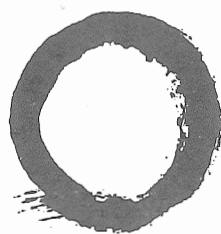


DHARMA EYE



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Dharma Friends

Rev. Gengo Akiba
General Director

The period when Zen Buddhism began to spread in China, is called the "Time of Pure Zen". It was during the To (Tang) dynasty, in the ninth century and in the place called Yosuko, (known in the western world as the Yangtse River). The river runs through the central parts of south and north China. There are many hills, valleys, rugged terrain and a lot of greenery. It was a rich land. At the time, there were no sects of Zen, nor contradictions between Koan practice and meditation. Zen monks were all seeking the way. They wandered through the land meeting each other and the people, exchanging questions and answers.

They were seeking answers to basic questions like, "What is human Nature? What is the fundamental essence of Zen?" They had to make their own way in Zen. Many of them lived in the mountains, scattered throughout the region. They practiced and lived a primitive way of Zen. From the time of the first ancestor, Bodhidharma, until the ninth ancestor Tozan Ryokai Daisho, the practice had been quite untrammled. It had strength and vitality. It is from these primitive beginnings that Zen developed.

A record of these times was kept. It is known as "Sodo-shu" ("The Collection of the Ancestral Hall"). The record had been lost in antiquity for centuries, but was finally unearthed in the mountains of South Korea after World War II. There are many episodes in the Sodo-shu that showed how people sought the way. The record of this time is valuable because it is new information about those times. Dr. Yanagida Seizan, an acknowledged authority on Zen Buddhism, studied this book. It is through his efforts that we can know these times.

Sodo-shu vividly describes how the ideas of Sekito Kisen, Yakusan Igen, Ungan Donjo, and Tozan Ryokai, who lived in the mountains at that time, became the foundations of Soto Zen. We can recapture the time before Soto Zen was established. There are interesting records on Seigen and Sekito's lineage, which describes how classical Soto Zen was established, and how it evolved.

There is an episode on Ungan Donjo, who was the master of

Tozan Ryokai, and Dogo Enchi who was the older brother of Ungan Donjo. Ungan Donjo left his family, worked to become a monk, and served his master Hyakujo Osho. Dogo stayed home and worked in civil society. He also cared for their mother, who worried about her younger son away at the monastery. Eventually she became blind and passed away. After twenty years of separation, Dogo accidentally met Ungan at a hotel, and told him of the death of their mother, Ungan persuaded Dogo to become a monk. Dogo Enchi was 46 years old, when he shaved his head and became a monk.

Ungan, the younger brother, was the senior Dharma brother to his older brother Dogo. Dogo asked Ungan questions about Zen. "When we leave our bodies," he said, "is it possible to meet each other again?" Ungan answered, "Where we meet there is no birth, and no dying." Dogo replied, "I find that to be an inadequate answer. Even though I am new in Zen, I see that this answer has little substance." Ungan said, "You carry your city employee background with you, that's why you don't understand." Then Dogo said, "Please, Dharma brother, don't say things like that. Buddha Dharma has nothing to do with being a monk or a lay person. Let's decide who is the senior Dharma brother on the basis of who best understands Buddha Dharma. As for me, it makes no sense to expect that we can meet again where there is no birth and no dying." Ungan was impressed with Dogo's insight. Later Ungan would say that Dogo's understanding and awareness penetrated many complex things, and he gained much from it. Dogo helped others to deepen their understanding.

The story develops their practice under Hyakujo Zenji. They worked and helped each other while they were there. Sodo-shu goes on to explain why, after a year, Dogo and Ungan left Hyakujo Zenji and went to study under Yakusan Zenji. When Dogo went to study with Yakusan Zenji, Yakusan Zenji questioned him. "How do you express the ultimate statement?", he asked. "Shakamuni Buddha didn't answer that question", Dogo replied. Then Yakusan asked him, "Where did all the sutras of the Buddha come from?" Dogo replied, "They leaked sideways."

Yakusan really liked this answer. Dogo was well received by the new master. Dogo was learning Yakusan's Zen and benefiting. He also waited for Ungan to come. One day he

wrote a letter to Ungan saying, "Ungan, what are you doing wasting your time. You had better come here as soon as possible." Ungan felt sad when he received the letter. One day Ungan stood motionlessly next to his master, Hyakujo. He didn't move even when evening came. Hyakujo said, "It's getting late, you had better go to bed," but Ungan didn't leave. Hyakujo said, "You don't look so good, you must have something troubling you." Ungan replied, "I'm OK." Hyakujo said, "Did you receive a letter from Dogo?" "Yes," he said. Hyakujo asked to read the letter, and Ungan gave it to him. "I understand this letter," Hyakujo said. "He's saying you mean a lot to him. Your parents gave him birth, but you are the one that understands him. You should go to him right away." "But, I don't want to go," Ungan said. Then Hyakujo said, "I was thinking about writing a letter to Yakusan, and giving him a gift. Why don't you take my letter and gift to Yakusan Zenji?"

Thus, Ungan went to Yakusan with the Hyakujo's letter and gift. Dogo welcomed Ungan, and took him to Yakusan Zenji. After Yakusan read the letter from Hyakujo, Yakusan asked, "What does Hyakujo Osho normally preach?" Ungan replied, "Hyakujo Zenji always says that I should be able to understand three steps ahead, and know six steps ahead." Yakusan said, "Being that far ahead there are no entanglements, so it's easy. What else does he teach?" Ungan replied with a story. "One day the Dharma talk was finished and the students were leaving the hall. Hyakujo Zenji called to the students. The students turned around. Hyakujo said to them, 'What happened?'"

"Ungan, why didn't you tell me this earlier....?", Yakusan said. "I know now that Hyakujo Osho is not senile. Because of you, I understood what Hyakujo is doing." Yakusan asked him another question, "What would you do if you saw death in front of your eyes?" Ungan answered, "But, there is no death in front of my eyes." Yakusan said to him, "Even though you have been twenty years with Hyakujo in the monastery, you still think like a townsman." Ungan said, "You may be right, but how would you answer the question?" Yakusan said, "As for me, I kind of wobble around, like an old man. I take small steps, and I take them one at a time. I do some embarrassing things. I make a lot of mistakes. I take one day at a time."

The two brothers continued to stay with Yakusan Zenji and helped each other improve their Zen. There are many more interesting episodes between Dogo and Ungan, but my space here is limited. I will say more next time. This time I want to focus on what Dogo said to Ungan. "Our parents gave me birth, but you are the one that understands me." It's a good thing that Dogo was Ungan's brother and that Ungan became a monk first, and that he was a Dharma brother to Dogo. Dogo, the brother who became a monk twenty years after Ungan, was enlightened first. Then, Dogo helped his older Dharma brother to get to where he was. What their parents gave them, was one thing, but helping each other and working together, was stronger; stronger, even, than receiving teachings from the master. Being together, and following the same path helping each other to understand the Dharma. They helped each other to go as far as they could go.

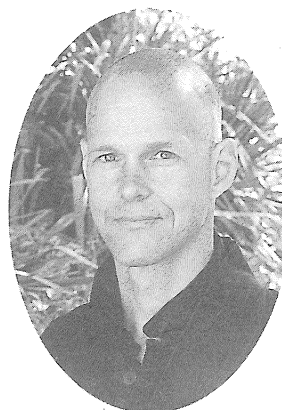
In Buddhism a good friend in the practice of the way is called Zenchishiki. Dogo and Ungan worked together, helped each other, and cared for each other. They created a path for their

successors. It is still true today. In the modern life time, we should not have a separation between American and Japanese Zen. We should be like Dogo and Ungan, helping each other, respecting each other, encouraging each other to go as far as we can go, and continuing this path for our successors.

Soto Zen Liturgy Translation Project

Tenshin Reb Anderson

Green Gulch Farm Zen Center



When I first came to San Francisco in 1967 to practice Zen, the only books available on Soto Zen in English were *The Religion of the Samurai*, published in 1913, and a translation of *Shobogenzo-zuimonki*. During the last three decades, international interest in the teachings of Soto Zen has spread rapidly among Buddhist practitioners, academics and the

general public, and translations of Soto Zen texts have dramatically increased. Access to these teachings, however, has been impeded by the inadequate state of existing translations. While there are now English versions of the basic writings of our great ancestors Eihei Dogen and Keizan Jokin, many of these represent free paraphrases rather than close translations, and few of these include the kind of detailed annotation necessary for a full understanding of the texts. Thus it is exceedingly difficult for those who use these English versions - whether in Soto Zen centers or in university classrooms - to achieve an accurate and rich appreciation of the sources of Soto Zen teachings. Continued development of the international understanding of these teachings requires a set of authoritative scholarly translations based on philological research and careful attention to the language of the original texts. Furthermore, although Soto Zen teachers in America and Europe are trained in basic Soto Zen ritual practice, generally they do not have access to the Japanese ritual texts; and, although most Soto Zen groups in America now study and recite the Soto liturgical texts in English, they often use different English versions. Now, many priests and scholars agree that further development of Soto Zen practice in America would be supported by the translation of Soto Zen ritual manual texts and the creation of an authoritative English Soto Zen liturgy.

In order to provide the best possible resources for teachers, students and scholars, a comprehensive translation project has been undertaken to produce a careful, accurate and inspiring translation of all the major texts of Soto Zen. These translations will be done by a team of scholars trained in Zen studies, in consultation with the International Division of the Headquarters of the Soto School (Sotoshu Shumuchō Kokusaika), American Soto Zen teachers, and Japanese Soto Zen scholars. They will hopefully be of the highest academic standard, will be based on the latest research, and will include complete annotation on the language, sources and ideas of the texts. The results will be produced in both electronic and printed forms and will be

published in cooperation with a major academic press to ensure high quality and widespread international distribution. In order to provide American Soto Zen teachers and students with adequate ritual and liturgical material, this project will also translate and publish the Soto School Manual of Daily Rituals (Sotoshu gyoji kihan) and work with American Soto Zen teachers to develop an authoritative English Soto Zen liturgy. The entire project is being financially supported by the International Division of the Headquarters of the Soto School.

An Editorial Board was assembled to review and approve all the translations. The members of the Board are: Prof. Carl Bielefeldt, Stanford University; Prof. Griff Foulk, Sarah Lawrence College; Prof. Nara Yasuaki and Prof. Matsumoto Bunryu, Komazawa University; Prof. Stanley Weinstein, Yale University; Rev. Tetsugen Glassman; Urs App, International Zen Research Center, Hanazono University; Rev. Shohaku Okumura, Soto Zen Education Center, Los Angeles; myself and two members of the International Division. Prof. Bielefeldt and Prof. Foulk are the main translators and the editors for the project.

As a member of the Editorial Board I was informally asked to organize the liturgy translation portion of the overall project. I was particularly interested in helping with the translation of the liturgical texts because, as mentioned above, although most Soto Zen centers in North America now study and recite the same basic liturgical texts, they often use different English translations. I felt that if teachers from various centers could come together, study the original texts, and reach accord on these translations, it would contribute to the harmony and vitality of Soto Zen practice among all our Zen centers. Also I felt that if the translations were good enough we might all want to use them, and that if we were using the same texts which we had created together communication and fellowship among all practitioners might be thus enhanced.

To this end, we have had three translations conferences at Green Dragon Temple/Green Gulch Farm Zen Center in Northern California's Marin County. Each conference lasted for about three days. We invited senior teachers from all the major Zen centers we knew of that use Soto Zen liturgy on a daily basis, and leading Zen scholars and translators. A high percentage of those invited came to the conferences. They made time in their busy teaching schedules to travel from all over the country to join the conferences. I was deeply impressed by the enthusiasm of the participants and their deep concern for the quality of the translations. Both teachers and scholars expressed strong feelings and opinions about the words we use to convey the teachings of our ancestors, yet at the same time they demonstrated a sincere appreciation of each other's contributions. In the end, the participants seemed to be gratified with the quality of our work. That is to say, we felt that the new translations reflect more clearly the intent of the original texts without eliminating any of their profound challenges.

The teachers and scholars who participated in all or some of the meetings were:

Rev. Gengo Akiba, Oakland;
Rev. Shosan Austin, San Francisco Zen Center
Rev. Dai-En Bennage, Mt. Equity Zendo, Muncy;
Prof. Carl Bielefeldt, Stanford University;

Rev. Kyogen Carlson, Dharma Rain Zen Center, Portland;
Rev. Nonin Chowaney, Nebraska Zen Center;
Rev. Tenkei Coppens, Kanzeon Zen Center, Salt Lake City;
Rev. Jiko Cutts, Green Gulch Farm Zen Center;
Rev. Meian Elbert, Shasta Abbey, Mt. Shasta;
Rev. Zoketsu Fischer, San Francisco Zen Center;
Rev. Tenshin Fletcher, Zen Mountain Center, Mt. Center, Los Angeles;
Prof. Griff Foulk, Sarah Lawrence College, Ann Arbor;
Rev. Zenkei Hartman, San Francisco Zen Center;
Rev. Taigen Leighton, Green Gulch Zen Center;
Rev. Shohaku Okumura, Soto Zen Administrative Office, Los Angeles;
Rev. Daizui MacPhillamy, Shasta Abbey, Mt. Shasta;
Rev. Teah Strozer, San Francisco Zen Center;
Rev. Sekijun Sunna, Minneapolis Zen Center;
Kazuaki Tanahashi-sensei, Berkeley;
Rev. Meido Tuttle, Shasta Abbey, Mt. Shasta;
Rev. Jisho Warner, Stone Creek Zendo, Sebastopol;
Rev. Sojun Weitsman, Berkeley Zen Center;
Rev. Dairyu Wenger, San Francisco Zen Center.

The conferences produced new consensus translations of the following scriptures: Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra (*Makahannya Haramitta Shingyo*), Universally Recommended Instructions for Zazen (*Fukanzazengi*), Song of the Precious Mirror Samadhi (*Hokyo Zammai*), and Harmony of Difference and Sameness (*Sandokai*); and of the following verses: Robe Chant (*Takkesage*), Three Refuge Vows (*Sankiraimon*), Four Vows (*Shiguseigan*), Universal Dedication (*Fueko*), Sutra Opening (*Kaikyoge*), Repentance (*Sangemon*), Formal Meal Verses (*Gyohatsu Nenju/Gokan No Ge*), Homage to Buddha's Relics (*Shariraimon*), and Bath Verse (*Nyuyoku No Ge*). We decided to leave the dharanis in the Sino-Japanese transliteration of the original Sanskrit.

We have now finished the basic translation work for the purposes of daily chanting practice. What still remains to be done is an annotated version of the translations which could be used as a resource for in-depth study and teaching. I had originally hoped that we might produce translations of such high quality that they would be adopted by all the Soto Zen centers in America. However, given the force of inertia, i.e. the usual attachment to the familiar and resistance to change in individuals and groups, this probably will not happen soon. Overall, I think the translations are better than those we had before, even though each separate group's former translations may be more poetic or inspiring in some places. Regardless of the fate of the translations, I think we all learnt quite a bit in our study and discussion of the texts, which at times went quite deep. I would guess that all the participants feel renewed respect and appreciation of each other as a result of working together on teachings that we all love.

ZEN AND TAIKO

Rev. Shuichi Thomas Kurai
Montebello Sozenji



Rev. Kurai is the head priest of Sozenji Buddhist Temple in Montebello, California. He has been a priest since 1983 and has been performing and teaching Japanese taiko drumming for 23 years.

When I was a child, I saw my father, Reverend Shuyu Kurai, play the taiko for the Obon dance.

That was my introduction to this ancient instrument. I felt my whole heart beating along with the sound of the taiko. Before I knew I wanted to be a priest, I wanted to become a taiko player.

In Buddhism, the sound of the taiko represents the voice of the Buddha calling us to listen to the dharma. It is used to mark time in the monastery and to keep the beat for sutra chanting. The taiko can even be linked the beginning of Japanese civilization.

In Shinto mythology, Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess hid in a cave because she was displeased with her brother. The entire world became dark and gloomy. Another goddess, named Uzume decided to bring the Sun Goddess out of the cave by dancing and playing the taiko. Wondering what the noise was about, Amaterasu came out and saw that everyone was dancing and having a good time. To everyone's delight Amaterasu began to dance too and the world became bright with sunshine again.

The taiko was very prominent in the creation of villages in Japan. Boundaries were drawn at the furthest distance the sound of the taiko could be heard. The center of the villages stood tall towers called yagura in which a taiko was placed to warn villagers of impending disasters such as fires, floods and tsunami. Farmers used the taiko to ward off insects and to celebrate as well.

The first sound that we hear as human beings is the sound of our mother's heartbeat in the womb. That is why babies are known to be lulled to sleep with the sound of an odaiko (very large drum). The beating of our hearts is the very rhythm of life itself. Like breathing in zazen, we follow a natural rhythm without consciously knowing it.

Our moods and feelings depend on rhythm in our daily lives. Sometimes we are going along with the beat and other times we are going against it. Listening and playing the taiko is very much like sitting in zazen. Sometimes my mind and body are one and sometimes it isn't. Becoming one with the sound of the taiko is like becoming one with mind and body.

There is no separation between myself and the sound. I am the sound and it is me. A member of the world-famous taiko group, Kodo said, "When I perform, I have very few moments when I feel completely satisfied with myself, but when I forget myself and become one with the sound of the drum, that is when I am released and feel totally free and unencumbered."

I am also the no-sound of taiko. Just like the empty space which gives shape to objects in a painting, the absence of sound gives shape and fullness to the sound. The Obon taiko player does not play every beat of the rhythm for the dance, but plays to complement and enhance the music and dance. The dancers do not "hear" the sound of the taiko when it is played properly, but miss it when the taiko is not played at all.

The taiko group that I instruct at the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center in West Covina, California is called Kishin Daiko. The word Kishin in Japanese literally means to "return to the heart". In Hinduism, Kishin is a nickname for Lord Krichina who urges one to exit from the cycle of birth and death and to return to him (Krishna) for good. This could also refer to one's roots.

In the 1970's, when I first began playing taiko, third generation (sansei) Japanese Americans were searching for their identity. Japanese culture, language, art and religion were brought to the United States by the first generation (issei). When Japanese Americans were sent to concentration camps during World War II, much of the culture was suppressed. Taiko is an art form that is easily accessible and many sansei embraced it as part of their cultural heritage.

Currently, I teach taiko to about 200 students from all backgrounds and all ages from 7 to 75 years of age. The students practice taiko for many reasons. Some of the reasons include, for exercise, participating in a cultural art form, for mental training, and for the pure enjoyment. The one common reason people have for playing taiko is the feeling of oneness with the drum. The oneness with the sound of the taiko. To play the taiko well does not mean to play to an audience to receive attention and applause. But the ultimate goal is to achieve oneness with yourself and the taiko. The link between you and the taiko are the sticks (bachi). To forget the self as in zazen. To release yourself from your ego.

The power and strength needed to play the taiko does not come from the muscles, but comes from the stomach (hara). As in the martial arts, the stomach is where the ki or energy is stored. This is where our energy or spirit is released to play the taiko. Besides meaning energy, ki also means heart, mind, spirit, and soul. Therefore, focusing on ki and practicing proper breathing is essential in playing the taiko.

When playing the taiko through our ki, we are communicating our energy and spirit to the audience or listener. When the listener responds, he or she communicates back to the player. So there is a constant communication, back and forth between the player and listener.

As a teacher, I am constantly learning from my students. I teach taiko to two Buddhist organization outside of my own temple. One is the Tzu Chi Foundation, a Taiwanese Pure Land lay organization headed by Master Cheng-Yen and the other is the Gold Wheel Sagely Monastery, a Chinese Zen organization founded by the late Master Hsuan Hua.

The students from the Tzu Chi Foundation are made up of a highly spirited group of men and women who volunteer around the world to give relief aid to underprivileged nations, collect bone-marrow donations and help build free clinics. Their collective spirit is communicated through the taiko when they play because their belief is so powerful.

There are 20 monks who range in age from 10 to 21 who practice taiko at the Gold Wheel Sagely Monastery. These monks come from all over the world to practice zen. Reverend Heng Chang, the head training priest wanted these young monks to participate in an activity that involved musical training that involved increasing one's spirituality as well. When the monks play taiko, I feel a sense of raw energy bursting out because of their concentration and focus.

I have found that taiko can be very therapeutic in relieving stress and tension. In the taiko class at TRW, a large aerospace corporation, employees come to pound out their stress from a hard day's work. Taiko can be taught as a form of music therapy as I discovered when working with patients at the Patton State Hospital in San Bernardino. Before practicing the taiko, we sat in zazen for 10 minutes to calm the mind, then played the taiko to calm the body. One patient stopped smoking.

After playing taiko for over 20 years, I am still learning and growing from my experiences through taiko. I have learned that to create a clear and pure sound from the taiko, one must have a clear and pure mind, body and spirit. To be fortunate enough to live in this life and to be able to hear, touch and feel the rhythm of our every day life is indeed something we can truly be thankful about.

Shundo Aoyama Roshi Visits Mount Equity Zendo and six Other Zen Centers and Cities in the United States for a Lecture Tour

Rev. Dai-En Bennage
Mt. Equity Zendo

In August of 1995 accompanying Aoyama Roshi and her attendant, Rev. Etsudo Sasakawa, as the interpreter for Aoyama Roshi's speech in Assisi, Italy, our van was racing along two rainbows arching the Italian Alps, taking us to our respective return planes in Milano. All duties completed, I had the opportunity to ask Aoyama Roshi to come to America Again, this time, to see what had evolved into Mt. Equity Zendo.

In 1984 at the invitation of Maezumi Roshi, Aoyama Roshi had visited Zen Center of Los Angeles during a Sesshin, Minnesota Zen Meditation Center, Zen Community of New York, Zen Mountain Monastery, San Francisco Zen Center and Green Gulch Farm, with myself as interpreter. About to leave Los Angeles for Minneapolis, Maezumi Roshi telephoned to Katagiri Roshi for us beginning his conversation with

"Hajimemashite", which is usually used for "How do you do?" I doubt if that were really the first time that Maezumi Roshi and Katagiri Roshi had met, but the conversation is indicative of the relative isolation of one Zen Center from another in the United States 15 years ago, so different from today.

After years of Zen practice in Japan, I wanted to see if my efforts back in the United States were on the right course, and what might be Aoyama Roshi's suggestion for the future.

No less did I wish to have her see the vitality of Soto Zen practice, particularly women's contributions, in a culture very different from Japan. This dream was finally to come true a little over two years later.

After arriving in Los Angeles with her attendant, Rev. Etsudo Sasakawa, and visiting North American Sotoshu Headquarters at Zenshuji, and Zen Center of Los Angeles, now headed by Rev. Egyoku Nakao, they were joined by Rev. Taiken Yokoyama, assistant secretary of North America Sotoshu Education Center, for the rest of the journey, beginning at Mt. Equity Zendo. In the interim between the invitation and the actual visit to America, Mt. Equity had been sold. Realizing that with the new owner, we would be able to stay for the present time, we wished some suggestions for the future. There was an opportunity to meet every ongoing Mt. Equity Zendo practitioner during Aoyama Roshi's three-day stay. Students filled every inch of space in the Zendo on both days of Aoyama Roshi's talks on "the Ten Ox Herding Pictures". Meal gathas were recited in English as we ate with the oryoki bowls that we owned.

And despite certain fatigue, an evening talk on "How Shall We Live?" at historic Pennsdale Quaker Meeting House was kindly consented to for local people who did not have zazen practice. Students at Bucknell University in nearby Lewisburg, PA who practice zazen in the university chapel, were also able to hear a talk and to freely ask questions. Every question that was asked anywhere was carefully recorded.

The long-awaited visit of Aoyama Roshi to Lewisburg Maximum Security Federal Penitentiary, unfortunately, was not to be, due to a lock-down. The Gateless Gate Sangha, in practice over five years, now has three men who have received the precepts.

Smith College, a women's university in Northampton, MA where we arrived the next day, already knew of Aoyama Roshi through her book "Zen Seeds" which Prof. Taitetsu Unno, retiring next year, is a respected scholar of Pure Land Buddhism.

Mt. Equity Zendo Sangha with Shundo Aoyama Roshi



A pleasant drive was made into the forest to visit at Valley Zendo. Over a potluck lunch, Rev. Issho Fujita helped us translate the many questions that his students asked.

At Bean Town Zendo in Boston, Rev. Eishin Ikeda, welcomed us. Rev. Duncan Ryuken Williams, a Harvard Ph. D. candidate as well as a Soto Sect Priest, aided us with his interpreting at both Bean Town Zendo and Harvard University the following day.

Upon our arrival in San Francisco, we had dinner with a number of women teachers from San Francisco Zen Center: Co-Abbot of the SFZC, Blanche Zenkei Hartman, Barbara Kohn, Vicki Shosan Austin, Fuyu Schroeder, and Teah Strozer, with Linda Jiko Cutts unable to attend. We had a good opportunity to meet and look at Soto practice from the viewpoint of women's needs, east and west.

Green Gulch Farm greeted us with a completely packed zendo of people coming to hear what a woman master had to offer. There was additional opportunity to be with other American Soto teachers, such as the new Bishop, Rev. Gengo Akiba, and Co-abbot Nortman Zoketsu Fischer, during the tea ceremony that was held afterward in the new tea ceremony house.

Aoyama Roshi as we were escorted to the last destination of the tour, Tassajara, by Rev. Cary Jisho Warner of Stone Creek Zendo. Aoyama Roshi's talk and question period was held in the yurt.

We are very grateful that Aoyama Roshi could be in the United States once more to share her wisdom with Mt. Equity Zendo and other Soto Zen Centers. May Aoyama Roshi have taken back with her a sense of the vitality of Zen in America.

Lecture Tour of Shundo Aoyama Roshi in L.A.

Rev. Taiken Yokoyama
Soto Zen Education Center

Shundo Aoyama Roshi; abbess of Aichi Senmon Nisodo (Soto Zen Nunnery in Aichi prefecture) was invited by Soto Zen Education Center to have a lecture tour in the United States. She arrived in Los Angeles on October 15 and visited many Soto Zen Sangha in the 6 cities in the West Coast and East Coast for two weeks until October 30th, 1997.

On Oct. 16th, Aoyama Roshi visited Zen Center of Los Angeles. At the ZCLA Aoyama Roshi gave a talk about "The Original Face". She brought Japanese sweets on whose wrapping paper her calligraphy of a circle is printed. She also talked about the meaning of the circle. All participants had the sweet with a cup of powdered tea served by Rev. Etsudo Sasakawa, Aoyama Roshi's attendant. We enjoyed a nice visit and appreciated the hospitality from the sangha members of ZCLA..

On the evening of the 16th, Aoyama Roshi had a meeting with teachers of Japanese culture such as tea ceremony, flower arrangement etc. First, we had tea ceremony led by tea master Sosei Matsumoto Sensei. Aoyama Roshi gave a lecture on "Practice and Impermanence" through the example of tea ceremony. During her lecture, participants sometimes laughed

and sometimes cried. All people appreciated the profound taste of Aoyama Roshi's teachings. After the lecture we had dinner with the Roshi.

On October the 17th, Aoyama Roshi flew to Williamsport, Pennsylvania to visit Mt. Equity Zendo. The rest of her tour is reported in Rev. Daien Bennage's essay.

Rohatsu Sesshin

Polly Chu

This past year, Rohatsu Sesshin at Zenshuji Soto Mission was held in conjunction with Soto Zen Education Center. I would like to express the appreciation of the Zenshuji zazenkai to the Soto Zen Education Center for sponsoring this event. Thanks also to the priests and tenzos for their hard work and thoughtful planning, the participants from far and near, and to Reverend Okumura for his thoughtful lectures on the "Samadhi of the Self" by Dogen Zenji.

I first visited Zenshuji in 1992. Previously, I had read about Zen for years, but I had never physically done zazen. It was an intellectual abstraction to me. Even after I discovered that I could actually do zazen with real Zen monks, I still only went irregularly. I didn't like getting up so early in the morning! But at some point I think the practice finally entered my body instead of only inhabiting my mind, and I began to sit regularly. For me, being at Zenshuji has rooted zen buddhist practice in zazen, and zazen in daily life. But this Rohatsu sesshin opened up the possibility that life itself can take root in zazen.

During one of his lectures, Rev. Okumura told us that zazen is not a part of life, but rather that life is a part of zazen. This intrigued me. It sounded great, but what did it really mean?

Earlier, Rev. Okumura had admitted that he felt almost guilty during this sesshin because of the mild weather and because he was able to sit all day while others had to interrupt their zazen to go to work. I secretly thought about how much easier it was to go to work than to sit all day, face to face with your self. Although part of me wanted to sit the whole sesshin, another part was relieved to have to get up from my cushion and go to work. Toward the end of the sesshin I sat for almost two entire days and it was harder than going to work. But when the sesshin ended and I went back to work on Monday morning, it was suddenly more difficult to navigate my daily life. Somehow I had thought it would become easier, that I would be more centered. Instead it was almost the opposite. That was when I remembered Rev. Okumura saying that life was part of zazen and not the other way around. I try to remember this now. In zazen we begin to come face to face with the reality of our lives. I hope that with continued zazen and sesshins, I will awaken more often to my life as part of zazen.

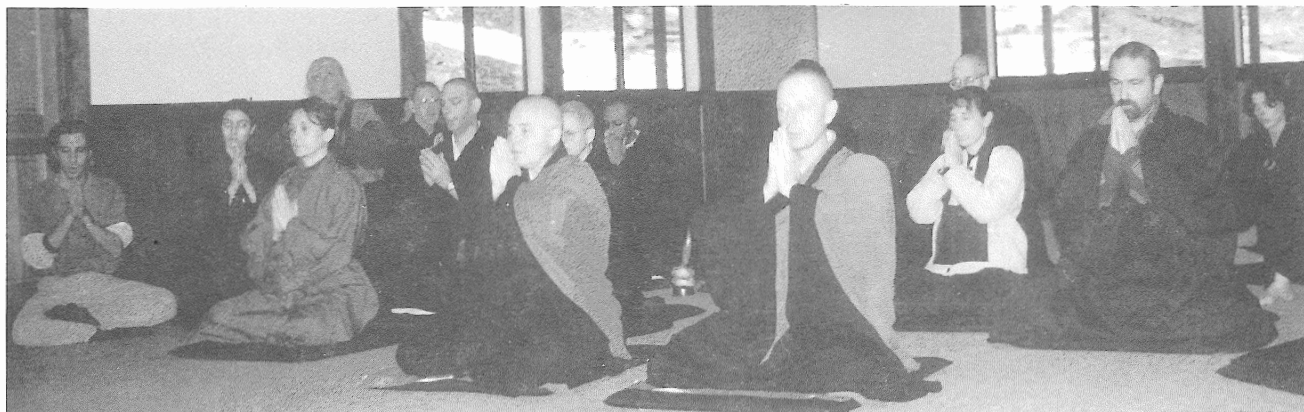


Lecture at Zenshuji during Rohatsu Sesshin. Dec.1997

Gathering of the Soto Zen Sangha Sesshin

Rev. Tenshin Fletcher

It was wonderful having old friends and new sitting together at Yokoji Zen Mountain Center. The zazen was quiet and deep, quite unlike the weather, which was extremely varied. At the start of sesshin I couldn't get back into Mountain Center because of a snow storm and unplowed roads. Shinko, one of the Zen Mountain Center's staff came to the rescue, and finally I got in around 11:00 p.m. with the snow still falling.



7-day Sesshin at Zen Mountain Center. Feb. 1998

By Monday the snow was already melting faster than we have experienced before. In the formal swing of sesshin everyone blended into the different forms of Yokoji. We have to compliment to the members from the various sanghas for their ability to blend it. As Dogen Zenji says, "Like milk and water."

As the week progressed the zazen deepened and the talks were very encouraging. Michael Zennen Wenger delivered a lively talk, entitled "Alive or Dead." It was a fine blend of ancient and contemporary stories, illustrating this fundamental point of Zen practice, it was well received. The talk by Anne Seisen Fletcher on, "Not Knowing is Most Intimate," had an accessible quality that people appreciated. She illustrated case 17 of the Shoyo Roku, "Hogen's Hair's Breath." Illustrating Dogen Zenji's comments in the Fukanzazengi. Dogen's comment that we are intrinsically enlightened but we have to make it for real. Okumura Sensei's presentation of "Polishing a Tile to Make a Mirror," gave us a more in-depth translation of the koan involving Nangaku and Baso. A koan on which Dogen Zenji wrote a whole chapter in the Shobogenzo. He presented different facets on this koan, illustrating practice and realization. Akiba Roshi's talk "When a Flower Opens the World Has Fragrance," touched us all. Akiba Roshi has been coming to Mountain Center on and off for six years and we have always felt his support. It was wonderful to hear speak in English, and we appreciate his efforts. Of particular interest to us all was his comments on Dogen Zenji's, "Dropping off Body and Mind," (Shinjin Datsu Raku). How it could have been mistranslated, and yet how important that misunderstanding was to Dogen Zenji, how he used it almost every time he mentioned Shikantaza ("Do shikantaza and drop off body and mind"), and how essential dropping off body and mind is to us as practitioners.

So the weather continued rain, soaking shoes, leaky gutters, and a little sun. On the last day, it snowed again. For Yokoji this was our first formal Winter Ango, and we felt that all participated wholeheartedly and made angou a great success. It was also our first winter Shuso Hossen, Sharon Chiren Meler being Shuso. During the Hossen procession we had another snow storm, another first for Yokoji. We were grateful for all those who participated in the Hossen and we enjoyed the offerings of congratulatory remarks.

Akiba Roshi officiated at the Parinirvana service on Sunday morning. I am sure the Buddha would have been pleased to see the different sanghas commemorating his passing. We

were saddened to hear about Bishop Yamashita's illness, followed 5 day later by his passing. Akiba Roshi and Furutani Sensei had to leave to be with Bishop Yamashita, yet another everyday teaching in life and death, something we will all have to face one day.

All in all the sesshin was strong and harmonious. When different groups sit together in the spirit of our founders. I feel little can go wrong. It is much easier then having meetings. I look forward to further gatherings of the various sanghas and would like to think all of our guests and especially the Soto Zen Education Center and Mountain Center staff for all their hard work organizing the sesshin.

My Zazen Sankyū

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

Notebook (1)

Rev. Issho Fujita

with assistance from Shibata

Foreword

Soon after I started practicing zazen, when I was reading the transcription of Dharma talk by Kodo Sawaki Roshi, I came across the following words - "All sutras are footnotes to Zazen." Although I could not understand the deep meaning of it at that time, I was impressed by the boldness of his words. Later, when I started to read the works of Dogen Zenji and found words declaring in essence that the Buddha Way = Zazen such as "In India and China, where there is Buddha Dharma transmitted, there is always sitting Buddha transmitted"; "The only correctly transmitted Dharma is the religion of zazen";

and "The Buddha way is just zazen.", I realized that Sawaki Roshi had simply rephrased these in his own words.



Dogen Zenji and Sawaki Roshi practiced zazen through their lives and recommended it to people widely. What is this zazen which is declared to be "Shikantaza (just to sit)", the only correctly transmitted genuine Dharma"? What is this zazen, recommended so strongly by both Dogen Zenji and Sawaki Roshi? Where in zazen is such an "extraordinary" thing hidden?

While I have been learning from various masters of the way directly and indirectly, and practicing zazen myself, I have been thinking about the real identity of zazen from various angles as my interests lead me. Even when I read books unrelated to Buddhism or Zen, there seem to be circuits formed in my brain which somehow relate those to the issue surrounding zazen.

Although Dogen Zenji who admonished us "Nothing can be gained by the extensive study and wide reading. Give them up immediately. Just focus your mind on one thing---" (Shobogenzo-zuimonki) would scold me, I really enjoy wide and smattering learning/thinking centered around zazen. I have no intention of putting them into a unified system, nor do I have the skill to do so. I just record my fragmented thoughts and research in my zazen sankyu notebook, and reflect on them on my own occasionally.

As I was invited to write for DHARMA EYE, the idea of explaining fragmentary thoughts scattered around in my "zazen sankyu notebook" in an easily understandable manner came to my mind. Among the readers of Dharma Eye, there must be people who have attained very deep understanding of zazen through long and continuous practice. I thought, if they check and critique my clumsy article, it will assist me to further develop my sankyu of zazen. Also, though this is rather presumptuous, I hope that some of my fragmentary thoughts may contribute to the spread of zazen by being a good stimulus to zazen practitioners for their practice as well as invitation to non-practitioners to sit on a zafu.

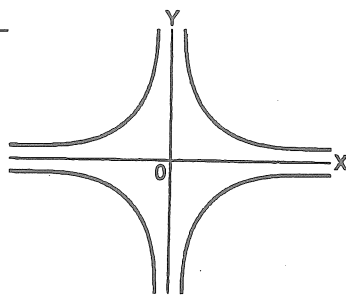
With these objectives in mind, I present my fragmented thoughts surrounding zazen. I would like to respond to questions, criticism, and comments from readers. Please feel free to send me a letter in care of Dharma Eye.

Fragmentary Thought 1 <Charm of Zazen>

By sheer coincidence or a quirk of fate, I encountered zazen in a manner I never even imagined. Since then, being grabbed by zazen, I have been wandering in its world for about 15 years. Although I practice it myself, recommend and teach it to the others, I still ask "What is zazen?" repeatedly.

Although it has become my intuitive convention that zazen is essential for my life, the true identity of zazen exists within myself as an unpenetrated koan. Whenever I present my understanding, it is always sent back to me because of insufficient understanding. This koan can never be penetrated

by discriminative thinking. As a right-angled hyperbola never intersects with the X-axis ($x=0$) and the Y-axis ($y=0$) although it gets closer to the axes infinitely, zazen as zero (beyond thinking; non-discrimination) will probably never be able to be penetrated by non-zero (thinking; discrimination).



However, the reality of zazen is very simple, clear, and transparent. There is nothing complicated nor ambiguous. Zazen is something everyone can do by just facing the wall and sitting with correct posture following the manner prescribed.

"So-called zazen is to put one futon at a quiet place, sit on it with correct posture, do not move with the body, do not talk with the mouth, do not judge good or bad with the mind, and let days go by just sitting quietly facing the wall. There is nothing special other than this." (Sermon by Daichi Zenji)

With no exaggeration, zazen is nothing more nor less than what Daichi Zenji described. However, the more I practice zazen, the more I feel that I will never reach the bottom of it because of its infinite depth. Zazen is like the clear and blue sky - because the sky is clear and limitless, we can never see the end of it. Sawaki Roshi call this nature of zazen as "yusui" (subtle and elusive). Though zazen is something which can be realized by a very simple act - sitting, once we try to capture it with words or thoughts, zazen seems to be infinitely far away. To me, the charm of zazen seems to come from this nature.

Fragmentary Thought 2 <Invitation from Zazen>

Despite its simple posture, zazen has unlimited expanse, subtlety, and elusiveness. It is said that the entire Buddha Dharma converges and is condensed into Shikantaza.

Without knowing these deep reasons, I tried zazen for the first time by following instructions in sesshin at a Zen temple. Then I heard an internal "voice" saying "At last, you came back here. I have been waiting for you a long time. From now on, continue to wedge zazen deeply into the middle of your daily life and see what kind of life is realized using your life as its material."

Though the voice was faint, it had a strength and certainty that I could not ignore. My zazen at that time was not something that could be called zazen - it was just a series of fights with sleepiness, hallucinations, boredom, and pains. "What is the use of doing this? Isn't this a waste of time? Why not finish this quickly and go home?" were the thoughts that occupied my mind. However, maybe because a part of me might have been touching zazen in a totally different dimension, the "voice" inviting me was coming from what seemed to be a point of contact. I felt some, mysterious peacefulness gushing out from there. I was flustered - "What is going on here?"

In Vimalakirti Sutra, there is a phrase "a lotus in the fire (= the lotus flower blooming in the fire)". This is the metaphor to describe something which seldom happens. The quiet "voice" of invitation from zazen which happened to be heard

within myself struggling and suffering was indeed a "lotus in the fire" for me. Finally, being led by this, I converted the direction of my life.

Where did that "voice" of invitation reaching my consciousness come from?

I can only say that it is from the strange place infinitely far away as well as infinitely close - the place infinitely far away if I try to find it with my consciousness, but also the place present in my existence. By practicing zazen for the first time, did I happen to touch the invitation from there? Had the "voice" been calling me "Come home--- this is the place you end up coming back to," long before that time?

"Come to me, all whose work is hard, whose load is heavy; and I will give you relief. Bend your neck to my yoke, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble-hearted; and your souls will find relief." (Matthew 11-28/29)

Zazen is also called "kika-onza" (returning home and sitting in peace).

Fragmentary Thought 3 <Footnotes to Zazen>

Kodo Sawaki Roshi said, "Zazen is to do what we cannot say in words and to practice what we cannot think." Dharma which we can never reach by words or thoughts does always realize before us when we throw our body and mind into zazen. To try to make sense with the mind is useless and a waste of time. Therefore, in Zen, it has been traditionally said, "Just sit first without saying anything." That's it when we sit. - there is no room here for human "cleverness" to dominate.

However, for a living human being with the mind to practice zazen correctly, I believe that efforts to shed some light with our intelligence on "zazen which is to do what we cannot say in words and to practice what we cannot think" as much as we can are also important. "All sutras are footnotes to zazen" also means that all sutras are the footsteps of many predecessors' efforts. Many literary gems were created from the tensions between their efforts to describe zazen with words as accurately as possible and that zazen which cannot be described thoroughly with words. It is as if a beautiful hyperbola cannot arise without the tension between zero and non-zero as the hyperbola gets infinitely close to the X- and Y-axes although they will never intersect.

These might seem superfluous to zazen itself, because the "body of text" called zazen is independent from these "footnotes." On the contrary, "footnotes" without the "body of text" do not have much value. (Can't we say that Boddhidharma's arrival in China was to bring in the 'body of text' to where there were only "footnotes" until then?)

However, in order for zazen as the "body of text" to be "read" (= practiced) correctly, excellent "footnotes" are always needed. At least, I would have interpreted the body of text my own selfish way and practiced zazen outrageously if there were no excellent footnotes by predecessors. The "body of text" (practice) and "footnotes" (understanding) stimulating each other, each deepened dynamically, while seeking interaction and unison, is the way it is supposed to be.

Zazen cannot be satisfied by all the sutras written in the past. Zazen as the body of text is always seeking to be re-read with new footnotes under the renewed light of the present age.

Those who practice zazen in this modern society are being requested from zazen to bring their own unique words to it.

Fragmentary Thought 4 <Zazen and Meditation>

Many people seem to be caught in a simple belief that zazen is to reach the state of no thought by unifying one's mind. However, I think that here is a confusion with 'meditation', the objective of which is to reach a certain state of mind with manipulations, techniques, or methods. This tendency is especially strong among the western nations where zazen is translated as "Zen meditation" or "sitting meditation". It is also reported that psychotherapists and doctors have applied the eastern meditation methods to the therapies of the "mind" and attained reasonable success. Under these circumstances, various meditation methods to attain objectives such as mind/body health and skill development, peaceful mind, resolution of various problems in life, are on the rise. Zazen is often described as one of these practice methods.

In the tradition of Buddhism, there are many meditation practice methods of this kind. I believe that we should learn from deep observation and effective therapies addressing various mental problems in this long-lasting tradition, and apply them to the present society.

However, if zazen is understood solely in this context, we fail to capture the true nature of zazen by over-simplification and over-specialization. Zazen, and Shikantaza (just sitting) taught by Dogen Zenji in particular, has the nature which cannot be categorized as meditation. In conclusion, I do believe that zazen is different from so-called meditation. Then, what is the difference?

Zazen's characteristics and meaning highlighted in comparison with various kinds of meditation methods originated in the west and the east, is one of the major themes in my sankyu of zazen.

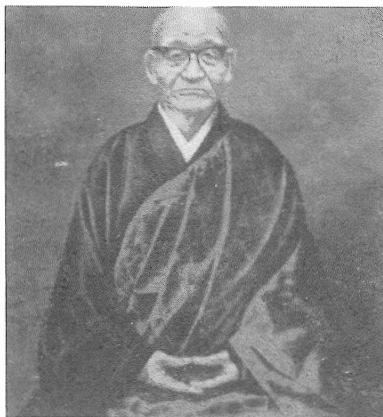
Fragmentary Thought 5 <Difference in Full-Lotus Position between Zazen and Meditation>

Dogen Zenji tends to describe zazen simply by sitting body postures such as "shoshin-tanza" (just sitting in correct posture), "taza" (just sitting), "gotsu-za" (sitting immovable like a bold mountain; "gotsu" means a bold mountain). This should not be coincidental. In his view, the main point of zazen must be, first and foremost, the wholistic body posture (= sitting posture), not the state of our minds.

Although so-called "kekka-fuza" (full-lotus position) is regarded as the best sitting posture in other meditation methods as well, there seems to be a huge difference in how sitting posture is positioned in meditation and zazen.

In meditation, practitioners start a certain method of meditation after sitting in full-lotus position. In other words, it is "kekka-fuza" plus meditation. "Kekka-fuza" here is the means of conditioning the body and mind optimized for mental exercises called meditation, not the objective as itself. The practice is structured in a somewhat dualistic manner that body sitting is a container and the mind meditating is the content. And the emphasis is always on meditation as mental exercises.

On the other hand, the objective of zazen is just to sit in "kekka-fuza" correctly, and there is nothing to add to it. That



Sawaki Kodo Roshi

is to say, it is "kekka-fuza" plus zero. (Sawaki Roshi's famous quote: "Just sit zazen, and that's the end of it.") Here there is no dualistic structure that the body sits while the mind does something else such as chanting sacred words in the heart, visualizing sacred images, concentrating the mind on a certain thought or sensation, counting breaths, etc. In zazen, both the body

and mind are simultaneously used up completely just by the act of sitting. In other words, the mind-body as one is just sitting zazen. In the volume of samadhi-king-samadhi of "Shobogenzo", Dogen Zenji said, "Kekka-fuza is upright mind, upright body, upright body-mind." and "Sit in kekka-fuza with body, sit in kekka-fuza with mind, sit in kekka-fuza of body-mind falling off."

If we compare "kekka-fuza" of a person who is meditating and that of a person who is doing zazen, they are rather different. Aside from detailed difference such as whether or not eyes are closed, or how both hands are maintained, subtle impressions from the whole postures are different. At the posture of the former, obviously, the fact that a person is engaging in mental exercises manifested externally. Even famous masters of meditation tend to sit in "kekka-fuza" posture which would be corrected at a zazen dojo in Japan. I am not saying they are wrong. It is not the matter of value judgment or which is superior. All I am saying here is that zazen and meditation are activities with different natures.

Dogen Zenji's Genjo-koan Lecture (2)

by Rev. Shohaku Okumura

Soto Zen Education Center

[Text]

- (1) *When all dharmas are the buddha dharma, there is delusion and realization, practice, life and death, buddhas and living beings.*
- (2) *When all dharmas are not [fixed] self, there is no delusion and no realization, no buddhas and no living beings, no birth and no perishing.*
- (3) *Since the buddha way by nature goes beyond [the dichotomy of abundance and deficiency, there is arising and perishing, delusion and realization, living beings and buddhas.*

Shakyamuni, the Heart Sutra and Dogen Zenji

Today I would like to talk about the meaning of the first three sentences in the context of Buddhist teachings. I think the essential teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha, the teachings of the Heart Sutra, that is, Mahayana Buddhist teachings and Dogen's teachings, correspond to the first three sentences of

this text *Genjokoan*.

Buddha's teaching: Four Dharma Seals

One of the most well known summarization of the Buddha's teachings is called the "Four Dharma Seals" (*shihojin in Jap.*). Seal means a stamp which is like a signature in this country. A seal is a certification of something written by a person. If there are those four points, a teaching can be called Buddha's teaching (Buddha Dharma).

The first point is that everything is suffering (*issai kaiku*). The second point is that everything is impermanent (*shogyo mujo*). The third point is that everything is egoless (*shoho muga*). The fourth point is that nirvana is tranquility (*nehan jakujo*).

These are four essential points of Buddha's teaching. I think those four points are one message from Shakyamuni Buddha to us.

Reality of our life: impermanence and egolessness

The second and the third Dharma Seal-impermanence and egolessness are the reality of our life or reality of all beings (*shoho jisso*). In Mahayana Buddhism this reality of impermanence and egolessness is called emptiness. This means that we have to die sometime sooner or later. There is no fixed entity which doesn't change; that is called *ga* in Japanese or *atman* in Sanskrit. The definition of *atman* (ego) in Buddhism is *jo-itsu-shu-sai*. *Jo* means permanent. *Atman* in Buddhism is something which is permanent (*jo*), and only one (*itsu*), the owner of this body and mind (*shu*), which controls and operates this body and mind (*sai*). Both our body and mind are constantly changing; it's a collection of five *skandas*, and yet somehow, we assume that there's something which doesn't change. Since we are born our body is constantly changing, and our mind is also changing. That is self-identity.

When I was a baby, when I was a teenager and when I became 49 years old, each time both mental and physical conditions had been constantly changing. Still we think that there's something which doesn't change and which is only one, which is the owner of this body and mind and which controls this body and mind, like the owner of a car. That is called *atman*, *ga*, or *ego* as a Buddhist term. And what Buddha taught is that there's no such thing. Everything living or existing is conditioned body and mind which are constantly changing.

We are the collection of different elements which are constantly changing, and we depend on other beings; that's how and why we can be alive this moment as this person. If something changes inside or outside we also change. This is in fact what Buddha meant when he said impermanence and egolessness. This reality is difficult to accept.

I don't think it's difficult to understand it. When we talk in this way probably you think "that is true." However, we still feel I am 'I', you are 'you', I am always 'I', I have self-identity." And it is important. I am a Buddhist priest instead of Christian or Islamic. I am a Japanese instead of American or Chinese.

If we don't assume this something which doesn't change it's very difficult to live in the society, with responsibility. That's one of the questions always asked by non-Buddhist people: if there's not an ego which does not change, we don't need to be

responsible for what we have done in the past because I'm a different person from who I was. But of course that is not what Buddha meant. Since there is certain continuation, we are responsible for what we did yesterday. Self-identity is important. But self-identity is, in Buddhist terminology, a mind creation; we create something with our mind which doesn't change because it's convenient.

Our life is like a river. Each moment the water is different, so it's constantly changing, but as a river, for example Mississippi river was Mississippi river even a million years ago and now it's still Mississippi river; and yet, the water flowing is always different, always new. There is no such fixed thing called Mississippi river. As a reality, a river is just a collection of a certain shape of the land and ever flowing water. Mississippi river is the name for a certain condition and different elements. And yet there is a certain continuation. Mississippi river is Mississippi river. And our life is like that.

The origin of Mississippi river is a small stream, but in New Orleans it's like an ocean, but both are Mississippi river and we can't say which is true Mississippi river; just a matter of conditions. Our life is the same; just a matter of conditions. I think that's the meaning for "everything is impermanent and everything is egoless", but still there is a continuation, causality: so we need to be responsible for what we did yesterday.

The first Dharma Seal: everything is suffering

"Everything is suffering" means that when we don't awake to this reality, we grasp at something as if permanent, that is ego, and try to make it most important, then our life as a whole becomes suffering. "Everything" here means even pleasure or happiness or success, both the positive and negative things we experience.

When we live based on ego and the idea of permanence, we grasp at something and we expect this something not to change and try to protect this ego and make it important and powerful. We try to become better than others. Sometimes we are happy, sometimes we feel really terrible; that is, *samsara*. In order to protect our ego we create *samsara*. Sometimes we feel like we are in heaven, sometimes we feel like we are in hell. No condition lasts for ever. Everything is always changing. This is transmigration; always up and down. Even happiness, pleasure and success become part of suffering, because if we live based on our egocentricity, whatever we accomplish we will lose, because everything is changing. Nothing lasts for ever. No matter how successful we are, at least when we die we have to leave everything, we have to open our hand. The ego which is the center of the world perish.

If we are not successful our life is really painful; this we often experience. But even if we are successful, happy and rich, still that happiness or success is very strongly egocentric. Based on ego and expectation of permanence, then we have fear because we may lose all.

Other people also want to have happiness or success, so our life becomes a competition with others. Even though we are happy, successful and rich, some people try to take our happiness away, because they also want to be happy. That makes this society the realm of *samsara*. Some are happy, some are unhappy.

I think that's the meaning of "everything is suffering". When we hear the words "everything is suffering", we feel Buddhism is pessimistic, but it doesn't mean that. Even the positive side of our lives becomes a part of *samsara*, that means a part of suffering. "Everything" is really everything, including pleasure, happiness, success or whatever, of course pain, sickness, hard time, aging and dying too.

The Fourth Dharma Seal: Nirvana

The way of life based on awakening to impermanence and egolessness is called nirvana. Nirvana is not a certain special state or condition of mind, but Nirvana is actual, real life based on the reality of impermanence and egolessness. When we really see impermanence and egolessness we deeply understand that we cannot grasp at anything; nothing lasts for ever. Since we can't grasp at anything; we don't cling to anything. We understand we have to open our hand. We try to open our hand before we are forced to open it. That is Buddhist practice and when we really, deeply understand this reality we feel we don't need to compete with others; we don't need to struggle to make our ego, more important, more powerful than others. This awakening allows us to live with more peacefulness and steadiness. We don't need to compete with others and we don't need to compete with ourselves, that means "to make myself who I want to be".

Nirvana is the way of life to stop such competition to just settle down on the reality of impermanence and egolessness. Buddha's message through these dharma-seals is that we can live in two different ways: one is in *samsara* and everything in our life becomes suffering; another is when we awake to this reality, our life becomes nirvana and our life becomes quiet and peaceful. We are free from excessive desires and competition with ourselves and with other people. I think this is a very precise explanation of Buddha's teaching.

Four Noble Truths and Twelve links of Causation

Another way of summarizing Buddha's teaching is the Four Noble Truths (*shishotai*). The first truth is that all is suffering. The second truth is that the cause of suffering is thirst or desire. The third truth is Nirvana; cessation of suffering. The fourth truth is the path toward the cessation of suffering. So in the Four Noble Truths Buddha showed us the two pairs of cause and result. First is that our desire is the cause and suffering is the result. The second is that the path (eight-fold right path) is the cause and nirvana is the result.

There is another important teaching of Buddha: the twelve links of causation. This shows the cause of suffering more deeply. The Buddha explained the cause of suffering with twelve links. Basically ignorance is the first cause of suffering. This is, briefly speaking, what Buddha taught.

Based on the reality of our life, that is, impermanence and egolessness, there are two ways of life: one is to be blind to this reality and live based on egocentricity-then everything becomes suffering-or to be fully awake to this reality and being free from egocentricity, then our life becomes nirvana. Nirvana is not a certain special, fantastic state of mind, like having LSD. Buddha was enlightened when he was 36 years old. At that time he entered nirvana and yet his life was not such an easy one; he

traveled all over India. To travel in India in ancient times was not so easy a thing. To be in Nirvana is not to be in a kind of trance. To be in Nirvana doesn't mean to have no pain or sorrow. Since Buddha was released from egocentricity tribulation was not part of transmigration in samsara but pain was just pain, and pleasure was just pleasure. In that sense we can really appreciate both the positive and the negative as the scenery of our life.

We can accept all conditions and even enjoy them in a sense. Of course we have to work on it. If we open our hand which grasps this person as most important, as the center of the world, then our life becomes much broader, our heart opens to all beings. I think that is basically what Buddha taught.

Mahayana: Madyamika, Yogacara and Tathagata-garba

I think this is the basic teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha. In the history of Buddhist philosophy, people have tried to explain, and understand certain important points in this teaching. For example Mahayana Buddhism, such as Prajna Paramita and the Madyamika School which was founded by the Indian Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna, tried to explain the reality of all beings; Nagarjuna tried to explain or show us the emptiness of all beings; the reality of life.

Another School of Mahayana called Yogachara, tried to explain how this life of suffering is created using the analysis of our consciousness. They thought everything we experience is stored in our deepest consciousness, called alaya consciousness-alaya means storehouse in which all our experiences are stored as seeds. Everything we experience, even if we forget, is stored in this consciousness, and when we face certain situations the seed comes up and makes us take an action depending on the situation. In the Yogachara School the philosophers thought this alaya was grasped by ego consciousness called manas, that is the 7th consciousness. Alaya is almost our life as an individual person, but this life is grasped by the ego consciousness as "me". The 6th consciousness is our usual psychology. Our usual thoughts are influenced by this manas. That's why our way of thinking is distorted. We cannot see the reality of egolessness and emptiness. That's the cause of how our life becomes distorted and suffering arises. This is a basic teaching or philosophy of Yogachara. And they taught how we can become free from egocentricity.

There's another kind of doctrine in Mahayana called Tathagata-garba, or theory of Buddha nature. This theory tries to explain why we can change our life from samsara to nirvana. The reason is that all living beings have Buddha nature. All of us are basically Buddha's children so inherently we have possibility to awaken to this reality and live within nirvana.

The basic point of each Mahayana School or philosophy tries to explain various points of the Buddha's teaching.

The Heart Sutra

If we carelessly read the Heart Sutra we may think that the Heart Sutra negates all the Buddha's teaching.

In the beginning, the Heart Sutra negates all elements of being. In the early Buddhist teaching, form, feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness are called the five

elements and that is all that exists. There is nothing beside those five skandas. Five skandas in human beings means: the first one, form or rupa, is material and the other four are mental elements. All that exists as reality are only body and mind. There's no such thing called ego or atman. That's how Buddha explained the reality that there's no ego, only the five skandas exist.

The Heart sutra says that there is no such five elements. The five skandas are also empty. In that sense the Heart Sutra negates the Buddha's teaching. This is the difference between early Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism.

The Heart Sutra continues: "*There is no ignorance, no extinction of ignorance, etc. until we come to there is no decay and death*"; *there is no extinction of decay and death.*" This is a negation of the twelve links of causation. Ignorance is the first one and decay and death are the last ones and this includes all ten links between ignorance and decay and death. There are no such things called twelve links of causation. It also says there is no extinction of them; those twelve links of causation do not exist and yet they have never disappeared.

"*No suffering, no origination, no stopping, no path*". This is the negation of suffering, of the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering (nirvana) and the path to nirvana. This is the negation of the Four Noble Truths. Clearly, the Heart Sutra negates what the Buddha taught.

If the people who composed the Heart Sutra wanted to negate Buddha's teaching, those people shouldn't say they are Buddhist, but they said they were true Buddhists. The Heart Sutra said this is the true teaching of Buddha.

We should truly understand what the negation in the Heart Sutra means. Remember that the Heart Sutra put "no" to all of Buddha's teachings.

Dogen Zenji's comment on the Heart Sutra

Dogen Zenji made his comment on the Heart Sutra in the second chapter of *Shobogenzo* titled *Maka Hannya Haramitsu*. This chapter and *Genjokoan* were written in the same year within a few months. I think these two are closely connected. In the *Maka Hannya Haramitsu*, Dogen Zenji quotes from the Prajna Paramita Sutras. In *Genjokoan* he didn't quote Sutras, but expressed his understanding of the teaching of Mahayana Buddhism with his own poetic words. His teaching in *Genjokoan* is closely connected to his understanding of Mahayana teachings. I want to introduce what Dogen said in his comment on the Heart Sutra.

"*The time of Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva practicing profound Prajna Paramita is the whole body clearly seeing the emptiness of all the five aggregates.*" "Aggregates" is the translation of skandas. It's very clear that this sentence is a paraphrase of the first sentence of the Heart Sutra. He adds only two words, "whole body".

"*The five aggregates are form, sensations, perceptions, predilections and consciousness, this is the five-fold Prajna*". The Heart Sutra said those five skandas are empty. But Dogen says: "Those five skandas are the five-fold Prajna." Those five skandas are themselves prajna paramita (wisdom).

"*Clear seeing is itself prajna. To unfold and manifest this*

essential truth [the Heart Sutra] states that form is emptiness and emptiness is form (*shiki soku zeku, ku soku ze shiki*).” Yet Dogen Zenji is saying, “Form is nothing but form, emptiness is nothing but emptiness.”

I think “form is emptiness and emptiness is form” is not clear enough, because when we say “form is emptiness” there are two things: “form” and “emptiness” and we say those two things are one. But if those two things really are the same, we don’t need to say “form” is “emptiness” because form is itself emptiness. Just saying “form” emptiness is already included. This is why he said “form is form and emptiness is emptiness.” To say “form” is “emptiness” and “emptiness” is “form” is still our thinking and both “form” and “emptiness” become concepts. And within our thinking, we think those two are one. Dogen Zenji is trying to show us the real thing in our actual lives. Each one of myriad things is a form. They are themselves empty and yet when we say “they are themselves empty”, this becomes my thought. I connect those two concepts. These concepts and our thoughts using concepts are a mental creation. This is the way we fail to see the actual thing. This actual thing is empty. What Dogen cautions us to is “to not think, just see and just live”. Just seeing this actual thing without saying this is empty even though this is truly empty. That’s it. We don’t need to say this is empty if this is really empty. He put more importance in the reality of each being (*shoho-jisso*). Reality is not within our thinking but it is each one of the myriad things.

That’s why he says “Form is nothing but form, emptiness is nothing but emptiness. One hundred blades of grass; the ten thousand things”. “One hundred blades of grass” and “the ten thousand things” mean “everything”. Everything is Prajna Paramita because everything is empty. Prajna is not our wisdom. Each thing is reality and each thing is prajna.

He says: “The twelve sense fields are twelve instances of Prajna Paramita” “Twelve sense fields” refers to eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind and the six objects of those senses. In the Heart Sutra, it said there are no such twelve fields, but Dogen says those twelve sense fields are twelve instances of Prajna Paramita.

“There are eighteen instances of prajna paramita, that is, eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind, sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, object of mind as well as the consciousness of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.” In the Heart Sutra, it said there are no such things. But Dogen Zenji says that they are prajna because they are empty. They are impermanent and egoless. Everything is prajna itself.

“Also there are four instances of prajna, that is, suffering, it’s cause, cessation and the path to cessation.” Again Dogen Zenji changed what the Heart Sutra said. He said those are four instances of prajna.

And Dogen Zenji continued: “Also there are six instances of prajna: generosity, pure precepts, calm, patience, diligence, quiet meditation and wisdom; those are six paramitas. And there is also a single instance of prajna manifesting itself right now, that is, unsurpassable, complete, perfect awakening (*annutara samyak sambodhi*). And also there are three instances of prajna, past, present and future.” Time is also prajna.

“There are six instances of prajna: earth, fire, water, wind, space and consciousness.” Those six are the elements of all beings.

“And also four instances of prajna are going on daily, that is, walking, standing, sitting and lying down.” This means that everything we do is prajna.

We can see the difference of expression between the Heart Sutra and Dogen Zenji. But we can see that the essence of the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha, the Heart Sutra and Dogen is exactly the same. Expression seems contradictory or paradoxical or even opposite, but the reality Shakyamuni Buddha, the Heart Sutra and Dogen Zenji are trying to show is the same thing. The characteristic of Dogen Zenji’s teaching is not “thinking” but “practice” as action. We should encounter everything as prajna itself.



Lecture at Chapel Hill Zen Group, NC. Nov.1997

In the very end of the *Maka Hannya Haramitsu* Dogen Zenji says: “Therefore Buddha-bhagavat is itself prajna paramita. Prajna paramita is nothing other than all beings.” Each and everything is prajna paramita because “All these things are empty in form, without arising or extinguishing, neither defiled nor pure, neither increasing nor decreasing.” We cannot grasp at anything with our discrimination such as good or bad, defiled or pure, or increasing or decreasing. We cannot control them, grasp at them or cling to them. We have to open our hand.

“Actualizing this prajna paramita is to actualize buddha baghavat.” We should actualize this prajna paramita and that is the actualization of Buddha.

And he said: “Inquire into it! Practice it! Making offerings and prostrations to [prajna paramita] is attending and serving buddha- baghavat.” Everything is prajna paramita. We should inquire into everything-inquire means we have to try to see the reality of each being because everything is reality. Because everything is reality, everything is prajna. This prajna paramita is Buddha. We have to inquire into it and we have to practice it. How can we awake to the reality of impermanence and egolessness or emptiness? How can we actualize it through our actions and practice in each situation in our daily lives? We should inquire into it.

I am talking now. I hope my talk is the expression of impermanence and egolessness, but if I make a mistake and I cling to my egocentric idea and I just talk about myself and my understanding and try to push my understanding on to you, then this is not an expression of prajna. My talk has become

an expression of my ego. I try not to do so but I'm not sure. Please don't trust me. You have to be really free from what I'm talking and you have to inquire into it by yourself and you have to practice it by yourself. What I'm talking is only my understanding from my reading, practice and my daily life.

The final sentence is: "*Attending and serving [all beings] is itself buddha baghavat.*" This practice; attending all beings whatever we encounter is our practice. When I prepare meals in the kitchen, cooking is my expression of prajna. Water, fire, food ingredients etc. are all prajna. That means Buddha. We have to really, deeply appreciate and revere everything we encounter. That is the basic teaching of Dogen Zenji. So not only sitting in the Zendo or studying in the classroom, but also working in the kitchen or garden or whatever should be the expression of prajna paramita. That is the essence of Dogen's teaching.

Genjokoan

In the first sentence of *Genjokoan*, Dogen zenji says: "*When all dharmas are the Buddhadharma there is delusion and realization, practice, life and death, Buddhas and living beings*". This is what Buddha actually taught. This is Buddha dharma. We have to accept it, understand it and inquire into it.

The second sentence: "*When all dharmas are not fixed self, there's no delusion and no realization, no Buddhas and no living beings, no birth and no perishing.*" I think this is what the Heart Sutra says.

"*Since the buddha way by nature goes beyond [the dichotomy of] abundance and deficiency there is arising and perishing, delusion and realization, living beings and Buddhas.*"

The side of abundance (arising, realization, buddhas) is positive and the side of deficiency (perishing, delusion and living beings) is negative. When we understand Buddha's teaching with our common sense, it seems samsara is not good so we want to escape from it and reach nirvana. We understand Buddha's teaching in the same way as "we don't like poverty therefore we work hard and then become rich." Practice becomes a step to nirvana in the same way that working hard is a step to becoming rich.

We think that we are deluded. Because we are ignorant our life becomes suffering. We should eliminate our ignorance, then we can reach nirvana. That is the common understanding of Buddha's teaching. If we simply accept that teaching and try to practice to eliminate ignorance and egocentric desires, if we really devote our life to that practice we will find that it's really impossible. Not only impossible but also it creates another samsara. Because the desire to become free from delusion or egocentricity is a part of our delusion and egocentricity. And the idea that there is nirvana or samsara separately is a basic dualistic illusion. The desire to escape from this side and enter this other side is actually another expression of egocentric desire.

If we are really in nirvana we should awaken to the fact that nirvana and samsara are not two separate things. This is what Mahayana Buddhism, especially Prajna Paramita Sutra wants to say. Samsara and Nirvana are one. If we don't find nirvana within samsara there's no place we can find nirvana. If we

don't find peacefulness within our busy daily lives there's no place where we can find peacefulness. This is why the Heart Sutra negates all those things to release us from dichotomies created in our thoughts. If we understand Buddha's teaching with our common and calculating way of thinking, we create another samsara. Eventually we feel more pain. Our life becomes more difficult because of our desire to reach nirvana. This is another cause of suffering. This is why the Heart Sutra says everything in a negative way.

We have to be free from this desire. Then, again, if we think about this Mahayana teaching with our egocentered calculating mind, we think simply that we don't need to practice. If samsara and nirvana are really one thing why do we have to practice? There's no reason to practice. This is another kind of misguided idea derived from Mahayana teaching. Because everything is reality and all things have Buddha nature, everything is all right. We have no problem. Just live as we want. That's all. That's nirvana.

That is not what Mahayana teachers wanted to say. But such an idea was very popular in Japan at the time of Dogen Zenji. According to his biography, Dogen Zenji had a question about this point. If all beings have buddha-nature, why buddhas and ancestors had to arouse bodhi-mind and practice?

I think Dogen's answer for his own question was: "Just practice: not because we want to escape from samsara, not because we want to reach nirvana but just practice right now right here. Then nirvana is already here." Of course samsara is still there. So within this practice, at this moment, both nirvana and samsara are present.

This is the meaning of just practice and just sit. In Japanese the expression "shikan", just do, without thinking that "I don't like samsara so I'm practicing then I can go to nirvana in the future." This is a story we create. As long as we practice within that story there's no time we can reach there. When we just open our hand and face whatever we encounter, then we can really truly find basic peacefulness. We don't need to escape from here and we don't need to go somewhere else, but just live right now right here, with mindfulness. Then we can find the way to live in nirvana within samsara.

Buddha Way

These first three paragraphs in *Genjokoan* are a summary of Dogen's understanding of the essential teaching of Buddhism-including Buddha's teaching and Mahayana teaching and in the third sentence he puts those teachings in our actual concrete day to day practice. So in the first two sentences he said: "Buddha-dharma, all dharmas" but in the third sentence he says: "since the buddha way." He is talking about the Buddha way, that is, our practice.

In the first sentence, there is "practice". In the second and third sentence there is no practice. This means that this whole sentence is about "practice" as the Buddha way. This is my understanding of these three paragraphs in the context of Buddha's teaching.

GRAFTING NEW SHOOTS ONTO AN OLD TREE

Rev. Tonen Sara O'Connor
Milwaukee Zen Center



Since I am a dendoshi living in the Midwest, far from both Japan and the California headquarters of the Soto Zen Education Center, it came as a pleasant surprise to be asked to articulate a response to the introductory issue of DHARMA EYE.

First, let me say that I am grateful that DHARMA EYE exists and seems willing to open up serious dialogue concerning the relationship between Japanese Soto Zen and American Soto Zen. We need a forum for communication in which frank discussion can take place. From the standpoint of one whose understanding has been limited to rumor and innuendo, it is a relief to receive a publication which assists my understanding of the issues at hand.

It seems to me that we are struggling to untangle the thorny questions surrounding the tension between tradition/new growth, Japanese culture/American culture and organizational hierarchy/individual independence. Hidden within this tangle lies the root problem, which should be recognizable to us as followers of the Buddha Way the ego's drive to power. Much of what is being expressed by many of the writers is really a veiled reference to "Who's in charge here?"

I'd like to digress for a moment to relate something that I experienced last summer during the angō at Shōgoji, where the Japanese teachers and staff were struggling to give the international participants an understanding of the full breadth of traditional Soto ritual and practice, all within the span of a short ten weeks. The result was a concentrated immersion in what seemed to me to be an infinite and sometimes exasperating multitude of details. The only way to survive without drowning was to just let go of self and swim like mad.

Shōhaku Okumura was present as a visiting lecturer, and one evening, at a meeting of the angō trainees, his presence encouraged me to ask, "what is the function of tradition?" His reply was that tradition is like a very large, very old tree with very deep roots. Sometimes it seems almost dead, but if we are very lucky it will produce vigorous new shoots. I thought, yes, and it is up to those of us from other countries to graft those new shoots onto the old tree. And furthermore, if we just sprinkle seeds helter-skelter into isolated locations, with no contact with the old tree, they may grow but will not necessarily be as strong.

I relate this story because it seems to me that this first issue of DHARMA EYE recognizes the dilemma posed by growth and change. The question is whether we define growth as division. If we are not divided in our purpose, we can

comfortably be different. But the tenor of many articles made me wonder whether we have yet truly embraced a common purpose, or whether we are primarily giving in to posturing based on both institutional and individual egos.

The greetings from Sotoshu officials make it clear that they hope for meaningful collaboration with their American counterparts, but they also use with considerable frequency the word "propagation", which hints at control of the "official" Soto Zen. On the other hand, Rev. Sojun Mel Weitsman writes of the incorporation of the Soto Zen Buddhist Association to bring together "those who have legitimate Dharma Transmission" (limited to Americans.) Then, he says, "We can decide as a group what our relationship will be with the Soto Zen Kaikyoshi Center." (One assumes that by this he means the Soto Zen Education Center.)

Which brings me to what I believe is a genuine sticking place within Soto Zen in America - the different designations for those trained in Japan (*kaikyoshi*) and in the US (*dendokyoshi*). There is a definite hierarchical difference here, and a definite problem. It would be most helpful if these two terms could be done away with and a new training program established which would create a form of certification for Soto Zen teachers which provided, for all those involved, a combination of grounding in the history and literature of Buddhism and real experience within both traditions, Japanese and American.

Finally, I think that we must define our most important goal. I cannot think that it is to assert our egos. Rather, it must be a serious intention to further the teaching of Dogen Zenji and the practice of Soto Zen in the United States. It is only a tireless commitment to the practice and spread of the Dharma that will overcome our differences and make possible true partnership.

I'd like to close with two of my favorite quotes from this issue of DHARMA EYE. The first is taken from Shōhaku Okumura's lecture on *Genjokoan*:

"We have to think how we can serve the whole community in the best way, and yet we should do it as our own personal action with our own responsibility. We are completely independent persons and yet we are 100% part of the community. How can we actualize both sides within one action? That is the really basic point of our lives."

The second is from Sojun Mel Weitsman's comments:

"My hope is that by remaining open and straightforward with each other, shining light in all directions so that there are no corners and no shadows, we can establish that confidence. In this way the benefits can flow both ways without hindrance."

I am glad that DHARMA EYE is here and enjoyed the variety of its contents. It is particularly satisfying that a serious article on *Genjokoan* was included and I hope that this practice will continue. It is also my hope that DHARMA EYE will become a vehicle for wide-ranging discussion among a wide variety of followers of the Soto Zen Way.

*Letter from Rev. Seishi So
Tenryoji Fukui, Japan*

I memorize the faces of the staff of the Soto Zen Education Center. I imagine you are diligently practicing in the Buddha Way. I have received your newsletter and read it repeatedly.

Word and letters brought about beyond human thoughts sometimes become wondrous dharma words and they shake and stimulate the soul of human beings. Such words allow us to deepen our faith and make it renewed and reestablished each time we listen to them or read them. After many years, such words of dharma help us to mature as the true self. Such words show us true existence of human beings which is beyond the difference of individual experiences, system of values and the trend of the thoughts of nations.

I hope the Dharma Eye becomes more and more rich and solid in its content and publishes more issues to spread Dharma to a broader community. This newsletter is necessary today. Since Soto Zen Education Center has excellent staff now, I hope this newsletter will continue to be published for a long time even though you will have to go through many difficulties. Even though I just caught a glimpse of the difficulty Kaikyoshis have to experience while practicing outside of Japan, I can imagine how hard it is to publish a newsletter within such a difficult day to day conditions.

However, for those many way-seekers in USA who have pure and enthusiastic aspiration in Buddha Way, please continue to offer guidelines to arouse awakening mind.

News from the Soto Zen Sanghas

Former Bishop Kenko Yamashita Roshi passed away on Friday, February 20th, 1998, at his home in Altadena, California, of infirmities of old age. He was eighty eight years old. We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to Rev. Yamashita for his long-time effort for the dharma in the U.S.A. as the Bishop and the head priest of Zenshuji Soto Mission. Rev. Yamashita's funeral was held at Zenshuji on March 1st with five officiants. Many guests came from Japan and various parts of U.S.A..

We are very sorry to learn that Sensei Sandra Jishin Holmes, wife of Roshi Bernard Tetsugen Glassman passed away on Friday, March 21, 1998, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, of a heart attack. She was fifty six years old.

Rev. Ikki Nambara was installed as the resident priest of Sokoji Soto Mission in San Francisco. His installation ceremony was held on March 8th, 1998.

Japanese Soto Zen temple children between age of 7 to 17 years old visited Yokoji Zen Mountain Center and Soto Zen Administrative Office and Zenshuji Soto Mission to learn about Soto Zen practice in America, on March 25th through 29th, 1998.

Soto Zen Education Center Activity Schedule (April to October, 1998)

APRIL 12, MAY 24, JULY 19, SEPTEMBER 13, OCTOBER 25.

Dharma Study Group (text: Shobogenzo Genjo-koan) led by Rev. Shohaku Okumura at Zenshuji in Los Angeles, CA, at 10:30 A.M.. For more information call SZEC (213) 617-0100.

MAY 16

Lecture series on Buddhism by Rev. Daien Bennage at Mount Equity Zendo in Muncy Pennsylvania. (717) 546-2784.

JUNE 1-3

Soto Zen Ministers Conference at San Francisco Zen Center in S.F., CA.

JUNE 5-12

Gathering of Soto Sangha Sesshin at Hokyoji in Minnesota.

For more information and registration, call Minnesota Zen Meditation Center: (612) 822-5313

JULY 12

Lecture series on Buddhism at Long Beach Buddhist Church in Long Beach, CA. Lecture by Taiken Yokoyama.

For information call Long Beach Buddhist Church: (562) 426-4014.

AUGUST 1

Lecture series on Buddhism at the Monterey Bay Zen Center in Carmel, CA.. Lecture by Rev. Shohaku Okumura.

Call Santa Cruz Zen Center ;(408) 457-0206.

SEPTEMBER 26-27

Lecture series on Buddhism at Shasta Abbey in Mount Shasta, CA.

Lecture by Rev. Daien Bennage. Call Shasta Abbey: (530) 926-4208.

OCTOBER 11

Lecture series on Buddhism at Zen Center of Los Angeles, LA, CA.

Lecture by Rev. Shohaku Okumura. Call ZCLA: (213) 387-2351.

OCTOBER 15-21

Gathering of Soto Sangha Sesshin at Tassajara Zen Mountain Center.

This sesshin will be limited to those who have an experience of at least one 7-day sesshin.

For information call Rev. Kokai Roberts at San Francisco Zen Center: (415) 863-3136.