain, and all these East Mountains are "moving over the water". Therefore, Mount Sumeru and the other nine mountains are all appearing, are all prac-

ting and verifying [the buddha dharma]. This is called "the East Mountain". But how could Yunmen himself be liberated from the "skin, flesh, bones, and marrow" of the East Mountain and its life of practice and verification?

At the present time in the land of the great Song there is a certain bunch of illiterates who have formed such a crowd that they cannot be overcome by the few real [students]. They maintain that sayings such as this "East Mountain moving over the water" or Nanquan's "sickle" are incomprehensible talk. Their idea is that any saying that is involved with thought is not a Zen saying of the buddhas and ancestors; it is incomprehensible sayings that are the sayings of the buddhas and ancestors. Consequently, [they hold that] Huangbo's "stick" and Linji's "roar", because they are difficult to comprehend and cannot be grasped by thought, represent the great awakening preceding the time "before the germination of any subtle sign". The "tangle-cutting phrases" often used as devices by earlier worthies are [they say] incomprehensible.<sup>7</sup>

Those who talk in this way have never met a true teacher and lack the eye of study; they are worthless little fools. There have been many such "sons of Māra" and "gang of six" shavepates in the land of Song for the last two or three hundred years.<sup>8</sup> This is truly regrettable, for it represents the decline of the great way of the buddhas and ancestors. Their understanding is inferior to that of the Hinayana shravakas, more foolish than that even of non-Buddhists. They are not layman; they are not monks. They are not humans; they are not gods. They are dumber than beasts that study the way of the buddha. What you shavelings call "incomprehensible sayings" is incomprehensible only to you, not to the buddhas and ancestors. Simply because you yourself do not comprehend [the sayings] is no reason for you not to study the path comprehended by the buddhas and ancestors. Even granted that [Zen teachings] were in the end incomprehensible, this comprehension of yours would also be wrong. Such types are common throughout all quarters of the state of Song; I have seen them with my own eyes. They are to be pitied. They do not know that thought is words; they do not know that words are liberated from thought. When I was in the Song, I made fun of them, but they never had an explanation, never a word to say for themselves — just this false notion of theirs about "incomprehensibility". Who could have taught you this? Though you have no natural teacher, you are natural little non-Buddhists.<sup>9</sup>

We should realize that this [teaching of] "the East Mountain moving over the water" is the very "bones and marrow" of the buddhas and ancestors. All the waters are

appearing at the foot of the East Mountain, and therefore the mountains mount the clouds and stride through the heavens. The mountains are the peaks of the waters, and in both ascending and descending their walk is "over the water". The tips of the mountains' feet walk across the waters, setting them dancing. Therefore, their walking is "seven high and eight across" and their "practice and verification are not non-existent".<sup>10</sup>

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Water is neither strong nor weak, neither wet nor dry, neither moving nor still, neither cold nor hot, neither being nor nonbeing, neither delusion nor enlightenment. Frozen, it harder than diamond; who could break it? Melted, it is softer than milk; who could break it?

This being the case, we cannot doubt the many virtues realized [by water]. We should study the occasion when the water of the ten directions is seen in the ten directions. This is not a study only of the time when humans or gods see water: there is a study of water seeing water. Water practices and verifies water; hence, there is a study of water telling of water. We must bring to realization the road on which the self encounters the self; we must move back and forth along, and spring off from, the vital path on which the other studies and fully comprehends the other.

In general, then, the way of seeing mountains and waters differs according to the type of being [that sees them]. In seeing water, there are beings who see it as a jeweled necklace. This does not mean, however, that they see a jeweled necklace as water. How, then, do we see what they consider water? Their jeweled necklace is what we see as water. Some see water as miraculous flowers, though it does not follow that they use flowers as water. Hungry ghosts see water as raging flames or as pus and blood. Dragons and fish see it as a palace or a tower, or as the seven treasures or the mani gem. [Others] see it as woods and walls, or as the dharma nature of immaculate liberation, or as the true human body, or as the physical form and mental nature. Humans see these as water. And these [different ways of seeing] are the conditions under which [water] is killed or given life.<sup>11</sup>

Given that what different types of beings see is different, we should have some doubts about this. Is it that there are various ways of seeing one object? Or is it that we have mistaken various images for one object? At the peak of our concentrated effort on this, we should concentrate still more. Therefore, our practice and verification, our pursuit of the way, must also be not

merely of one or two kinds, and the ultimate realm must also have a thousand types and ten thousand kinds.

If we reflect further on the real import of this [question], although we say there is water of the various types, it would seem there is no original water, no water of various types. Nevertheless, the various waters in accordance with the types [of beings] do not depend on the mind, do not depend on the body [of these beings]; they do not arise from [different types of] karma; they are not dependent on self; they are not dependent on other. They are liberated dependent on water. Therefore, water is not [the water of] earth, water, fire, wind, space or consciousness; it is not blue, yellow, red, white or black; it is not form, sound, smell, taste, touch or idea. Nevertheless, the waters of earth, water, fire, wind, space, and the rest have been spontaneously appearing [as such].

This being the case, it becomes difficult to explain by what and of what the present land and palace are made. To say that they rest on the wheel of space and the wheel of wind is true neither for oneself nor for others; it is just speculating on the basis of the suppositions of an inferior view and is said only out of fear that, without such a resting place, they could not abide.<sup>12</sup>

The Buddha has said, "All things are ultimately liberated; they have no abode."<sup>13</sup>

We should realize that, although they are liberated, without any bonds, all things are abiding in [their own particular] state. However, when humans look at water, they have the one way that sees it only as flowing without rest. This "flow" takes many forms, of which the human view is but one. [Water] flows over the earth; it flows across the sky; it flows up; it flows down. [Water] flows around bends and into deep abysses. It mounts up to form clouds; it descends to form pools.

The *Wen Tzu* says, "The tao of water, ascending to heaven, becomes rain and dew, descending to earth, becomes rivers and streams."<sup>14</sup>

Such is said even in the secular world; it would be shameful indeed if those who call themselves descendants of the buddhas and ancestors were more stupid than the secular. [This passage] says that, although the way of water is unknown to water, water actually functions [as water]; although the way of water is not unknown to water, water actually functions [as water].

"Ascending to heaven, it becomes rain and dew." We should realize that water climbs to the very highest heavens in the highest quarters and becomes rain and dew. Rain and dew is of various kinds, in accordance with the various worlds. To say that there are places to which water does not reach is the teaching of the Hinayana

shravaka or the false teaching of the non-Buddhist. Water extends into flames; it extends into thought, reasoning and discrimination; it extends into awareness and the buddha nature.

"Descending to earth, it becomes rivers and streams." We should realize that, when water descends to earth, it becomes rivers and streams, and that the essence of rivers and streams becomes sages. The foolish common folk think that water is always in rivers, streams, and seas, but this is not so: [water] makes rivers and seas within water. Therefore, water is in places that are not rivers and seas; it is just that, when water descends to earth, it works as rivers and seas.

Moreover, we should not study that, when water has become rivers and seas, there is then no world and no buddha land [within water]: incalculable buddha lands are realized even within a single drop of water. Consequently, it is not that water exists within the buddha land, nor that the buddha land exists within water: the existence of water has nothing whatever to do with the three times or the dharma realm. Nevertheless, though it is like this, it is the koan of the actualization of water.

Wherever the buddhas and ancestors are, water is always there; wherever water is, there the buddhas and ancestors always appear. Therefore, the buddhas and ancestors have always taken up water as their own body and mind, their own thinking.

In this way, then, [the idea] that water does not climb up is to be found neither in Buddhist nor non-Buddhists writings. The way of water penetrates everywhere, above and below, vertically and horizontally. Still, in the sutras it is said that fire and wind go up, while earth and water go down. But this "up and down" bears some study — the study of the up and down of the way of the buddha. [In the way of the buddha,] where earth and water go is considered "down"; but "down" here does not mean some place to which earth and water go. Where fire and wind go is "up". While the dharma realm has no necessary connection with up and down or the four directions, simply on the basis of the function of the four, five or six elements, we provisionally set up a dharma realm with directions. It is not that the "heaven of non-conception" is above and the "avici hell" is below: avici is the entire dharma realm; the heaven of non-conception is the entire dharma realm.

Nevertheless, when dragons and fish see water as a palace, just as when humans see palaces, they do not view it as flowing. And, if some onlooker were to explain to them that their palace was flowing water, they would

surely be just as amazed as we are now to hear it said that mountains flow. Still, there would undoubtedly be some [dragons and fish] who would accept such an explanation of the railings, stairs and columns of palaces and pavilions. We should calmly consider, over and over, the reason for this. If our study is not liberated from these confines, we have not freed ourselves from the body and mind of the commoner, we have not fully comprehended the land of the buddhas and ancestors, we have not fully comprehended the land of the commoner, we have not fully comprehended the palace of the commoner.

Although humans have deeply understood what is in seas and rivers as water, just what kind of thing dragons, fish, and other beings understand and use as water we do not yet know. Do not foolishly assume that all kinds of beings must use as water what we understand as water.

When those who study Buddhism seek to learn about water, they should not stick to [the water of] humans; they should go on to study the water of the way of the buddhas. We should study how we see the water used by the buddhas and ancestors; we should study whether within the rooms of the buddhas and ancestors there is or is not water.

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From the distant past to the distant present, mountains have been the dwelling place of the great sages. Wise men and sages have all made the mountains their own chambers, their own body and mind. And through these wise men and sages the mountains have appeared. However many great sages and wise men we suppose have assembled in the mountains, ever since they entered the mountains no one has met a single one of them. There is only the expression of the mountain way of life; not a single trace of their having entered remains. The "crown and eyes" [of the mountains] are completely different when we are in the world gazing off at the mountains and when we are in the mountains meeting the mountains. Our concept of not-flowing and our understanding of not-flowing should not be the same as the dragon's understanding. Humans and gods reside in their own worlds, and other beings may have their doubts [about this], or, then again, they may not.

Therefore, without giving way to our surprise and doubt, we should study the words "mountains flow" with the buddhas and ancestors. Taking up one [view], there is flowing; taking up another, there is not-flowing. At one turn, there is flowing; at another, not-flowing. If our study is not like this, it is not "the true dharma wheel of the

Thus Come One".

An old buddha has said, "If you wish to avoid the karma of avici hell, do not slander the true dharma wheel of the Thus Come One."<sup>15</sup>

These words should be engraved on skin, flesh, bones and marrow, engraved on interior and exterior of body and mind, engraved on emptiness and on form; they are engraved on trees and rocks, engraved on fields and villages.

Although we say that mountains belong to the country, actually they belong to those who love them. When the mountains love their owners, the wise and virtuous inevitably enter the mountains. And when sages and wise men live in the mountains, because the mountains belong to them, trees and rocks flourish and abound, and the birds and beasts take on a supernatural excellence. This is because the sages and wise men have covered them with their virtue. We should realize that the mountains actually take delight in wise men, actually take delight in sages.

Throughout the ages, we have excellent examples of emperors who have gone to the mountains to pay homage to wise men and seek instruction from great sages. At such times [the emperors] respected [the sages] as teachers and honored them without standing on worldly forms. For the imperial authority has no authority over the mountain sage, and [the emperors] knew that the mountains are beyond the mundane world. In ancient times we have [the cases of] Kongtong and the Hua Guard: when the Yellow Emperor made his visit, he went on his knees, prostrated himself, and begged instruction.<sup>16</sup> Again, the Buddha Śākyamuni left his royal father's palace and went into the mountains; yet his royal father felt no resentment toward the mountains nor distrust of those in the mountains who instructed the prince. [The prince's] twelve years of cultivating the way were largely spent in the mountains, and it was in the mountains that the Dharma King's auspicious event occurred. Truly, even a "wheel-turning king" does not wield authority over the mountains.

We should understand that the mountains are not within the limits of the human realm or the limits of the heavens above. They are not to be viewed with the calculations of human thought. If only we did not compare them with flowing in the human realm, who would have any doubts about such things as the mountains' flowing or not flowing?

Again, since ancient times, wise men and sages have also lived by the water. When they live by the water they hook fish. Or they hook people, or they hook the way. These are all "water styles" of old. And going further,

there must be hooking the self, hooking the hook, being hooked by the hook, and being hooked by the way.

Long ago, when the Preceptor Decheng suddenly left Yueshan and went to live on the river, he got the sage of Huating River.<sup>17</sup> Is this not hooking a fish. Is it not hooking a person? Is it not hooking water? Is it not hooking himself? That the person got to see Decheng is [because he was] Decheng; Decheng's accepting the person is his meeting the person.

It is not the case simply that there is water in the world; within the world of water there is a world. And this is true not only within water: within clouds as well there is world of sentient beings; within wind there is world of sentient beings; within fire there is world of sentient beings; within earth there is world of sentient beings. Within the dharma realm there is a world of sentient beings; within a single blade of grass there is world of sentient beings; within a single staff there is a world of sentient beings. And wherever there is a world of sentient beings, there, inevitably, is the world of buddhas and ancestors. The reason this so, we should study very carefully.

In this way, water is the palace of the "true dragon"; it is not flowing away.<sup>18</sup> If we regard it only as flowing, the word "flowing" is an insult to water: it is like imposing "not flowing". Water is nothing but water's "real form just as it is". Water is the virtue of water; it is not flowing. In the thorough study of the flowing or the not-flowing of a single [drop of] water, the entirety of the ten thousand things is instantly realized. Among mountains as well, there are mountains hidden in jewels; there are mountains hidden in marshes, mountains hidden in the sky; there are mountains hidden in mountains. There is a study of mountains hidden in hiddenness.

An old buddha has said, "Mountains are mountains and waters are waters."<sup>19</sup>

These words do not say that mountains are mountains; they say that mountains are mountains. Therefore, we should thoroughly study these mountains. When we thoroughly study the mountains, this is the mountain training. Such mountains and waters themselves become wise men and sages.

*Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma*

Book 29

The Mountains and Waters Sutra

Presented to the

Eighteenth day, Tenth month, First year of Ninji (1240),  
at Kannon Dori Kosho Horinji.

<sup>1</sup> "Preceptor Kai of Mt. Daynag" is better known as Furong Daokai (1044 - 1119), seventh ancestor of Dogen's Caodan house of Chang after the founder Tongshan.

<sup>2</sup> "Swift as the wind" alludes to a line in the *Lotus Sutra* describing the speed of the supreme, buddha vehicle. "A flower opening within the world" probably alludes to the line, "A flower opens and the world arises," in the transmission verse attributed to Bodhidharma's master, Prajñātāra.

<sup>3</sup> Dogen is playing here with the term "stepping back", often used in Chang texts in the sense, "returning the mind to its enlightened source."

<sup>4</sup> The four views of mountains here are probably drawn from a similar list in Buddhist scripture.

<sup>5</sup> Dogen is here playing with the term "stone woman" a standard idiom for a barren woman. The references to male and female, heavenly and earthly stones invoke passages in Chinese literature.

<sup>6</sup> "The Great Master Yunmen Kuangzhen" is better known Yunmen Wenyan (864 - 949), founder of the Yunmen house of Chan.

<sup>7</sup> "Nanquan's 'sickle'" refers to a well-known conversation attributed to the early ninth-century master Nanquan Puyuan; "Huangbo's 'stick' and Linji's 'roar'" refers to the famous Chang teaching techniques of beating and shouting attributed to these two ninth-century masters.

<sup>8</sup> "Son of Māra {The Evil One}" is a standard Buddhist term of approbation.; "gang of six" refers to a notorious group of lawless monks among the followers of the Buddha.

<sup>9</sup> Or "children of a non-Buddhist naturalism." "Naturalism" here may well refer to what Buddhists consider the false view that things arise, not from cause and conditions, but spontaneously.

<sup>10</sup> "Seven high and eight across" indicates a state of total spiritual freedom; "practice and verification are not non-existent," from a dialogue between the Sixth Patriarch, Huineng, and his disciple Nanyue Huairang, is often used by Dogen to indicate the mystery of enlightened spiritual practice.

<sup>11</sup> These various ways of seeing are based on the *Vijñānavāda* of water": gods see water as jewels; humans see it as water; hungry ghosts, as blood; and fish, as a dwelling.

<sup>12</sup> Buddhist cosmology posits a set of disks, or "wheels," beneath the earth, composed in descending order, of the "elements": of water, wind, and space.

<sup>13</sup> The exact source of this saying is unidentified.

<sup>14</sup> After a line in book I of this "Daoist" classic.

<sup>15</sup> From the *Zheng dao ge* ("Song of Verification of the Way") attributed to the early eighth-century Chan figure Yongjia Xuanjue.

<sup>16</sup> Dogen seems to be running together two stories from the ancient Daoist classic the *Zhuangzi*, one dealing with the Yellow Emperor's interview with Guang Chenzi of Mt. Kongton, the other with Emperor Yao's instruction by the Hua Guard.

<sup>17</sup> At the time of the Tang government persecution of buddhism (845) Chuazi Decheng left his teacher Yueshan Weiyuan and became a boatman on the Huating River. There he met Jiashan Shanhui. After transmitting the dharma to Shanhui by throwing him in the river, Decheng himself leaped into the water and disappeared.

<sup>18</sup> The "true dragon" refers to "the real thing"; from the well-known Chinese story of the man, famous for his lover of caved dragons, who was one day visited by a real dragon and frightened out of his wits.



<sup>19</sup> There are several possible sources for this saying; e.g., a saying of the early tenth-century figure Yunmen Wenyan: "Monks, do not have deluded notions. Heaven is heaven, earth is earth; mountains are mountains, waters are waters; monks are monks, laymen are laymen."

## Address of Thanks for Completion of the Preliminary Memorial Service in North America for the 750th Anniversary of Dogen Zenji's Entering Nirvana

Rev. Gengo Akiba

General Director of Soto Zen Administrative Office  
of North America

(Translated by Shohaku Okumura,  
Edited by Seiko Yanasak)

The Preliminary Memorial Service in North America for Dogen Zenji's Entering Nirvana was held at the Ryodaihonzan Betsuin Zenshuji in Los Angeles on Saturday, May 12th. We were especially honored to have Rev. Myogen Otake, President of the Administrative Headquarter of Soto Zen in Japan, as the officiate of the ceremony. On the evening before the memorial ceremony, *Dokui Kento Fugin* (Evening Service) was held with Rev. Donin Minamizawa, Director of the Great Anniversary Office, officiating. On the 10th and 11th, we had a workshop for Kaikyoshi and Dendokyoshi, sponsored by the Soto Zen Education Center. We were pleased and honored to have Prof. John McRae from Indiana University, join us for the workshop. On the evening of the 11th, a commemorative banquet was sponsored by Zenshuji, which was attended by many people.

On the 12th, before the *Kengu-shutsuban* (Preliminary Memorial Service for the 750th Anniversary of Dogen Zenji's Entering Nirvana), a 16mm film entitled "Life of Zen" was shown that introduced Zen practice at the two main temples of Sotoshu in Japan; Eiheiji and Sojiji. Prof. John McRae also gave a talk entitled "Dogen Zenji's Life — Soto Zen in America." His talk was not only interesting but also educational for everyone attending.

Many virtuous priests came from Japan and various places in the United States, including members of Zenshuji, Sozenji in Montebello, and Sokoji in San Francisco, all participating in the ceremony.



This was the first of the preliminary ceremonies for the Great Anniversary taking place within this year in North America, Hawaii, Brazil, Europe and nine other places in Japan.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to everyone that extended themselves in so many ways to make this ceremony possible; Sotoshu Shumuchō, Daihonzan Eiheiji...all members of Zenshuji, the virtuous priests that came from afar, to everyone that participated in the ceremony. I am grateful that, because of and through all of the contributions made, the ceremony was successfully completed.

The Preliminary Memorial Service was the fruit at the heart of gratitude, thankfulness, and prayer for everyone practicing Zen in Japan and here in America who are faithful to Soto Zen teachings. I felt that what Dogen Zenji wrote in the *Shobogenzo* is true, that "We should repay the great debt of kindness of the ancestral teachers for their transmission of Dharma. Even Animals show gratitude. How can human beings fail to do so? Even millions of years later, if we correctly transmit the true Dharma, that is truly Buddha Dharma."

At Daihonzan Eiheiji, International Day will be held on September 16, 2002. For Zen lay students and priests living outside of Japan who wish to pay homage to Dogen Zenji at this rare occasion of the 750th Anniversary of Dogen Zenji's Entering Nirvana, I cannot say enough to encourage as many people as possible to visit Eiheiji. Please, do take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to join others that will be coming from many parts of the world to express their heartfelt gratitude to our teacher Dogen Zenji for his dharma teachings.



Preliminary Memorial Service  
at Zenshuji, Los Angeles

## Soto Zen in America (4) Doin' the Dharma Two-step

Prof. John R. McRae  
Indiana University

When we talk about Zen, we usually discuss a select number of its founders, ancestors, and legendary teachers. For China, we'll emphasize Bodhidharma and the Sixth Patriarch, Caoshan and Dongshan (who together become "Soto" of the Soto school), Linji (Rinzai), and others. For Japan, we'll naturally focus on great figures such as Dogen, Keizan, Ikkyu, and Hakuin, etc. In the context of world culture, this is totally unremarkable. Humans everywhere seem to direct their attentions at the "great men" of history, and Zen is no exception.

Part of this emphasis is simply the natural desire to focus on the main part of the story, to get to the essentials and avoid distractions. However, this can be taken too far. For example, some popular writers and translators use a "core and periphery" model to explain Zen Buddhism. The assumption (sometimes explicitly stated) is that "true Zen" represents precisely the understanding and activities of the great figures who constitute the mainstream of the lineage scheme, whereas the understanding and activities of those who were not recognized in this way simply didn't make the grade. Sometimes such authors describe the figures on the periphery (who are mostly anonymous, although not always) as corrupting, or threatening to corrupt, the "true spirit" of Zen. The history of Zen is an ongoing battle for some idealized form of religious "purity." The "core and periphery" model is simply one variant of the "golden age and decline" model, in which everything that happened in a suitably far off set of good old days was pure and wonderful, but it's been downhill ever since.

The "core and periphery" and "golden age and decline" models do not do justice to the complex dynamics of Zen as a religious movement. They are too simplistic and too value-laden. In addition, both models are profoundly influenced by the subject matter they attempt to explain, implying a debilitating logical circularity. But I'm getting too complicated too quickly; I'll have to leave this point to be elaborated more fully on a later occasion.

Even when we consider only the focus on the great historical models of the Zen tradition, not broader interpretive strategies such as the two models just mentioned, the matter cannot simply be summarized with the observation that "that's what people everywhere do." To be sure, people in all human societies may focus in some way on great central figures. However, there is a mechanism in Zen Buddhism that compels its followers — by which I mean anyone who participates in the religious movement known as Zen, by the broadest possible definition — to focus on the "great men" who dominate the main story line. This mechanism is lineage.

In Zen Buddhism, lineage schemes are as common as the air itself. Each teacher is identified as representing a long series of masters that goes back, through Dogen and Bodhidharma, for example, to Sakyamuni Buddha himself. And, rather like the bare end of an electrically charged wire, that teacher is by no means the end point of the lineage, but only its active node, its point of connection to the future. Like the rhizome of an orchid, the lineage grows onward indefinitely, consolidating energy when it must but dividing and propagating whenever it can.

The lineage schemes of Zen are not merely public knowledge; they are ritually implanted into the consciousnesses of all Zen teachers and students by means of their regular recitation within Zen liturgy. Every morning

and every week, Zen practitioners and communities define their religious identities by intoning the names of their saintly predecessors. We are those who follow after, we are those who inherit, we are those who emulate. We are Zen practitioners, because we are in lineages descended from Zen masters.

My reference to "great men" above should have been something of a red flag: what about the great women of Zen history? In the past several years some American Zen communities have added female names to the lists of ancestors, great contributors to the Buddhist tradition such as *Mahaprajapti*, the Buddha's aunt and first *bhiksuni*. Feminist sensitivities are also involved in the use of the term "ancestors" rather than "patriarchs" as a general term to the great predecessors that dominate the Zen family tree. I applaud this change in terminology as one small step in the transformation of our tradition, as part of the natural evolution that Zen is and will continue undergoing as part of its growth outside of East Asia.

But as a description of Zen within the traditional societies of East Asia — China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam — to call the figureheads of the Zen lineage "ancestors" rather than "patriarchs" would be to miss the point. The assumptions of patriarchalism, in the feminist sense, were fundamental to the societies in which Zen developed, and to Zen itself. When we study the past, we must be constantly diligent to be aware of our preconceptions and prejudices. In spite of what our college history professors may have told us, we have every right to be judgmental, to make value judgements about the events of the past. We should simply be aware when we get caught in a feedback loop, in which our preconceptions and prejudices are influencing our analysis of what actually happened in history, which then get used to bolster our preconceptions.

My point is that the Zen lineage scheme constitutes a template by which we approach the Zen tradition, a lens through which we understand it. As template or lens, it imparts a certain shape or color that was not necessarily part of the subject matter.

It seems absurd, even, to consider Zen without a patriarchal succession. I generally argue — in my college classroom, in weekend seminars at Zen centers, and in academic publications — that Zen is fundamentally "genealogical," in the sense that the concept of lineal succession fundamentally structures its historical self-conception and its style of religious practice. It is not enough, actually, to say (as I did just above) that lineage schemes are as common as the air itself: they are the very water in which Zen swims. The point here is not to see what Zen would be apart from lineage, but to understand how lineage affects the way we understand Zen.

So, the Zen lineage model induces us to concentrate on a succession of great male leaders. That is, the Zen lineage model is a conceptual structure that provides religious and intellectual justification for the ordinary human focus on great male leaders.

This is of course only one of the many observations we can make about the Zen lineage model. Some of my historical research at present is devoted to exploring the Zen lineage model in traditional Chinese Zen Buddhism. In the present context, though, I want to use these initial observations about Zen lineage per se as a steppingstone to some comments about Zen in America. That is, having briefly stated some of the reasons for the "great man" emphasis of Zen Buddhism, I wonder: How about those who are not the "great men" of Soto Zen in contemporary America? More broadly, what is the role played by those other than the great teachers in contemporary American Soto Zen?

The question really should be obvious. How could we possibly think about Zen in America without thinking of all the people involved? If we tried to imagine American Zen as consisting only of the recognized teachers, what would we have? A very small group of individuals, for one thing. An empty shell.

As I travel about to Zen centers preparing my study of Soto Zen in America, I often jokingly say that, although my main interest is in students, I will "condescend" to talk to the teachers. Teachers, after all, are the ones who get to talk all the time, telling their students how things are, showing them how it's supposed to be done. Teachers are the ones whose Dharma talks are recorded and published, whose books are sold.

Students, on the other hand, spend far more of their time in Zen listening rather than talking. So, when I come along with my tape recorder to ask them how they approach their Zen practice, the students are *always* anxious to talk! At least, there are always Zen students around who are willing interviewees. Basically all I have to do is turn the tape recorder on and say, "Well?" Forty-five minutes or an hour later I have an articulate description of one person's encounter with Zen Buddhism.

In the course of all these visits and interviews, I've noticed that there is a natural division apparent in the offerings and participants of many Zen centers. One set of students is dedicated to full-time self-cultivation, perhaps as on-site residents, but certainly as frequent and regular participants in the particular center's training activities. In terms of administrative workload, this "first set" of students provides most of both work force and

leadership pool. It may also be true — although I am not able to make reliable generalizations yet, and the situation probably varies widely from site to site — that this set of students also receives the major part of the teachers' attentions and energy. In terms of the traditional lineage model, this "first set" of students represents the pool from which candidates for inclusion in the Zen lineage are drawn.

The other group or "second set" of students is composed of the vast spectrum of individuals, couples, families, and groups whose lives intersect with the Zen center in some way or other. From one perspective this "second set" is defined simply by its members' exclusion from the first set, but it would be a mistake to overlook this second set as simply the less dedicated. As human institutions, no Zen community could survive without support and participation from this second group. This is not a moral value judgement. What I am saying is that a Zen community that does not have a healthy relationship with its less dedicated participants does not have a solid institutional foundation and is thus more likely to disappear. In contrast, a Zen community that adequately or creatively meets the religious needs of its less dedicated participants will have a better chance of institutional survival.

Let me describe two different Zen communities, which I'll call Zen center A and Zen center B. Both of these are specific institutions, not composite images. Zen center A derives from a Soto tradition that emphasizes long hours of "just sitting," with a notable disinclination to religious ritual. Located in a beautiful mountain setting several hours' drive away from large population centers, Zen center A maintains a strict zazen schedule but no other group activities whatsoever. Based on the idealistic position that those who want to practice Zen in their particular style will find the center if and when it's right for them to find it, Zen center A does nothing to actively attract participants. The resident teacher does a certain amount of lecturing at colleges and other groups in the area, but he does not actively seek to develop these contacts into a network of support for his center. And in several ways this center very effectively discourages the creation of any sense of community identity. It does not maintain a mailing list, let alone send out fundraising circulars or announcement of events' because there are none, other than the regular sitting schedule. Even during meditation retreats, participants are required to bring their own food, and those who show up with guests are sometimes met with open disapproval. Practice continues, with an explicit fondness for strictness and an unspoken emphasis on self-motivated dedication.

Zen center B is also located in a beautiful mountain setting a couple of hours away from a major population center, and it too has a rigorous practice schedule. But there the similarity ends. In the first place, the arrangements made for full-time and fully dedicated students are institutionally elaborate. This center has an extensive training system, in which formal application to a committee of teachers and community leaders is required for passage from one level to another. In the second place, there are extensive offerings for the weekend warriors of American Zen: Zen center B actively advertises its many workshops on art, calligraphy, ecology, photography, and a whole host of subjects. I receive its slickly produced catalogs in my mailbox every few months. The teachings of Zen center B's founder are available in cassettes, CDs, videos, and books, some of which are found at mainstream bookstores. The first generation of his successors is now beginning to found centers of their own, and a network of living-room zazen groups and local communities is developing with Zen center B as its nucleus.

Which center represents "true" Zen? I would hate to make this judgement! Zen Center A is maintaining a certain style of Zen institution, adapted to the contemporary American situation but with deep roots in East Asia. Given its philosophy of no-nonsense practice, and in particular the dedication to the goalless endeavor of *shikan taza*, who could possibly say that there is anything "wrong" with its approach?

However, when we ask, Which center has the better chance of institutional survival?, the answer is clear. Which center influences more lives? Which center does more to heal the madness of contemporary society? Here too the answers are clear.

This last summer I made two separate visits to Zen Mountain Center in southern California (which is neither Zen center A or B, incidentally). On the first visit, really just a Sunday morning stopover, Rev. Tenshin Fletcher briefly explained some of the innovative meditation techniques he'd used at a recent wilderness retreat. I won't try to describe them in full detail until some later occasion, but they involved actively dealing with one's false thoughts in different ways. For example, one of the techniques involved simply vocalizing every thought that comes to mind. Those on the retreat would each go to an isolated area, out of each others' earshot, and verbalize every thought that occurred to them. I have always been surprised by the wide variety of specific practices that Zen practitioners use, but this was a new one on me.

When I went back later in the summer and did some interviews with resident students, I was a little surprised that none of these innovative techniques was mentioned.

Students referred to all the most widely known practices — breath concentration, *shikan taza*, *koan* study — but none of them mentioned practicing the four rather unconventional techniques I had heard about a few weeks before. Since I had only done a small number of interviews, it was very possible that I'd just missed their mention by accident. However, it turned out to be something else.

When I asked Tenshin about them again, he reminded me that the techniques he'd described earlier were associated with a wilderness retreat, and he explained that they were not part of the ordinary practice curriculum for resident students. They had been developed specifically on behalf of the "second set" of participants as described above, and that is why none of the "first set" participants had mentioned them to me.

At this point, I suspect that Zen Mountain Center is more like Zen center B than Zen center A. At the very least, Tenshin's decision to provide qualitatively different religious services to weekend workshop participants is insightful and commendable in social institutional terms. Rather than ignoring the "periphery" in favor of the "core," providing markedly different types of guidance for different clienteles is a function of greater institutional sophistication. "Doin' the Dharma Two-step," as I like to call it, might not necessarily be any "better" according to some idealized religious standard, but it is certainly more effective as means of disseminating the benefits of Buddhist practice to a larger number of people. Paying attention to different subsets of the Zen "clientele" turns out to be good institutional design strategy, simply because it involves helping people in ways that are appropriate to their own situations.

## My Zazen Sankyū Notebook (8)

Rev. Issho Fujita

Pioneer Valley Zendo

(with translation assistance from Tesshin Brooks)

### Fragmentary Thought XVIII

#### <Zazen as "Whole and One" 1>

##### Zazen posture as "whole and one" (1)

When people give instruction on how to sit zazen, they usually do it in order: first on regulating the body,

then on regulating the breath, and finally on regulating the mind. Generally they begin by explaining how to deal with each part of the body: the legs, the torso, the hands, the mouth, and the eyes as a way to establish the body's sitting posture. Next they teach how to breathe and then how to deal with the mind. In order to explain how to do zazen, there is no alternative but to first to dissect zazen, to disassemble zazen into the parts of the body, the breath and the mind, and then to describe what to do with them in sequence.

Of course it is possible to think about the method without using words. You could simply demonstrate zazen first and then just say, "Do it like this". But I don't think this method is effective or helpful for beginners. Because with this method it is very difficult to communicate the subtle aspects of zazen posture and it is almost impossible to learn anything about the psychological aspects of zazen simply by watching its from outside. And even if we try to copy the appearance of zazen by imitating it, in most cases we would probably take a look at each part of the posture and try to copy it, part by part, thinking "all right, legs are like this, then hands are like that...". So after all we cannot help but link each part of the body in a certain order, to build zazen posture. In this sense it is not much different from providing a verbal explanation of how to do zazen.

Anyway when we teach or learn how to do zazen, we can not teach or learn zazen as a whole at a single stroke. So it is inevitable for us to initially dissect zazen into small pieces and then to arrange them into a certain sequence. Also when we begin to practice zazen we will tend to gradually construct the body-mind of zazen by following a sequence: regulating the body (*choshin*), regulating the breath (*chosoku*) and regulating the mind (*choshin*). (In the *Eihei-koroku* Dogen wrote, "In our zazen, it is of primary importance to sit in the correct posture. Next, regulate the breath and calm down")

But after going through this preliminary stage (of course this is already an important part of zazen), when zazen becomes zazen (when sitting in the correct posture, *Shoshintaza*, is actualized), all instructions given in the form of many separate pieces in terms of space and time must be integrated as a whole (integration in space) and in a single stroke (integration in time) in the body-mind of the practitioner of zazen. The "whole" of zazen must be integrated as "one" sitting. In other words, zazen must become "Complete, Unified Zazen" (or "Zazen, Whole and One"). The expression, "Taza", seems to be emphasizing this quality of being whole and one in time and space.

Let me focus here on how this quality of being whole and one is manifested in the sitting posture of zazen.

When zazen is deeply integrated as whole and one, the practitioner does not feel that each part of his/her body is separate from the others and is independently doing its job here and there in the body. The practitioner is not engaged in doing many different things in different places in the body by following the various instructions on how to regulate the body. In reality he/she is doing only one thing to continuously aim at the correct sitting posture with whole body. So in the actual feeling of the practitioner, what is there is only a simply and harmoniously integrated sitting posture. He/she feels the cross-legged posture, the cosmic mudra, the half-opened eyes, etc., as local manifestations of the sitting posture being whole and one. While each part of the body is functioning in its own unique way, as a whole body they are fully integrated into the state of being one. It is experienced as if all boundaries or divisions among the bodily parts have vanished and all parts are embraced by and melted into one big pose (one unified posture; one complete gesture) of flesh and bone. We sometimes feel during zazen that our hands or legs "have vanished or gone away".

Our living human body is not just a collection of bodily parts but an organically integrated whole. It is designed in such a way that when one part of the body moves, however subtle the movement may be, it simultaneously causes the whole body to move in accordance with it. Late Dr. Keizo Hashimoto, the founder of the Japanese bodywork called Sotaiho, named this phenomena as "The Law of simultaneous and interrelated link-movements"

For example, if you try to move only a big toe, it looks like only that part is moving. But if you grip your big toe tightly enough to prevent it from moving and try to move it forcefully, you will find that your ankle joints, knee joints, pelvic joints, spine, neck joints, and skull all receive some force and start moving. Even the muscles in your face, your fingers and all the joints of your upper limbs move in harmony with the other parts. So we can say that even a tiny movement of one joint can create a chain reaction of the movement in neighboring joints, and that this movement spreads through the whole body.

Our human body is originally one and whole. We should consider how subtle and tricky it is to create a correct sitting posture and maintain it with such a body, a body which can be described as a "highly sophisticated machine in which each of the parts moves jointly". For example, there is an instruction that tells how to deal with the eyes during zazen: "Keep your eyes open, without opening widely nor closing". This instruction sounds pretty trivial and easy. But you should realize that if you try to follow it properly and strictly, it goes beyond the matter of treating one local area of the body (in this case

the eyes) and ultimately becomes a matter of treating the whole body (including the mind).

*(to be continued)*

## Dogen Zenji's Genjo-koan Lecture (9)

Rev. Shohaku Okumura  
Director, Soto Zen Education Center  
(Edited by Koshin Steve Kelly)

### **(text: section 10)**

*When the Dharma has not yet fully penetrated into body and mind, one thinks that one is already filled with the dharma. When the dharma fills the body and mind, one thinks that something is [still] lacking. For example, when we sail a boat into the ocean beyond sight of land and when our eyes scan [the horizon in] the four directions, it simply looks like a circle. No other shape appears. This great ocean, however, is neither round nor square. It has inexhaustible characteristics. [To a fish], it looks like a palace; [to a heavenly beings] a jeweled necklace. [To us] as far as our eyes can see, it looks like a circle. All the myriad things are like this. Within the dusty world and beyond, there are innumerable aspects and characteristics; we only see or grasp as far as the power of our eye of study and practice can see. When we listen to the reality of myriad things, we must know that there are inexhaustible characteristics in either an ocean or mountains and there are many other worlds in the four directions. This is true not only in the external world, but it is the same right under our feet or within a single drop of water.*

### **Two sides of the buddha dharma**

In the beginning of Genjo-koan, Dogen Zenji brings up three pairs of the most important points in Buddhist teachings: (1) delusion-enlightenment, (2) enlightened buddhas - deluded living beings, and (3) life (or birth, arousing) - death (or dying, perishing). In the first sentence, Dogen says, "there is delusion and realization, practice, life and death, buddhas and living beings." And in the second sentence he says, "There is no delusion and no realization, no buddhas and no living beings, no birth and no perishing." In the third sentence, he talks about our practice as the manifestation of the buddha way and said, "There is arising and perishing, delusion and realization, living beings and buddhas."

Then from section 4 to section 7, he discusses (1) delusion and realization, and (2) buddhas and living beings. In section 8, he speaks about (3) life and death.

The first and the second sentence are apparently contradicted each other. But as I explained in my commentary in that section, these are two sides of Buddhist teachings. And the theme of the entire Genjokoan is how to live and practice based on the clear insight of both sides.

### Practice based on the two sides

Then from section 9, Dogen Zenji discusses our concrete way of practice as the buddha way based on the clear understanding of the dharma that he developed in sections 1 through 8. In this section I am most impressed with Dogen's saying "When a person attains realization, it is like the moon reflecting on the water." Here according to Dogen it is not because of our individual effort that the moon reflects itself on the water. What Dogen is pointing out here is the reality of all beings as independent-origination. Everything is connected with everything. Everything exists only within the relationship it has with all other things and by support from them. That is what Dogen Zenji is pointing out when he says that the moon reflects itself on each and every drop of water.

But still, he says, the moon has infinite height and water has infinite depth and we need to investigate how high it is and how deep our life can be. This process of inquiry is the process of our practice.

*(text) When the Dharma has not yet fully penetrated into body and mind, one thinks that one is already filled with the dharma. When the dharma fills the body and mind, one thinks that something is [still] lacking. For example, when we sail a boat into the ocean beyond sight of land and when our eyes scan [the horizon in] the four directions, it simply looks like a circle. No other shape appears.*

### Seeing the ocean as one circle

In section 7, Dogen Zenji says when we first seek after the dharma, we become far from the boundary of the dharma. And when the dharma is correctly transmitted to us, we are *immediately* original persons. Our practice is the way of living as an original person. Our practice is not the way to "become" an original person sometime in the future. In that section he uses the analogy of sailing a boat where the coast is still in our view and we mistakenly think the coast is moving and boat is not moving, that is,

our self is something fixed as a subject and things are moving and changing around us.

In this section, he discusses that, after we clearly see that all things have no [fixed] self, we should inquire how we should live as an original person based on such an insight. Here he uses an analogy that we are sailing on a boat in the midst of ocean where we don't see the coast anymore. We only see a circle of horizon.

### Dogen's voyage to China

My guess is that, these two analogies were taken from Dogen's experience when he went to China in 1223. Dogen was 23 years old. The voyage was a sincere journey to discover the genuine buddha dharma for Dogen and his teacher, Butsuju Myozen (1183-1225).

In *Shobogenzo Zuimonki*, Dogen talked to his own students about Myozen's resolution to go to China. Myozen's original teacher was a Tendai monk named Myoyu. When Myoyu was in his deathbed he asked Myozen to postpone the trip to China for a while in order to take care of him and conduct his funeral service. After having a meeting with his dharma brothers and disciples to discuss this matter, Myozen said,

*"Even if I put off my trip for the time being, one who is certain to die will die. My remaining here won't help to prolong his life. Even if I stay to nurse him, his pain will not cease. Also, it would not be possible to escape from life-and-death because I took care of him before his death. It would just be following his request and comforting his feeling for a while. It is entirely useless for gaining emancipation and attaining the Way. To mistakenly allow him to hinder my aspiration to seek the dharma would be a cause of evil deeds. However, if I carry out my aspiration to go to China to seek the dharma, and gain a bit of enlightenment, although it goes against one person's deluded feelings, it would become a cause for attaining the Way for many people. Since this merit is greater, it will help return the debt of gratitude to my teacher. Even if I were to die while crossing the ocean and failed to accomplish my aspiration, since I would have died with the aspiration to seek the dharma, my vow would not cease in any future life. We should ponder Genjo Sanzo (Tripitaka Master Xuanzang)'s journey to India. Vainly spending time which is easily lost, for the sake of one person would not be in accordance with the Buddha's will. Therefore, I have firmly resolved to go to China now."*

These days, to go to China from Japan takes only a few hours by airplane. Since there are many flights by different airline companies everyday, it is not a big deal to postpone a trip for a while. But, in the 13th century, to sail

to China was very dangerous. Many people who sailed to China did not come back to Japan. Also, if they missed a chance they could not know when the next chance to take a voyage would be. The next trip to China by Japanese Buddhist monks after Dogen and Myozen in the history, was in 1233. That was 10 years after their departure. Actually Myozen died at Tientong monastery in China when he was 42 years old and Dogen returned to Japan with his ashes. Myozen's resolution was not simply an exaggeration.

With two other attendant monks, Dogen and Myozen left Kenninji in Kyoto in February 1223 to Hakata, Kyushu probably by a boat and then they changed boats to sail to China.

On the Inland Sea between Osaka and Kyushu, they could always see the coast of Honshu, Shikoku or many other smaller islands. But after they departed from Hakata in the end of March, they saw nothing but the circle of the horizon until they arrived in the port of Ninbo, in April. About the voyage, Dogen said in the *Zuimonki*, "On my way to China, I suffered from diarrhea on the ship, yet when a storm came up and people on the ship made a great fuss, I forgot about the sickness and it went away."

This voyage must have been a very impressive and important experience for Dogen. I think the process of this voyage and the process of his search for the true dharma and a true teacher were overlapped in Dogen's mind.

### **Is seeing one-circle enlightenment?**

When we sail the Inland Sea, we see mountains, villages, people, trees and many other things on the coast. Some times we feel the coast is moving and sometimes we see that the boat (our self) is moving. Sometimes we feel both are moving together.

After we sail out to the vast ocean, we only see the ocean, its horizon like a circle and the vast sky. We see the oneness (or not-two-ness) of all things. It is a surprising experience to us. But is it enlightenment? Or is it the goal of our practice? Dogen says, "No!"

He says, if you feel such a condition is enlightenment, then, *the Dharma has not yet fully penetrated into body and mind*. He continues and says, "when dharma has fully penetrated the self, we see that something is still lacking." This means that when the dharma fills us, we will see the incompleteness of our practice and the various characteristics of all beings, and we will understand that we need to inquire endlessly about these characteristics and how we can sincerely practice with them as bodhisattvas. The moon has infinite height and our life as an individual self

also has infinite depth. But what we see with our eyesight is limited. No matter how deep, high or broad we try to see, our sight is limited. To see this limit is wisdom.

As a finite human being, we cannot see the entire reality as it is. We are born, live and die within the reality. We can only see the reality from inside. We need to take a position in the reality. That means we cannot see the parts of reality hidden by our own existence. Our eyesight is smaller than 180 degrees. When we see forward, we cannot see backward. When we turn our head to see backward, we cannot see in front of us. We can not see our back. Our eyes cannot see themselves.

But somehow, we have an ability to remember things we saw in the past and to integrate them with what we are seeing right now and create a picture as if we are seeing 360 degrees or the total reality. What we need to understand is that this way of seeing is simply a picture of the world we create in our mind, that is, a mind-construction.

Even the circle of the horizon on the ocean is a mind construction. Therefore it is still a limited view of a conditioned self. Seeing that not only our discriminating views but also our view of oneness or beyond discrimination is a mind-construction, is the beginning of seeing the reality. Seeing how deluded we are is the wisdom to see the actual reality of our life.

Kodo Sawaki Roshi said, "Everyone reads the sections of the newspaper in a different order. One person reads the stock market page first, another turns first to the sports page, a serial novel, or the political columns. We are all different because we see things through our own individual discriminating consciousness. Grasping things with human thought, we each behave differently. We can't know the actual world, the world common to everyone, until we stop discriminating."

The view without discriminating is sometimes expressed as one round circle like the horizon in the ocean. But once we take it as a kind of concept or description, we are already out of the reality. "To stop discriminating" occurs only in letting go of thought in our actual sitting practice of zazen.

Sawaki Roshi also said, "People often say, 'in my opinion...' Anyhow, 'my opinion' is no good -so keep your mouth shut!"

Keeping our mouth shut, does not mean we stop thinking. But rather we should try to see the actual reality more and more clearly, deeply and from a broader perspective. And in our actual lives, we also should see that we are also moving and changing so that the things around us seem different not only because they are



changing but also because we are changing. Things that used to be attractive in my twenties are not at all attractive to me in my fifties.

*(text) This great ocean, however, is neither round nor square. It has inexhaustible characteristics. [To a fish], it looks like a palace; [to a heavenly beings] a jeweled necklace. [To us] as far as our eyes can see, it looks like a circle.*

### **A Palace for fish is water for human beings**

The analogy of how four different kinds of beings see water in four different ways appears in a commentary to Asangha's *Shodaijoron (Mahayanasamgraha)*. Here it is said that human beings see water as water, fish see water as a palace, heavenly beings see water as a jewel, and hungry ghosts see water as pus and blood. This analogy explains how each one of us sees things in different ways and has different concepts and pictures depending upon our karma. This analogy is used in Yogacara philosophy, which insists that only consciousness exists and no objects exist outside our consciousness.

Dogen Zenji writes about the difference of viewing water depending upon the karmic conditions of each being in *Shobogenzo Sansuikyo (Mountains and Waters Sutra)* as follows.

*The ways of viewing mountains and waters are different depending upon what kind of beings we are. There are some beings that view water as a jewel. However, this does not mean that they view a jewel [for human beings] as water. How do we see what they view as water? What they see as a jewel is what we see as water. Some beings see water as wondrous flowers. But they do not use flowers [for human beings] as water. Hungry ghosts view water as raging fire or as pus and blood. Dragons and fish view it as a palace or a lofty building. [Some beings] see it as the seven treasures or the mani jewel. [Others] see it as a forest or walls, or as the dharma nature of immaculate liberation, or as the true human body, or as body as the form and mind as the nature. Human beings view it as water. And these [different ways of viewing] are the conditions under which [water] is killed or given life.*

*Thus the views of different beings are diverse depending upon their karmic conditions. We should question this for now. Should we think that each being views one and same object in different ways? Or do all kind of beings make a mistake when we see that various different forms we see as one and same objects? We should inquire further on the top of our efforts of inquiry. Therefore, our practice/realization as engaging the Way should not be only one way or two ways. The ultimate realm has one*

*thousand or ten thousand of ways."*

The important point in Dogen Zenji's comment on this analogy is that he questions even the fixed existence (self-nature) of the water that is seen by those four different beings. The common interpretation of this analogy is that there is one reality of water and four different kinds of views. Dogen says that it is not certain if there is water as a fixed object objectively outside of the relationship between each being and something tentatively called water. This is what Dogen meant when he said, "Therefore, flowers fall down even though we love them; weeds grow even though we dislike them." We feel sad when we see a flower that we love is fading. We dislike weeds growing only if the weeds are growing in our garden where we have to pull them up. We don't care how many weeds grow on a mountain or a grassy plain where we don't need to weed. We rather enjoy the scenery.

What is the difference between Dogen and Yogacara philosophy? Yogacara teachers say that only consciousness exists and nothing else exists outside of our consciousness. What Dogen says is that our self and the world are working together within a relationship of interdependent-origination. The world and everything in the world appears within this relationship between our self and all myriad dharmas. For him the important point is how we act, or practice within our relationship with the myriad dharmas. His concern is not whether the self, or the myriad dharmas exist or not. He questions all the possible ways of thinking and de-constructs whatever concepts we have and cling to, regarding the myriad dharmas and us.

*(text) All the myriad things are like this. Within the dusty world and beyond, there are innumerable aspects and characteristics; we only see or grasp as far as the power of our eye of study and practice can see. When we listen to the reality of myriad things, we must know that there are inexhaustible characteristics in either an ocean or mountains and there are many other worlds in the four directions. This is true not only in the external world, but it is the same right under our feet or within a single drop of water.*

### **Endless inquiry**

The dusty world refers to the secular world and the world beyond refers to the world of dharma, which is beyond the standards of the ordinary world.

In *Shobogenzo Ikka-no-myōju (One Bright Pearl)*. Dogen Zenji introduces a story of a Chinese Zen master, Gensha

Shibi (Xuansha Shibe, 835-908). One day Gensha, while he was still a student, was leaving his teacher's monastery to visit other masters. Shortly after he left the temple, he stubbed his toe on a stone. As it bled with terrible pain, he suddenly had a deep insight and said, "This body is not existent. Where does this pain come from?"

When we study Mahayana Buddhism we learn that our body is just a collection of five skandhas and that it is empty and does not really exist. Still, when we injure even a tiny part of it like our toe, we have terrible pain. If the body is empty, where does the pain come from? This is not a "question" for Gensha, but a realization of reality. To see the emptiness of all beings, or the five skandhas as our body and mind, is exactly the same as seeing the ocean as just the one circle. No individual, independent, fixed entity is there. Still we have pain and the pain is so real, fresh and immediate that we need to take care of it somehow. Each pain comes from emptiness but each pain has its own causes and conditions. We need to figure out what is the cause of each particular pain and how to take care of it. Just seeing the emptiness or oneness of all beings does not work. Even though it's true that seeing the ocean as one circle is to see that the entire ten-direction world is one bright pearl (as Gensha said after he became a Zen master.) But within the one bright pearl, there are many different kinds of pain that people suffer. Each pain has different cause and needs a different cure. We need to study each pain one by one.

As Dogen Zenji experienced on his voyage to China, within one circle of the ocean, he did not have only beautiful, peaceful days, he also had stormy days. Dogen suffered from diarrhea on the ship, yet when a storm came up and people on the ship made a great fuss, he forgot about the sickness and it went away. When we have a larger and more serious problem, we sometimes forget our smaller problems and somehow they go away. Each of us may have had this kind of experience. But such a thing does not always occur. In our actual lives, we experience many different kinds of situations and depending upon our karmic conditions we interpret each experience and condition in many different ways. Most often we make a story in which we are the main subjects.

It is right here in the middle of our story where we need to keep our eyes open and try to examine the myriad beings, and ourselves very closely in order to study the reality of interdependent origination. We should try to see reality with fresh eyes; without grasping our fixed ideas or a system of values that we have created from our previous experiences.

We only see or grasp as far as the power of our eye of study and practice can see. I have been practicing zazen

and studying Dogen Zenji's teachings more than thirty years, from the time I was nineteen years old, through my twenties, thirties, forties, and now, my fifties. In each stage of my life, the power of my eye of study and practice has been changing so that the scope I can see and grasp has been changing. On one hand, I feel the longer I practice and study, the more I can see myself and things around me deeply. On the other hand, I feel that I am losing the energy to change myself, and the situations I am involved in. I don't think it is appropriate to say I am improving and growing or I am losing energy and backsliding. Both are true and both are not true. Though I did not have deep understanding when I was 19, I think I was much more sincere in my practice. When I was young, I was young. When I am in my fifties, I am just in my fifties. I am getting older and older, and my condition inside and outside my self will always be ceaselessly changing. At any stage, I will try to be honest and keep practicing and studying endlessly. There is no time I graduate from this practice. On the day, my teacher Uchiyama Roshi died, he wrote a poem on his diary and said that it finally fully expressed what he wanted to say. He kept studying, practicing, and trying to express his dharma in even a little bit better than the day before, until the day he died when he was 86 years old.

### **The one-circle as the Logo of Zen**

We often see calligraphy of one-circle. Right now, they have an exhibit of Zen art at the San Francisco Asian Art Museum. On the poster for the exhibition is calligraphy of the one-circle. Actually, on the cover of this newsletter, we find the one-circle as well. This one-circle is widely thought of as almost the "logo" of Zen. But at least, there was one Zen master who did not like the one-circle. That was Dogen.

In *Shobogenzo Bussho* (Buddha-Nature) Dogen wrote about his experience at a Chinese Zen Monastery. On a wall of a walkway, he found the painting of a one-circle. He asked what did the circle mean? The guiding monk said that it was a painting of Nagarjuna manifesting the form of a round moon. Later on, Dogen discussed about the story of Nagarjuna in the same chapter. I think the story of Nagarjuna was the origin of the one-circle. When Nagarjuna sat in zazen, his physical form disappeared and people only saw the form of a round-moon. Dogen criticized the painting on the walkway and said, if they wanted to paint Nagarjuna's form of a round-moon, they should just paint Nagarjuna's sitting as we usually do. Dogen was a very unique Zen Master and probably did not care about being a "Zen Master" anyway.

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# SOTO ZEN EDUCATION CENTER ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

October, 2001 to March, 2002

## DHARMA STUDY GROUP

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At Sokoji Temple, San Francisco, CA.

Led by Rev. Shohaku Okamura in English

Text: *Shobogenzo* (Buddha Nature)

On Sundays

October 14, November 18, December 9, 2001,

January 13, February 17, March 31, 2002

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

10:00am Lecture

(Dates of Dharma Study Group in December have been changed.

On December 9, lecture will be held at 2:00 pm. On this day we have no Zazen and service.)

For more information call *Soto Zen Education Center: (415) 567-7686*

## LECTURE SERIES ON BUDDHISM

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At Zenshuji Temple, Los Angeles, CA.

Led by Rev. Wako Kato in English

On Sundays

10:00 am Lecture

October 7:

The *Higan* is the time reflect on paramita.

November 4:

Buddha's question of the self

December 9:

On *Karma*

January 6:

Zen and Silence

February 10

What is Zen Practice

March 5:

*Higan* Observance.

For more information call *Zenshuji Temple: (213) 624-8658*

## SESSHIN

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**Soto Zen Education Center Sesshin**

October 19 - 26, 2001 (Gathering of Soto Zen Sangha)

At Tassajara Zen Mountain Center in Carmel Valley, CA.

For more information call *San Francisco Zen Center: (415) 863-3136*

## GENZOE SESSHIN

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**Genzoe Sesshin**

Genzoe Sesshin is a sesshin focus on *Shobogenzo* study. During this Genzoe Sesshin, we are going to have two lectures a day by Rev. Shohaku Okamura using Prof. Carl Bielefeldt's translation of "*Shobogenzo Sansuikyo* (Mountains and Waters Sutra)"

March 8 - 15, 2002 (Gathering of Soto Zen Sangha)

At San Francisco Zen Center, San Francisco, CA.

For more information call *San Francisco Zen Center: (415) 863-3136*

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## NEWS

### FROM THE SOTO ZEN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE AND EDUCATION CENTER

- The Preliminary Memorial Service for the 750th Anniversary of Dogen Zenji's Entering Nirvana was held on May 12, at Zenshuji Soto Mission in Los Angeles. Many people attended the ceremony.
- The staff of Soto Zen Education Center attended the Preliminary Memorial Service for the 750th Anniversary of Dogen Zenji's Entering Nirvana as follows.  
Rev. Ikki Nambara: At Soto Mission of Hawaii on May 20th.  
Rev. Kensho Miyamae: At Busshinji in Brazil on June 11th.  
Rev. Taiken Yokoyama: At La Gendronniere in France on June 17.
- From 9th through 21st of July, Tatara High School's (Japanese High School which is affiliate to Soto School) 16 students and 3 teachers visited Green Gulch Farm and San Francisco Zen Center to have the workshop and English class.
- The workshop to review the Regulation of the Soto School was held as follows.

August 23rd and 24th at Minnesota Zen Meditation Center, MN  
August 27th and 28th at Zen Mountain Monastery, NY

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