



SOTO ZEN JOURNAL

# DHARMA EYE

News of Soto Zen Buddhism: Teachings and Practice

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## A Greeting

**Rev. Issho Fujita**

Director, Soto Zen Buddhism  
International Center

I cannot find no words to properly express the sorrow I feel for each and every victim of Great East Japan Earthquake. I also would like to extend my heartfelt sympathy to all the people affected by that disaster, I sincerely hope that they will be able to gather themselves up from deep sadness and great fear very soon.

More than seven months have passed since the nuclear accident at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Stations happened in Fukushima Prefecture. But the situation is still far from settlement. We will have a long and difficult way to go until we are freed from fear of radioactive contamination and exposure. In that process we will inevitably have to radically re-examine our high-energy-consuming lifestyle. For that, profound wisdom and strong courage are very much needed. I believe that we should go beyond the blind faith and overconfidence in science and technology as before, make our best effort to seriously dig deep into the groundwater of Buddhist tradition and draw up what should be drawn up for this situation. In that sense we, as Buddhists, will have much greater and heavier responsibility to build a brighter future. With the increased awareness of this, let us keep walking firmly on the path of Buddhist practice together.

Sotoshu Shumuchu has received many con-

tributions for the people in Japan who have been going through unprecedented adversity as a result of the Great East Japan Earthquake. These contributions have been put into the “Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Relief Fund”. The monetary donation gathered through four Sotoshu regional offices in Hawaii, North America, South America and Europe has run up to 31,542,923 yen (as of October 25, 2011). I want to take this opportunity to give special thanks to all of you who showed great compassion and inspiring support.

On October 4th, we held “Soto Zen Buddhism International Symposium” at Tokyo Grand Hotel under the theme of “Advance One Step Further - Soto Zen Opens the Way to the Future,” hosted by Soto Zen Buddhism International Center, and sponsored by Sotoshu Shumuchu, Daihonzan Eihei-ji, Daihonzan Sojiji, Soto Zen Buddhism Hawaii, North America, South America and Europe offices. In spite of our concern about the negative impact of the disaster, thanks to the care and support from many people, we had as many as 67 participant priests and practitioners from outside Japan. We had also more than 160 participants from various places in Japan. In this symposium we had Prayer for World Peace Ceremony, Keynote Lecture, International Dissemination Presentation, Panel Discussion, International Joint Statement, and International Gathering.

On October 5th, a group from outside Japan had a Sotoshu Shumuchu tour and visited to Chokokuji, Tokyo branch temple of Daihonzan Eihei-ji. After that, we attended



“Public Symposium in commemoration of 100th Anniversary of Relocation of Daihonzan Sojiji” presented by Sojiji at Fukazawa Campus of Komazawa University. And then, we went to Daihonzan Sojiji to stay.

On October 6th, after morning zazen, we offered incense at a Memorial Service for deceased Kaikyoshi and Kokusaifukyoshi and the special ceremony for 100th Anniversary of the Relocation of Daihonzan Sojiji. In the latter ceremony Rev. Dosho Saikawa, the Director of the Soto Zen Buddhism South America Office, officiated as an incense-burning master on behalf of all directors of four Sotoshu regional offices.

Our International Center have never organized such a big event in Japan before and we had many concerns about our ability to carry through it. But it turned out to be very successful to our great joy. We really appreciate all the support and help from many individuals and organizations involved.

We have been sending out Dharma Eye both in print and PDF up to the last issue of No. 27. But from the current issue, we deliver Dharma Eye only in PDF at Sotozen-net. ([global.sotozen-net.or.jp](http://global.sotozen-net.or.jp))

I wish you continue to be regular readers as before.



Soto Zen Buddhism International Symposium

## At the Disaster-stricken Area

**Rev. Kiko Tatedera**  
Sokoji, California, U.S.A.

On March 11, 2011, there was a severe earthquake of magnitude 9.0, with the seismic center offshore of Miyagi Prefecture. What followed was a giant tsunami that overwhelmed the northeastern Pacific coast of Japan with waves of a severity not seen in recent years. The town where I was born, Minamisanriku-town in Miyagi Prefecture, received the force of the giant waves directly, leaving the town in a state of ruin. My teacher's temple, Shinryu-in, was hit by a twenty-meter high wave. The main hall, gate, bell tower, members' hall with kitchen, garage—all were washed away and lost, totally destroyed. Our family's living quarters also received major damage.

I flew from San Francisco upon hearing word of the earthquake and rushed to meet up with my brother who had been in Tokyo. It wasn't until the sixth day after the disasters that we were finally able to enter Minamisanriku-town. The Tohoku Expressway was completely closed to traffic, and other routes were giving priority to emergency vehicles, so we left from Niigata Prefecture and entered Sendai-city through Yamagata Prefecture.

Even though this was our hometown, these roads through the mountains were ones we had almost never used. There was a total power outage and the loss of ability to use our cell phones, but as we passed through towns and

scenery that seemed relatively untouched by the earthquake, we felt some reassurance.

However, the moment we reached the edge of

where the tsunami had hit, the scene that unfolded before our eyes left us completely speechless. The entirety of the fields—which had been far from the shore—had been turned into a mountain of rubble. As far as the eye could see, destroyed houses, cars, boats—aside from a road that had been manually cleared, it looked just like the site of an aerial attack. Thinking of my teacher's temple near the sea and the surrounding community, I was overwhelmed with anxiety. As I feared, the shopping area and buildings around it had been swept away, as had nearly everything around my teacher's temple. With the exception of just a few buildings on high ground, it was total destruction.



Mountain gate and Buddha hall destroyed by tsunami



Damaged guest room

The Kesennuma-train-line that followed the coastline had been pulled up from the ground the track itself was torn off, and as for the station, nothing remained of its original shape. The national and prefectural roads along the coast had been pulled apart at the foundations. Furthermore, the asphalt had been peeled off; the roadways were not in any way usable. The smell in the air was a bizarre mix of rubble and sludge, a smell I will never forget.

In these tragic circumstances, in this sadness, there was the consolation that my parents and those in the neighborhood around teacher's temple had all been able to evacuate. When I met my parents again and we wept together, rejoicing that we were all right, I felt a sense of relief that words cannot describe. We just kept crying out in our mind, "Good! This was good!" or sometimes unconsciously uttered it.

But the news we received—about the town as a whole, about my classmates and seniors and juniors, about some of the member families of our temple—came in the form of terrifying numbers, both of those who had died and those whose whereabouts were unknown. We received no word regarding our aunts and uncles who lived in Kesennuma-city, to the north of my town and in Ishinomaki-city, to the south, nor did we have any means of investigating where they might be. (In the days that followed, however, we were able to verify that they were all right.)

For a month and a half after arriving, we threw ourselves into the demolition of the crumbled temple buildings, removal of rubble,

and cleaning of those buildings that barely remained standing. Being a monk, I was also called on to chant sutras for cremation services in towns far away.

I am so thankful to those temple members who, though their homes had been washed away and they were forced to live in evacuation shelters, assisted with removing the rubble and restoring the temple to functionality. Even with so little control over their day-to-day lives, our neighbors made the repair work of the temple a priority, and for that, I feel deep gratitude.

I say "recovery work," but the electricity and water supplies had been completely cut, so at the start we suffered from a severe shortage of both water and fuel. We cut the rain gutters and placed buckets below, then used the water that collected for cleaning. The weather was still bitterly cold, so we had to break through a top layer of ice before we could soak and wring out the t-shirts and towels we used for cleaning. The rescue helicopters flew overhead every day, continuously, and from the hill one could see that on the inlet, where usually there were lots of floaters for aqua farming, there were now escort vessels of the Self Defense Forces docked, and around them were anchored fishing boats that had survived—only with no port. Over the coast near the temple, helicopters flew low, searching for those who were missing. And every day, we had to take caution in the midst of both major and minor aftershocks.

In this atmosphere in which one might tend to lose sight of reality, I concentrated on the day when my parents might once again be



able to live in the temple, and I focused my efforts on the work in front of me.

Amidst all this, what I felt thankful for, what gave me strength, was the presence of the monks who came from all around to offer aid. The monks who had trained at the same time as me and my brother at Eiheiiji and Sojiji, with whom we had sat in zazen, alongside whom we had slept, those with whom we ate the rice from the same pan, as well as other monks from throughout the region—all assisted in the recovery work, and treated our temple with the same concern as if it was their own. They helped not just with the manual labor at the temple, but also with the work of distributing food and provisions to evacuees. In seeing this, it was impossible not to feel the priceless karmic connections that we share.

Every morning, at daybreak, we went to the local irrigation well to get water, then boiled it over a flame in pots outdoors—in such circumstances, the question of how to use limited water efficiently was a very important thing. I spoke at that time with my teacher and was embarrassed to feel that I understood—only then, for the first time—Dogen’s admonition of “For every scoop of water, return half to the river.” It was thanks to the cooperation of the Self-Defense Forces and the people of the waterworks department in other prefectures, because of their water rationing, and because of the material support that came from all over the world, that the situation was able to gradually improve.

At the start of May, we still didn’t have running water or electricity, but we had completed

the first step of eliminating the rubble around the temple. It was then possible for my parents to finally return to temple life, and so, by my own choice, I returned to San Francisco.

At the end of July, Minamisanriku-town (including my teacher’s temple, Shinryu-in) has seen the return of electricity, running water, and phone lines—finally, the town is moving in the direction of true renewal. It is no exaggeration to say that this could not have been achieved without the support of the whole country and the entire world. I will not forget my gratitude for that support. I feel that for those of us who survived, it is our responsibility, in our collective mourning for those who were sacrificed, to move forward as a community, one step at a time.

Speaking personally, it was thanks to the support I received from Sokoji and from all of you that I was able to put my efforts into the work of rebuilding following the disasters. Looking at what remains to be done, I do think there is a long road ahead, but I also feel that doing what I can, not withholding—this is the practice of personally offering something back to those precious karmic connections from which I have so benefited.



Rev. Kiko Tatedera and his master are chanting sutras at a disaster-stricken area.

## Prayer

### Ms. Miki Onosaki

Temple Family of Dougen-in,  
Ishinomaki-city, Miyagi Prefecture

Everyone, I am so pleased that you are all safe and sound after going through so much.

For myself, I never imagined that I would be living out days and months such as these, so full of life and death—days of just surviving moment to moment as mother to a family of four hundred precious lives.

The earthquake on March 11, at 2:46p.m., was a magnitude of 9.0, a super-catastrophic event. In an instant, amidst total destruction, we found ourselves seeking each other out, following screams through the chaos. While the earth shook so severely, *Hojo-san* [Dougen-in's abbot] ran to check on the *hondo*. "It's OK! The altar Buddha is OK! Come on! Everyone will run to us here, so straighten up!" That's right. It was exactly one year since the Chile earthquake and tsunami when about 150 local people came seeking shelter. Right. People will come here. We have to straighten up. I settled my 96-year old mother down in her bed, then grabbed a broom and a dustpan, and put a bundle of large garbage bags on my back; as soon as I did, I saw our cat, *Ohana*, in the kitchen, her eyes rolling over and dizzy. Ah—this is *Ohana* dying. "*Ohana, Ohana*"—I called her name while the earth shook. So she'd be with me, I held her to my chest and wrapped waist with packaging string threefold so that

*Ohana* would not fall down, then began cleaning. Like fast-forwarding an animated movie....

They're coming, they're coming—they're already arriving. Ten minutes hadn't even passed yet.

"Ah, my grandma has not yet come!"

"Ah! Look at that wave! It's washing the house away!"

"The wave is over the pine trees!"

"Over there! You can't even see the processing factory!"

"The boats have been pulled all the way in to the fields!"

"Look! The wave is over the Tachi bridge!"

"People are climbing on the roofs!"

"In the water! There are people swimming!"

Creak...creak...CRASH! "Aaaaa--help! Quickly, HELP!"

The tsunami attacked relentlessly—second waves, then third waves. Every time the floor shook from the earthquake, there were waves of black mud mixed with rubble.

"This is hell! It's hell! We're in hell! Let's get out of here!"

"Eh!? Where will you go? If the temple isn't safe, nowhere is safe!"

"Maybe, but—"

"No but!"

"There is no place to go!"

The earthquake was one thing, but the scale of the tsunami was so enormous that there is just no way of describing it. What were

houses, what was a town, what was a coastline, the people we knew—all of them were picked up and tossed around as if by the hand of a giant. They were crushed and torn in the giant's teeth. They were kicked through the air by the giant's huge feet. What can a person do?

The temple buildings leaned to one side, and because the ground sank, there was a hole in the entryway stairs. Tiles had fallen from the roof, and rain leaked in. Because of walls had fallen away, one could see the outside. There were cracks in the ground; the stone wall on the back hill had shifted and moved closer to the temple. The gate was at a tilt, the thirty-three Avalokiteshvaras had fallen all over, and *Niou-sama* [two guardian Deva kings] balanced in space on one leg.

And then there are all of you, this large family. Urn storage had opened up in our members' graves and, the gravestones had flown away and fallen like dominos, the garden lanterns had smashed and rolled away, bones from urns scattered everywhere....

In Ishinomaki-city a 6.20 million tons mountain of rubble was left—comparing that to the 1.35 million tons in Sendai-city gives some sense of the huge extent of the damage. In Miyagi Prefecture, of the 14,000 people counted as dead or missing, 5,500 were in Ishinomaki-city. By April 10, word of forty-five deaths came to Dougen-in (we couldn't use the phone until June 15). Some visitors to the temple arrived with their hands wrapped up in layers of floating plastic bags and twined with floating strings, pushing their way through the

rubble to bring us news. They came to the temple and saw *Hojo-san's* face, and the stories of family members dying and the suffering they've endured spilled out from their mouths like the tsunami itself.



Watanoha Area, Ishinomaki-city,  
Right after the tsunami.

The number of evacuees increased and increased; by the third and fourth day following the disasters, the number had come close to four hundred, so that the temple space became packed full. In response, Dougen-in and the neighboring San Juan Bautista Museum shared the burden of offering shelter. Meals were prepared using the Dougen-in kitchen—the evacuees chose cooks from amongst themselves who, working and sharing together in harmony, prepared meals every morning and evening. The sound of the children happily shouting "*Itadakimasu!*" was a kind of salvation for us all.

From infants to a second-year high school boy, there were twenty-five children evacuees immediately following the disasters. Seeing the children's shoes being trampled over by the adults' big shoes, I thought to myself that now, more than ever, is the time to practice the



teaching that “putting our shoes in order, we put our minds in order.” The children’s tiny hands went to work arranging the many pairs of totally mud-covered boots and athletic shoes.

We have received support from all over Japan, and we have also received warm messages of aid, encouragement, and loving concern from people across the ocean, in foreign countries. We received a group message of support from Hawaii. On paper the shape of cherry blossoms were written individual messages that brought warmth to the evacuees’ hearts. One person in Australia sent origami toys to the children evacuees. The children rejoiced at the warmth conveyed by these handmade gifts.

At Dougen-in, three days after the disasters, the evacuees prepared a resolution. All four hundred evacuees agreed to uphold eight tenets—a creed of daily life to foster mutual support and communication. This creed became a basis for regaining our energy.

#### Eight Promises for Living Cooperatively at Dougen-in

1. Let’s greet each other cheerfully.
2. Let’s arrange our shoes neatly, and maintain the mind of keeping things tidy and in order.
3. Whatever the circumstance, let’s compromise, cooperate, and be polite to one another.
4. When the weather is good, let’s spend time in the sun and take walks.
5. Let’s share even the smallest things.
6. Let’s help in every way we can.
7. Let’s maintain religious respect toward gods

and buddhas and never forget the mind of gratitude.

8. Let’s establish and uphold rules that support the life here .

At Dougen-in, from April 1, we began morning services alongside the evacuees. From small children to senior citizens, together, we held memorial services. Also from April 1, by *Hojo’s* decision—and in the same *hondo* in which the evacuees lived—we started to perform funerals.



Morning Service with evacuees

Both for those whose lives were lost and those whose whereabouts were unknown, we performed memorial services every seven days, monthly, to the hundredth day. On the forty-ninth day called “*Dairenki*,” we say that the departed begin their journey to the other shore. On the hundredth day called “*Sokkokuki*,” we cry as much as we can cry, and we take those tears as the basis for moving forward. On the forty-ninth day, the *hondo* overflowed with more than three hundred people, the bereaved families and evacuees together; on the hundredth day, more than four hundred came to offer their respects. It goes without saying that

for the families, this hundredth-day ceremony elicited special feeling in their hearts, but it was so not only for them, but for every one of us.

I have never before felt so strongly the importance of prayer.



Ms. Miki Onosaki

## Social work Soto Zen

**Rev. Shuei Diethelm**

Bendoji, Bern, Switzerland

I'm a social worker. I'm a Buddhist monk. I run a little temple in the capital of Switzerland, the Zenpozan Bendoji and I work as a social worker for the government of the city of Bern. I'm married, have children, have a degree in theology and trained as a Sotozen monk under the guidance of Kosen Nishiyama Roshi of the Daimanji in Sendai.

Social work is about providing shelter, bread, healthcare and support. Zen, Zazen is helping to get to the place, where one can say every day is a good day and that in each "here and now" there is no "not enough" and no "too much". Zen is providing a way of training or of lifestyle, which helps to go beyond gain and loss, shame and honour, good and evil, like and dislike.

If one faces evil, it is good to face evil. If one dies, it is good to die.

Facing evil, facing death is the miraculous way of "getting rid" of evil and death and is the way of the realization of nirvana. (Ryokan)

During my first 15 years working as a social worker, I worked very classically. Checking the needs of individuals or families for total or additional financial aid, analyzing the needs for therapy in cases of addiction, physical or mental illness and providing coaching for the unemployed.

I also helped clients with legal issues, supporting them to assert their rights when difficult situations with employers, insurances or house owners were present.

With time I developed special skills for dealing with exceptionally aggressive and bad tempered people. I experienced many situations where the skill of de-escalation and/or escalation was needed.

Three years ago, I was chosen by my employer to be a social inspector. This involved checking on clients, to see if the information they gave us in respect to their employment, financial situation, physical and/or psychological condition was correct and to try and ascertain if they were deceiving us, in other words a search for the truth.

On a daily basis I must check whether the clients are living together or alone and whether they are working or not. This creates many difficult situations in which I often have to deal with aggressive and threatening behavior, even to the point where my own family has been threatened.



Instuction of zazen

Although I'm still a social worker, due to the focus on investigation it now entails, my work has become similar to the work of a policeman.

My practice of meditation is not different from my daily life as an inspector, father or husband. Every moment is one of the countless gates to the truth. My sitting in Zazen is not the most holy thing I do in my life. There is no need to flee my work, my family and search for nirvana, because work and family themselves are already nirvana.

One basic axiom of Buddhist teaching is that everything co-arises inter-dependently. Based on this, it is quite clear, that every action is penetrating everything and has beside the intended and aimed for effect an additional effect on everything and everyone for whom the action was not meant for or aimed at. Whatever I do, is, although I wish to have control over it, out of my control from the very beginning. It doesn't matter, whether an action is a planned one or not. Even when I claim that my action is based on my idea, I must clearly realize, that my action and my idea is not really mine as it too co-arises interdependently and that, the idea of "I" as an "individual" can therefore not be upheld as being something real. This struck me most heavily, when I was studying Soto Zen.

Based on this Karma (=action) is always a social phenomenon. Actually there is nothing else than Karma. Karma is just another word for "strawberry" or "Bodhidharma". I hardly ever think that Karma is something individual. I think the interpretation of Karma as something individual is very vulgar and has been a cause of



much suffering. One can say, if Karma is not individual, that no one can be blamed as being responsible for a certain action. That is right, even it confuses us! We are always told to take responsibility for our actions. However, the idea of being able to take responsibility for something or someone is a matter of inflated ego just like the idea of one person being personally enlightened.

There is enlightenment however no enlightened!

We normally say, that we have Karma. Nevertheless I believe we must consider this “we have Karma” as wrong. No one can possess action. Our identity is only ongoing mutually interpenetrating action. It is totally impossible to possess something. There is death but no death, there is birth but no one born there is stealing but no one robbed, there is murder but no one is killed.

Every moment of action is, no matter whether it tastes good or bad, nirvana. “*bonno soku buppo*”. We are Karma, we are action without inner core or substance. Only an ongoing process of changes, were nothing is gained or lost. A world, were nothing is to be swept or polished.

Based on this groundless ground, I do my daily work and go about my daily life without reason. Conscious, that by “my” actions “I” mutually interpenetrate every sentient and not sentient being. Nothing belongs to me, nor to anyone else. We are accustomed to remember. We are our own personal historians. We iden-

tify ourselves with some actions and with others not. By this we construct our self. If we identify, then we must identify with all sentient and none sentient beings, which means we must identify with all kinds of actions.

There are the two healthy ways to look at our selves and the world. One, if nothing belongs to us, we are freed of everything even of ourselves and can find freedom. Two, if we can identify with everything there is no thirst or lack. In the first way everything will be taken. In the second way everything will be given.

If Dogen Zenji advises us to identify with others and in its extreme form with everything, then this is only possible by forgetting one self and by dropping one’s own body and mind. This doesn’t lead to an inflation of the ego or the self. It is not a process where everything becomes part of us. It is a process where we become part of everything. This means it is the process of becoming the servant of all beings. This is the way of a bodhisattva.

The very cause of our suffering is, that we have much self-consciousness. Every emotion makes us conscious of our self. In psychotherapy often the therapist quotes, that the suffering is caused, because a person lacks self-consciousness. However the feeling of sadness or of joy makes us conscious of our self and through this we are blinded and get drunk, lose orientation, lose the contact to others and think we are something special.

The art of helping based on these ideas is, not to go against the ego of oneself and of

others nor to flatter the ego of oneself and of others by admiring or even worse worshipping it. It is the art of ignorance or letting go. By doing social work, I do not wish to create a better world as I do not try to become a Buddha by doing Zazen.

The bodhisattva is active in all of the six worlds and this not as a master of this six worlds. He is the servant who helps the masters and all the inhabitants of the six worlds to overcome their prison of centeredness and of concentration. This means in other words, helping to overcome egocentrism, group centrism (whether in the family or in religious community) and any kind of nationalism.

Sartre gave us once following words: “l’enfer c’est les autres” the hell is the others. Lets change this by saying the hell is me “l’enfer c’est moi”. Suddenly we might be able to say “l’enfer c’est ni moi ni les autres” The hell is neither the me nor the others.

Only recently I was, as many others were, collecting money for Japan with my *shakuhachi*.



Practicing *shakuhachi*



## The 22nd Chapter of *Shobogenzo: Zenki* (Total Function) Lecture (1)

Rev. Shohaku Okumura  
Sanshinji, Indiana, U.S.A.

When and Where *Zenki* was Written.

*Shobogenzo Zenki* is the 22nd fascicle of the 75-fascicle version *Shobogenzo*. According to its colophon, this short fascicle was presented not at his monastery but at the residence of his main patron, Yoshishige Hatano located in the neighborhood of a temple named Roku-haramitsuji (Six Paramitas Temple). This is a unique fascicle among the *Shobogenzo* collections because the main audience was lay people, particularly warriors. The topic of this fascicle is life and death that is suitable for samurai, the worriers. *Shobogenzo Shoji* (Life and Death) has the same quality.

Rokuharamitsuji was founded by the famous Pureland Buddhist master Kuya in the 10th century, located near from Kamo River in the eastern part of Kyoto city called Rokuhara. At the time of Dogen, the branch office of the Kamakura shogunate government was located in this area and Hatano was one of the high officials as a member of the supreme court called hyojoshu within the office. This location was also very close from Kenninji monastery where Dogen practiced for 6 years from 1217 with his teacher Myozen until they went to China in 1223. He stayed at Kenninji again for 3 years right after returning from China in 1227. He left Kenninji and moved to Fukakusa in 1230 and established Koshoji in 1233. Fukakusa was outside of the city of Kyoto in

Dogen's time, but it was not far. It takes less than two hours by walk from his temple Koshoji to Rokuharamitsuji. In 1253, when Dogen passed away at his lay disciple, Kakunen's residence in Kyoto, his body was cremated at a place not so far from Kenninji. So, this area in Kyoto has important place in Dogen's life.

The presentation of *Zenki* was done on the 19th day of 12th lunar month in 3rd year of Ninji era (1242). In the 7th month of the next year (1243), right after they completed the 3-month summer practice period, Dogen and his assembly gave up Koshoji and moved out of Kyoto to Echizen (presently Fukui Prefecture) to found the new monastery later named Eiheiiji. Hatano Yoshishige was the lord of the area and he invited Dogen to locate the new monastery in his feudal estate. Dogen gave another presentation of *Shobogenzo Kobutsu-shin* (Old Buddha Mind) at Rokuharamitsuji on 29th day of the 4th lunar month in 1243, two and half month before he moved to Echizen. These two visits and presentations might have something to do with his moving out of Kyoto.

#### About the Title *Zenki* (Total Function)

Dogen took this expression, "*Zenki*" from Yuanwu Keqin (Engo Kokugon, 1063-1135)'s comment on a koan appeared in the Recorded Sayings of Yuanwu. The name of the koan in Blue Cliff Record (*Hekiganroku*) compiled by Yuanwu himself is "Daowu's Condolence Call." The story in the Recorded Saying is a little shorter than the one in Blue Cliff Record. The story is as follows:

Daowu and Jianyuan went to a house

to make a condolence call. Jianyuan tapped the coffin and asked, "Alive or dead?"

Daowu said, "I won't say alive, and I won't say dead."

Jianyuan said, "Why won't you say?"

Daowu said, "I won't say. I won't say."

Halfway back, as they were returning, Jianyuan said, "Please my teacher, tell me right away; if you don't tell me, I'll hit you."

Daowu said, "You may hit me if you wish, but I won't say."

Jianyuan then hit him.

Daowu Yuanzhi (Dogo Enchi, 769-835) was a disciple of Yaoshan Weiyao (Yakusan Igen, 751-834) and a Dharma brother of Yunyan Tansheng (Ungan Donjo, 780-841) the teacher of Dongshan Liangjie (Tozan Ryokai, 807-869) the founder of Caoding (Soto) School, one of the five schools of Chinese Zen. Jianyuan Zhongxing (Zengen Chuko, ?-?) was one of Daowu's Dharma heirs. Another Dharma heir of Daowu was Shishuang Qingzhu (Sekisho Keisho, 807-888) who appears in the other versions of this story. The abbot, Daowu and his disciple Jianyuan visited a lay supporter's house for condolence call. Jianyuan tapped the casket and asked to his teacher, "Is the person alive or dead?" Of course, Jianyuan did not doubt if the person in the casket was still alive or not. His question was what is life and death. The teacher Daowu simply repeated again and again, "I won't say." Jianyuan thought his teacher rejected to answer his question and finally got angry and beat his teacher.

On this story, Yuanwu Keqin commented:

How is it possible to climb up the



silver mountain and the iron wall. Tonight, this mountain monk will place a flower on the golden brocade. I would wide open [the barrier] and discuss this koan. Life is manifestation of the total function. Death is manifestation of the total function. Again and again, "I won't say. I won't say," is repeated. Within this place, since there is neither back nor front, we must accept it right here and now. Without being separated even one thread width, [life and death] fill the boundless empty space. Each and every bit and piece is unbarred red heart.

Yuanwu said this koan is a very difficult one like climbing up to the silver mountain or the iron wall. He would try to give his insight on this matter, however, his answer might be something meaningless same as putting a flower for decoration on the golden brocade that is already beautiful. Then he said, "Life is manifestation of the total function and death is manifestation of total function.(生也全機現、死也全機現)." Life and death are not two separate thing. Both are manifestation of total function (*Zenki*) of entire network of interdependent origination. Within this network, it is not possible to make separation between back and front and it penetrate the boundless empty space. There is no way to make distinction between life and death using words and concepts. When we are born nothing is added to the network of interdependent origination and when we die, nothing is taken out. Only thing we can do is accepting life and death as they are, here and now. When we live with such an attitude each moment, our practice in

each moment is nothing other than the expression of the total function as unbarred red sincere heart. That was the reason, Daowu repeated, "I won't say." He was not rejecting Jianyuan's question, but that was his precise answer to the question. There is no even one thread width separation by saying anything. But Jianyuan thought his teacher dismissed his question. This statement by Yuanwu on this story is the source of the expression, "*Zenki*", or total function Dogen uses in this fascicle.

### Development of the Koan Story

When I took a look at the *Shinji Shobogenzo*, Dogen Zenji's collection of three hundred koans, I found two different versions of this same story. I was curious why Dogen includes these two different versions within one collection. Then I tried to collect as many versions of this story as possible in Chinese Zen literature. It was interesting to me to see the process of development of this particular koan story. I think it is helpful to examine the process of the development, to see how Chinese Zen practitioners understood the meaning of this story.

The two different versions in the *Shinji Shobogenzo* are as follows:

#### Case 29. "Daowu Won't Say"

Jianyuan Zhongxing of Tan Province (a heir of Daowu), once accompanied Daowu visiting a family to offer condolence. As soon as they arrived, the master tapped the casket and said, "Alive or dead?" Daowu said, "I won't say alive. I won't say dead." The master said, "Why won't you say?" Daowu said, "I won't say. I won't say." On their way back, the master said, "High

Priest! You should immediately say it for me. If you don't say, I will hit you." Daowu said, "Hit me if you want, but I will not say." Jianyuan hit him several times. After returning to the monastery, Daowu said, "You should leave here. I am afraid when the temple officers know this you will be in trouble."

After Daowu passed away, the master visited Shishuang, brought up the story and asked for guidance. Shishuang said, "I won't say alive. I won't say dead." The master said, "Why won't you say?" Shishuang said, "I won't say. I won't say." Upon hearing this, the master immediately attained realization.

In this version, after Jianyuan hit Daowu, he left the monastery. Then Daowu passed away. He visited his elder Dharma brother Shishuang and asked his guidance. Shishuang repeated exactly the same thing Daowu said, "I won't say. I won't say." But this time Jianyuan immediately realize what it means.

Another version of the same story in Dogen's *Shinji Shobogenzo* is as follows:

Case 289. Daowu's "Alive or Dead"

Daowu visited a family with Jianyuan for a condolence call. Jianyuan tapped the casket and said, "Alive or dead?" The master said, "I won't say alive. I won't say dead." Jianyuan said, "Why won't you say?" The master said, "I won't say. I won't say." Jianyuan could not understand.

Later while staying at a certain place, he heard someone chanting the *Kannon-kyo*. It said, "To those who can be conveyed to deliverance by the body of bhiksu,

[Avalokitesvara] appears in the body of bhiksu and expound the Dharma." Hearing this, Jianyuan suddenly attained great realization.

In this version Jianyuan did not hit his teacher and he understood the meaning of Daowu's "I won't say," by himself when he heard someone chanting *Kannon-kyo*, The Sutra of Avalokiteshvara, the 25th chapter of the Lotus Sutra. He did not visit his Dharma brother Shishuang to seek the guidance. In this case, Avalokiteshvara is the symbol of the network of interdependent origination. Each and every thing appearing and disappearing, coming and going, being born, living and dying are the thousand hands and eyes of the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion. Avalokiteshvara manifests him/herself in many different forms as it is said in the *Kannon-kyo*. The dialogue between Daowu and his Dharma brother Yunyan about the thousand hands and eyes of Avalokiteshvara shows the same meaning. Dogen wrote a fascicle of *Shobogenzo Kannon* (Avalokiteshvara) and discussed in detail on the koan.

"Alive or Dead" in the Oldest Text

These two versions are very different. If one is true another must be made up. Or both of them were simply made up stories. I tried to find the older texts. As far as I know, the oldest text in which this story appear is the section of Jianyuan in vol. 6 of *Zutangji (Sodoshu)* compiled in 952. The story is again quite different from the later versions.

High Priest Jianyuan was a dharma heir of Daowu. His dharma name was Zhongxing. His biography is not available. The begin-

ning and end of his life is not known.

Once he accompanied Daowu to visit a house of a temple supporter. When he saw the casket, he hit it with his hand and asked, "Alive or dead?" Daowu said, "I won't say alive. I won't say dead." The master asked, "Why won't you say?" Daowu said, "I won't say! I won't say!"

The master did not consent and left [the monastery]. When he stayed overnight at Yangxi, at midnight he came to realization and had a good cry. When he returned to the temple, his master (Daowu) was delighted and came out the entrance to welcome him.

The master visited Shishuang. He took a hoe and walking back and forth in front of the dharma hall. Shishuang asked, "What are you doing?" The master said, "I am looking for relics of my late master." Shishuang said, "The flooding water spread the entire sky and has flowed away." The master said, "This is just where I should apply effort." Shishuang said, "In my place, there is no ground even to stick a needle. Where do you apply effort?"

Later Fu of Taiyuan said, "The late master's relics are still there."

In this oldest version, Jianyuan did not hit Daowu. He was not satisfied by his master's response and just left the monastery. And when he stayed a certain place named Yangxi, he realized Daowu's saying by himself. This is closer to the version of the case 289 in Dogen's 300 koans. But this version does not mention that Jianyuan heard the sentence from the *Kannon-kyo*, therefore how or what he realized is not

clear at all. That was added later to make the story clear. Then he went back to Daowu's monastery. Daowu was delighted by his returning and went to the temple entrance to welcome Jianyuan. The story is happy ending. Daowu was not beaten and he did not die. It seems that he was killed by the people who made the later version of the story. It seems to me that this first half of the story about the conversation between Daowu and Jianyuan and the later part about Jianyuan's visit to Shishuan after Daowu's death are two separate stories. But later some people made up one interesting story by combining these two parts as the material. To do so, they made Jianyuan hit his teacher, and killed Daowu before Jianyuan had realization. Then Shishuan taught Jianyuan the true meaning of their late teacher's answer. The story became more interesting and meaningful. But in that case, how Jianyuan can be considered to be Daowu's Dharma heir?

"Alive and Dead" in Jingde Chuandeng lu

A half century later, another collections of biographies of Zen Masters was compiled titled Jingde Chuandeng lu (*Keitoku Dentoroku*, the Record of Transmission of Lamp) in 1004. Within the volume 15 of the text, there is the section of Jianyuan.

Zen Master Jianyuan Zhongxing of Tan Province was tenzo in the assembly of Daowu. One day he accompanied Daowu on a condolence visit to a deceased supporter's house. The master slapped the casket with his hand and said, "Alive or dead?" Daowu said, "I won't say alive; I won't say dead." The master said, "Why



won't you say?" Daowu said, "I won't say. I won't say." After the visit, as they were returning, the master said, "High Priest, you must say today for Zhongxing. If you still not say, then I'll beat you up."

Daowu said, "Strike me if you'd like, but I won't say alive, I won't say dead."

The master finally hit Daowu several times. After returning to the temple, Daowu made the master leave, saying, "You had better go for a little while, because when the director finds out, he will beat you."

The master then bowed and left, and went to visit Shishuang. There he brought up the matter of the previous conversation, which ended up with his hitting Daowu. [Then the master said,] "Now I ask you to tell me." Shishuang said, "Don't you see that Daowu said, 'I won't say alive; I won't say dead!'" At that, Jianyuan greatly came to realization. He offered a memorial meal for Daowu in repentance.

One day, the master took a hoe into the dharma hall and walk from east to west back and forth. Shishuang asked, "What are you doing?" The master said, "I am looking for relics of our late master." Shishuang said, "Vast waves spread far and wide, foaming billows flood the skies – what relics of our late master are you looking for?" The master said, "This is just where I should apply effort." Shishuang said, "Right here, even a needle tip cannot be entered. What kind of effort do you make?"

Later, Fu of Taiyuan said, "The late master's relics are still there."

In this version, Daowu was beaten but not killed yet. Jianyuan went to Shishuan directly and asked the meaning of Daowu's response to his question. Shishuan said, "Don't you see that Daowu said, 'I won't say alive; I won't say dead!'" Then Jianyuan has great realization. Dogen quotes this version in his Chiji Shingi (Leighton & Okumura translation. Pure Standards for the Temple Administrators section in Dogen's Pure Standard for Zen Community, p. 138).

#### "Alive or Dead" in Blue Cliff Record

In the Case 55 of the Blue Cliff Record made in 12th century by Yuanwu Keqin, the story is as follows:

Daowu and Jianyuan went to a house to make a condolence call. Jianyuan hit the coffin and said, "Alive or dead?" Daowu said, "I won't say alive, and I won't say dead." Jianyuan said, "Why won't you say?" Daowu said, "I won't say. I won't say." Half-way back, as they were returning, Jianyuan said, "Tell me right away, Teacher; if you don't tell me, I'll hit you." Daowu said, "You may hit me, but I won't say." Jianyuan then hit him.

Later Daowu passed on. Jianyuan went to Shihshuang and brought up the foregoing story. Shihshuang said, "I won't say alive, and I won't say dead."

Jianyuan said, "Why won't you say?" Shihshuang said, "I won't say, I won't say." At these words Jianyuan had an insight. One day Jianyuan took a hoe into the teaching hall and crossed back and forth, from east to west and west to east. Shishuang said, "What are you doing?" Jianyuan

said, “I’m looking for relics of our late master.” Shishuang said, “Vast waves spread far and wide, foaming billows flood the skies – what relics of our late master are you looking for?” Xuedou added a comment saying, “Heavens! Heavens!” Jianyuan said, “This is just where I should apply effort.” Fu of T’aiyuan said, “The late master’s relics are still present.”

Here, Daowu died before Jianyuan had realization. It seems this change was made in the 12th century within the development of Koan practice. There is an interesting thing in Yuanwu’s commentary on this story in Blue Cliff Record. Although in the main case, Jianyuan visited Shishuang right after he left Daowu’s monastery, Yuanwu mentioned another version of the story.

Yuan later came to a small temple where he heard a workman reciting the Avalokiteshvara scripture, where it says, “To those who would attain salvation as monks, he appears as a monk to expound the Dharma for them.” Suddenly Yuan was greatly enlightened and said, “At that time I was wrongly suspicious of my late teacher. How was I to know that this affair isn’t in words and phrases?” As an Ancient said, “Even someone great beyond measure can be whirled around in the stream of words.”

According to this commentary, Jianyuan has great realization twice. Daowu’s saying, “I won’t say,” is to show that the reality of life and death is taking place not within words and concepts.

## “Alive and Dead” in Xutangji

The koan collection used in Soto Zen tradition Congronglu (*Shoyoroku*, Book of Serenity) does not include this story. There is another koan collection made in Soto Zen lineage entitled, Xutangji (Kidoshu, Empty Hall Collection) published in 1295. Danxia Zichun (Tanka Shijun, 1064-1117) was a Dharma heir of Furong Daokai (Fuyo Dokai, 1043-1118) and the teacher of Zhenxie Qingliao (Shinketsu Seiryō, 1089-1151) and Hongzhi Zhengjue (Wanshin Shogaku, 1091-1157). Zhenxie is three generation before Tiantong Rujing in Dogen’s lineage. Hongzhi is the master who selected the 100 koans and composed verses on each of the koan. Later it became Congronglu (*Shoyoroku*) together with commentaries by Wansong Xingxiu (Bansho Gyoshu, 1166-1246). Before Hongzhi, his teacher Tanxia collected 100 koans and composed verses on each of them. Later Linquan Conglun (Rinsen Jurin, ?-?) added Instruction, Capping words and Commentary to the main cases and Tanxia’s verses. Linquan was a disciple of Wansong. Case 16 of Xutangji is the same story with “Alive or Dead,” but it is titled “Jianyuan Holding a Hoe.”

Their interest in this story is not on the question of “Alive or Dead” but the relation between the master and disciples. In the commentary, Linquan made the story including all of the elements in the older versions.

Zen Master Jianyuan Zhongxing of Tan Province became Abbot’s attendant at Daowu’s monastery. ....One day Jianyuan accompanied Daowu to visit a lay supporter’s house for offer condolence. The master place his hand in the casket and

said, "Alive or Dead." Daowu said, "I won't say alive; I won't say dead." The master said, "Why won't you say?" Daowu said, "I won't say. I won't say." On their way home, the master said, "High Priest! You must say today for me. If you don't say, I will hit you." Daowu said, "You may hit me, if you want. I won't say." The master immediately hit him. When they returned the temple, Daowu said, "You should leave here. I am afraid that when temple officers know this, you will be in trouble." The master made prostration and left. He hid himself at a village temple. Three years later, once he heard a novice monk chanting the *Kannon-kyo*. When the boy reached the paragraph which said, "To those who can be conveyed to deliverance by the body of bhiksu, [Avalokitesvara] appears in the body of bhiksu and expounds the Dharma," suddenly Jianyuan attained great realization. Finally he burn incense and made prostrations toward his teacher far away. He said, "Now I truly know my late teacher did not utter the words in vain. I myself did not understood and I rather resented him. My late teacher has already died. Shishuang is the only legitimate dharma heir. He must be able to certify my realization."

He visited Shishuang. Upon seeing him Shishuang asked Jianyuan, "After leaving Daowu, where did you go?" Jianyuan said, "I just having being staying at a village temple." Shishuang said, "Have you understood the cause and condition of you hitting your late master, or not?" The master stood up approaching [toward Shishuang], and said, "I would like to ask you

to give me one pivotal expression." Shishuang said, "Why don't you see that Daowu said that he would not say alive; he would not say dead." The master spoke the story and what he attained at the village temple. He finally made prostrations to Shishuang. Jianyuan offered a meal and made repentance.

On another day, Jianyuan held a hoe went to Shishuang again, and walking back and forth from east to west and west to east. Shishuang asked, "What are you doing?" The master said, "I am looking for relics of my late master." Shishuang said, "Vast waves spread far and wide, foaming billows flood the skies - what relics of our late master are you looking for?" Jianyuan said, "This is just where I should apply effort." Shishuang said, "In this place, there is no ground even to stick a needle. Where do you apply your efforts." Fu of Taiyuan said, "The late master's relics are still there."

In this version, Linquan adopted all of the elements of the story appeared in the previous versions and made the final version of the story. In the Blue Cliff Record, Yuanwu spoke of Jianyuan's realization at a village temple, but did not make it a part of the main story. It seems Jianyuan had great realization twice. But in Linquan's version, Jianyuan attained realization at the village temple and then visit Shishuang to ask him to certify his realization instead of giving him guidance. This final version of the story was made in the end of 13th century, that was about 500 years after Daowu and Jianyuan lived, and 350 years after the fist version of this story appeared in



Zutangji in 952. For several centuries, Chinese Zen Practitioners continued to reinterpret and develop the story to make it more interesting and meaningful. To me, this is amazing.

Based on the oldest version in Zutangji, some people thought the two parts of Jianyuan's section were independent each other. And made up how Jianyuan attained realization at the village temple. That became the version in case 289 in *Shinji Shobogenzo*. Other people interpreted these two parts as one story and made up that Daowu passed away before Jianyuan's realization and that was why he visited his elder Dharma Brother, Shishung to ask his guidance. Jingde Chuandeng lu adopted that version. And that was case 29 in Dogen's collection. I suppose those people wanted to connect Jianyuan's question of "Alive or Dead" with Shishuang's expression, "Vast waves spread far and wide, foaming billows flood the skies - what relics of our late master are you looking for?" Later Blue Cliff Record and Xutangji tried to integrate both of them and made longer versions.

Anyway, in the Yuanwu's comment in the Recorded Saying of Yuanwu, he interpreted Daowu's "I won't to say" because both life and death is penetrate into entire dharma world, there is no way to say "alive" or "dead." His saying, "Life is manifestation of total function; death is manifestation of total function," points out this reality. In this fascicle of *Shobogenzo Zenki*, Dogen expresses his insight on our life-and-death as the total function.

## Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma Book 8



### The Mind Cannot Be Got *Shin fukatoku*

Translated by  
Mr. Carl Bielefeldt

## INTRODUCTION

This essay was composed during the summer retreat of 1241, when Dōgen was living at Kōshōji, on the southern outskirts of the capital at Heian-kyō. It occurs as number 8 in the 75-fascicle redaction of the *Shōbōgenzō*, as well as number 4 in the 28-fascicle "secret" *Shōbōgenzō*; it represents number 18 in the vulgate Eiheiji edition. In the vulgate edition, the essay is followed by another of the same name (typically referred to as the Go *Shin fukatoku*, or the "later" text) that was preserved in the secret *Shōbōgenzō* collection. The first half of this second work is quite similar to our text here, while the second half represents material found in the *Shōbōgenzō tashin tsū*, a work of 1245 recorded as number 73 in the 75-fascicle redaction.

This brief essay represents Dōgen's comments on a single koan, the famous story of the old woman selling cakes who defeated the monk Deshan, a leading scholar of the Diamond Sutra. The Zen tradition valued this story because the victory of the old woman over the scholar monk nicely dramatized the tradition's dismissal of book learning and church hierarchy. For his part, however,

Dōgen seems disappointed by the quality of the exchange between the monk and the old woman: Deshan is quite pathetic; for that very reason, he is unable to test the depth of the old woman's understanding and, thus, leaves Dōgen wondering what she might have to say if she were really challenged and prompts him imagine what the two characters should have said.

This translation is based on the text appearing in Kawamura Kōdō, ed., *Dōgen zenji zenshū*, volume 1 (1991), pp. 82-86. A more fully annotated version can be found on the website of the Soto Zen Text Project: <http://scbs.stanford.edu/sztp3>. Other English renderings of this text appear in Kōsen Nishiyama and John Stevens, *Shōbōgenzō*, volume 1 (1975), pp. 28-30; Yuho Yokoi, *The Shobogenzo* (1986), pp. 109-114; Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross, *Master Dogen's Shobogenzo*, Book 1 (1994), pp. 221-225; Hubert Nearman, *The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching* (2007), pp. 188-194; and Kazuaki Tanahashi, *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Zen Master Dogen's Shobo Genzo*, vol. 1 (2010), pp. 191-194.

## TRANSLATION

[In the Diamond Sutra] the Buddha Śākyamuni said, "The past mind cannot be got; the present mind cannot be got; the future mind cannot be got."

This is the study of the buddhas and ancestors. Within [the truth of] "cannot be got," it has dug out the pits of "past," "present," and

"future." Nevertheless, it is using its own pit: "its own" here means "the mind cannot be got." The present thinking and discrimination is "the mind cannot be got"; the whole body that [as Zhaozhou said] "makes use of the twelve times [of the day]" is "the mind cannot be got." Once one enters the chambers of the buddhas and ancestors, one understands "the mind cannot be got"; one who has yet to enter the chambers of the buddhas and ancestors does not question, or speak of, or see and hear, "the mind cannot be got." Fellows like the masters of sutras and masters of treatises, types like the Śāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have not seen this even in their dreams. The sign of this is near at hand [in the following episode].

\* \* \* \* \*

The Chan Master Xuanjian of Deshan [i.e., Deshan Xuanjian, 780-865; lay surname Zhou] used to claim that he had clarified the Diamond Prajna Sutra and to style himself "Zhou, King of the Diamond." He especially claimed mastery of the Qinglong commentary [to the Diamond Sutra]. He further compiled twelve loads of books and seemed without peer as a lecturer. Nevertheless, he was in the line of dharma masters of words and letters.

Once, upon hearing that, in the south, there existed an unsurpassed buddha dharma transmitted from legitimate heir to legitimate heir, he was overcome by indignation, and, packing his sutra commentaries, he crossed mountains and rivers [to investigate it]. In the process, he encountered the congregation of the Chan Master Xin of Longtan [i.e. Longtan Chongxin, dates unknown). As he was headed

to join this congregation, he paused for a rest on the road. An old woman came along and rested by the side of the road.

The lecturer Jian said, "Who are you?"

The old woman said, "I'm an old woman selling cakes."

Deshan said, "Sell me a cake."

The old woman said, "Why is your reverend buying a cake?"

Deshan said, "I'm buying the cake for a refreshment."<sup>1</sup>

The old woman said, "What is that load your reverend is carrying?"

Deshan said, "Haven't you heard? I'm Zhou, King of the Diamond. I'm an expert on the Diamond Sutra. There's nothing [in it] I haven't mastered. What I'm carrying here are interpretations of the Diamond Sutra."

Hearing him speak thus, the old woman said, "This old woman has a question. Does your reverend grant it?"

Deshan said, "Granted. Feel free to ask."

The old woman said, "I once heard it said in the Diamond Sutra, 'The past mind cannot be got; the present mind cannot be got; the future mind cannot be got.' Now, which mind will you refresh with the cake? If your reverend can answer, I'll sell you the cake; if your reverend can't answer, I won't sell you the cake."

Deshan was at a loss and could think of nothing to reply. The old woman thereupon brushed off her sleeve [in dismissal] and left. She never sold Deshan the cake.

What a pity. A commentator of several hundred rolls, a lecturer of several tens of years, gets but a single question from a tired, worn-

out old woman and is immediately defeated, without so much as a response. This happens because of the great difference between one who has met a true master, who has succeeded a true master, who has heard the true dharma, and one who has not yet heard the true dharma or met a true master. At this time, Deshan first says, "A painted cake can't satisfy one's hunger."<sup>2</sup> Now, it is said he inherited the dharma from Longtan.

If we think carefully about this case of the encounter between the old woman and Deshan, it is obvious that at that time Deshan had not clarified [the dharma]. He was probably still afraid of the old lady even after he met Longtan. He was still a late-comer to study, not an old buddha transcending verification.

Although, at the time, the old woman shut Deshan's mouth, it is still difficult to decide that she was really "that person" [i.e., a person of real understanding]. This is because, she asks in the way she does, having heard the words "the mind cannot be got," and thinking only that the mind cannot be got, that the mind does not exist. If Deshan were a [real] man, he would have had the strength to examine the old woman; and, once he had examined her, the truth of whether she was really "that person" would appear. Since Deshan is not yet Deshan, whether the old woman is "that person" is also not yet clear.

Today, in the Great Land of the Song [dynasty], [the monastics,] "patched in clouds and sleeved in mist," foolishly laugh at Deshan's inability to answer and praise the old woman as being spiritually acute; this is quite insubstantial and stupid. The reason is that we are not without reasons to doubt the old



woman. When Deshan was unable to say anything, why did not the old woman say to him, “Since your reverend is unable to say anything, ask this old woman, and the old woman will answer for you.” Having said this, if what she replied to Deshan’s question was well said, whether she was really “that person” would be clear. [As it is,] while she may have a question, she does not yet have something to say. From ancient times, no one has been considered “that person” who has yet to make a statement of a single word. That vain boasts are in the end without profit, we should see from Deshan’s past; that we should not acknowledge one who does not yet have something to say, we should know from the old woman.

Let us try speaking for Deshan. As soon as the old woman asked him this question, Deshan should have said to her, “In that case, don’t sell me the cake.” If Deshan had said this, he would have been a sharp student.

Suppose Deshan had asked the old woman, “The past mind cannot be got; the present mind cannot be got; the future mind cannot be got.” Which mind will you refresh with the cake?” Being asked this, the old woman should have said to Deshan, “Your reverend knows only that the cake can’t refresh the mind. You don’t know that the mind refreshes the cake; you don’t know that the mind refreshes the mind.”

If she had said this, Deshan would surely have paused to consider it. At that moment, she should have taken up three cakes and given them to Deshan. When Deshan went to take them, the old woman should have said, “The past mind cannot be got; the present mind cannot be got; the future mind cannot be got.”

Or, if Deshan did not open his hand to take them, she should have taken up a cake and hit him with it, saying, “You lifeless corpse. Don’t be at such a loss.” Thus addressed, if Deshan had something to say, fine; if he had nothing to say, the old woman should have said something for him. But she just brushed off her sleeve and left, though I doubt she had a bee in her sleeve. And Deshan does not say, “I have nothing to say; the old woman should say something for me.” In this way, not only does he not say what he should say, he does not ask what he should ask. Sadly, the old woman and Deshan, on the past mind and future mind, their questions and statements are just “the future mind cannot be got.”

Even after that, we do not see that Deshan had any clarification; he just engaged in rough hurried acts. Had he long attended on Longtan, the [worthless] horns on his head might have been broken off, and he might have had an occasion directly to transmit the jewel at the chin [of the dragon]. But all we see is [the story of] the paper lantern blown out, — hardly enough to transmit the lamp.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, monks who study [the dharma] should always study hard: those who have taken it easy are not right; those who have studied hard are buddhas and ancestors. In sum, “the mind cannot be got” means to buy a single painted cake and chew it up in a single mouthful.

Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma  
The Mind Cannot Be Got  
Number 8

Presented to the assembly, summer retreat,

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## NOTES

1. “I’m buying the cake for a refreshment”: The translation “refreshment” for *tenjin* obscures the old lady’s subsequent play on the word that is a key to the story. She takes it, not as the common noun for a light snack (known in Western Chinese restaurants as *dimsum*), but as a verb-object construction meaning something like “to spark the heart,” or “to refresh the mind” — hence, her question, “which mind are you going to refresh?”

2. “A painted cake can’t satisfy one’s hunger”: A famous saying, found frequently in Chan texts but usually attributed to Xiangyan Zhixian (d. 898), rather than to Deshan.

3. “The paper lantern blown out”: An allusion to the story of Deshan’s experience of awakening when his master, Longtan, blew out his lantern.

## My Footnotes on Zazen 1 Zazen is not Shuzen (1)

**Rev. Issho Fujita**

Director, Soto Zen Buddhism  
International Center

In my *Zazen Sankyu Notebook* (1)[*Dharma Eye* Number 2], I wrote, “Zazen as the body of text is always seeking to be freshly re-read with new footnotes under the renewed light of the present age. Those who practice *zazen* in this modern society are being requested by *zazen* itself to bring their own unique words to it”. More than ten years have passed since I wrote that impression and I still feel so. I would like to share with *Dharma Eye* readers some footnotes I have made during these years. I hope my little effort to add new footnotes to *zazen* will inspire, even a little bit, the readers to creatively make their own footnotes.

Around early 6th century CE a strange Buddhist monk came to China from South India. Unlike other visiting monks, he did not bring any new Buddhist scriptures or commentaries. He did not translate nor give lectures on Buddhist scriptures, either. He did nothing that could be called “missionary work.” What he did was just sit all day long facing the wall in a room at Shaolin temple. So people gave him a nickname, “wall-gazing Brahman” (an Indian monk who indulged in meditation facing the wall). This monk was Bodhidharma who is now revered as the “First Ancestor of Zen”.

Except for his own disciples (small in number), very few could understand the true meaning of what he was doing by facing the

wall. For example, a famous Buddhist scholar-monk, Nanzan Dousen(Tang dynasty, a founder of Nanzan Vinaya School), classified Bodhidharma in a shuzen section when he compiled The Sequel of Biography of Eminent Monks. That implies that Dousen thought of Bodhidharma as a shuzen practitioner, one who engaged in meditation to attain a special state of mind called “dhyana” (Sa. Jhana, Pa). But Dogen criticized Dousen, saying that such an understanding is completely wrong and irrelevant because zazen encompasses the whole Buddha Dharma, not a part of it. In Shobogenzo Gyoji he wrote, “This was the utmost stupidity, which is lamentable.” According to Dogen, the sitting zazen facing the wall that Bodhidharma practiced in silence is totally different from what had been practiced as zazen to train(shu) a meditative state of dhyana (zen). What Bodhidharma did was authentic zazen, which had been correctly transmitted through generations of ancestors from Shakyamuni. “The ancestral teacher (Bodhidharma) alone embodied the treasury of the true dharma eye transmitted from buddha to buddha, from heir to heir”. Zazen is not a training of dhyana (shuzen) which is one genre of Buddhist practice, like the Three Studies (sila, samadhi, prajna) or Six Paramitas(dana, sila, kshanti, virya, dhyana, prajna) . It is a quite different practice from zazen. In other word shuzen is a personal training to achieve a human ideal(small vehicle, hinayana) and zazen is an expression of something transpersonal or universal(great vehicle, mahayana)

I believe that it is crucially important for us as zazen practitioners to distinguish zazen as the entirety of Buddha Dharma from shuzen as

one genre of it, even though these two practices look similar at a glance. We should avoid confusing them. That is why Dogen repeatedly emphasized this point (zazen is not shuzen) in his writings(Fukanzazengi, Shobogenzo, Eihei Koroku, etc..). It could be said that the bulk of his writings were written to clarify the criteria for discerning authentic zazen.

Then, what is the difference between zazen and shuzen? This is a very important question to consider when we practice zazen. Even if we are sitting with almost the same posture, it does not mean the content is also the same (“If there is a hairsbreadth deviation, it is like the gap between heaven and earth” Fukanzazengi). I am wondering how many zazen practitioners are keenly aware of the importance of this question.

I stayed at a small zendo in western Massachusetts from 1987 until 2005 as a resident teacher and practiced zazen together with a group of people. That was a great experience for me to deepen my understanding of zazen. Luckily in that area many people were interested in Buddhism and many Buddhist centers and groups (large and small, Theravada, Mahayana, Tibetan) were full of activities. Moreover, the colleges nearby all offered introductory courses in Buddhism and seminars on Buddhist philosophy. Those classes were very popular and many students attended them.

Because I was living in such a “hot place” of Buddhism, I was often visited by people who had already studied and practiced various traditions of Buddhism such as Theravada, Tibetan Buddhism, or Rinzai koan practice before coming to my zendo. I was, in a sense, forced to distinguish shikantaza (just sitting) from



those types of sitting meditations. It is not a matter of showing off the superiority of my practice to the other but I needed to clarify what shikantaza is all about in comparison with other kinds of practice. Otherwise I could not fulfill my responsibility as a teacher of that practice.

In English-speaking countries zazen is usually translated as “zen meditation” or “sitting meditation”. But this translation makes it almost inevitable that people think of zazen as an effort to control the mind and attain a certain state of mind by applying a certain method. This is exactly what shuzen means. Therefore I had to explain that zazen was different from meditation. When I talked about zazen, I decided to use Japanese word, zazen, instead of using English translations. Then it was quite natural that people started asking me, “Ok. Then what is zazen? What should we do to do zazen?”

I realized that when people tried to do zazen based on the shuzen-like assumption they first physically sat down with a certain posture and then applied some mental technique (with emphasis on the mental technique). They thought they had to do some psychological work in addition to physically sitting. But zazen should be practiced within a totally different framework. So I had to clarify the difference between zazen and their deeply-held assumptions.

I tried this work of clarification by directly experiencing shuzen type of meditation.

Near the zendo where I resided there was a vipassana meditation center founded by S. N. Goenka in the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin. This center, formally called Dhamma Dharā (land of Dhamma), was the first meditation center in North America (founded in 1982)

among about 100 centers worldwide. The center consists of 108 acres of land and many buildings, including a bathhouse, two dining rooms, meditation hall for 200 people, a 60 cell pagoda, separate residences for men and women and a center manager's house. Every year around 2,000 people participate in their 10-day course of vipassana meditation. (for more information, see their website at <http://www.dhara.dhamma.org/ns/index.shtml>). I attended 10-day courses offered by this center twice.

During the 10-day course, for the first three days they practice anapana-sati, focusing the attention to the physical sensations around the nostril and the rest of the period they keep “scanning” the whole body by using the cultivated attention to the sensations ( for the details of this technique, see Art of Living by William Hart).

Later I met Larry Rosenberg, a guiding teacher at Cambridge Insight Meditation Center and an author of an excellent book, *Breath by Breath: The Liberating Practice of Insight Meditation*. He kindly invited me as a guest participant to the 10-day course for advanced yogis he led at Insight Meditation Center in Barre, MA. There I experienced another style of vipassana called “labeling” in the tradition of Mahasi Sayadaw. In this practice practitioners are encouraged to keep noting/labeling every activity all day long.

Before I came to America, I had experienced 5-day or a week-long Zen sesshin many times. But I never had a chance to experience 10-day meditation retreat in Japan. Physically it was not so hard for me to sit for many hours for 10 days. But it was the first time I had to

apply a certain meditation technique for that long period. These were practices such as exclusively focusing on the sensations around the nostril, or keeping scanning the whole body for a long time, or labeling whatever is happening in body and mind. Metaphorically speaking, I used “mental muscles” a lot which I seldom use during zazen. And I felt mental “muscular pain” from overusing them. In zazen our mind pervades throughout, resting with the body that is sitting and breathing. It does not engage with any other activity. In zazen we do not intentionally use or actively control our mind, applying a certain method and technique. In those two types of vipassana practice I had a different “taste” of sitting, compare to the one I had in zazen. Where does this difference in taste come from? It was very informative to think about it. Of course this is but my personal impression as a complete beginner of this practice. It is highly likely that the “taste” will change as I deepen the practice further. And also it could be that vipassana is quite different from shuzen.

Another helpful hint for me in clarifying the difference between zazen and shuzen is Uchiyama Roshi’s definition of zazen. He says it is “an effort to continuously aim at a correct sitting posture with flesh and bones and to totally leave everything to that.” In his definition there is no shuzen element which assumes the central role of mind in shuzen practice. In opposition, the somatic element of zazen is strongly emphasized. If we can understand Bodhidharma’s “wall gazing” as an effort “to keep sitting with body-mind being like a wall, whatever happens, let it flow as it is, without clinging to or fighting against it”, it is very similar to Uchiyama roshi’s definition of zazen. In

this kind of practice, to do zazen means just to sit solely aiming at a correct posture. There is no other need to reach a certain state of mind as a goal or to attain a special experience. Therefore we are freed from anxiety and frustration which comes from seeking for a special state of mind and experience which we have not yet attained and are able to peacefully rest in the here-and-now as it is, nothing special. There can be no competition or ranking based on what is achieved because there is no fixed attainment target. All those human struggles are totally suspended in zazen. That is why zazen is called the “dharma gate of joyful ease”. We simply make a sincere and straightforward effort to sit zazen with body and mind all together without desiring to get something however lofty it may be. This is the way of zazen and in that sense it is quite different from shuzen.

This is easy to say but very difficult to do for us because we are usually driven by a desire to achieve something which does not exist here and now. When we hear that zazen is about no achievement, we immediately ask, “If zazen is that, how can I do it?” But this is a question exactly stemming from the framework based on “means and end” which is always behind the shuzen approach. It is nothing but an undertaking to grasp zazen using the shuzen concept. This shuzen attitude is deeply rooted in our way of behavior and thinking. That is why we should take a radically different approach to zazen so that we can avoid changing zazen into shuzen, consciously or unconsciously.

How can we clearly understand total difference in quality between zazen and shuzen?

(to be continued)

# NEWS

**April 27, 2011**

South America Soto Zen Conference was held at Busshinji, Sao Paulo, Brazil

**May 20-22, 2011**

Europe Soto Zen Conference was held at Temple Zen de la Gendronnière, France

**September 7-9, 2011**

North America Soto Zen Conference and Workshop was held at Zenshuji, Los Angeles, California

**September 9, 2011**

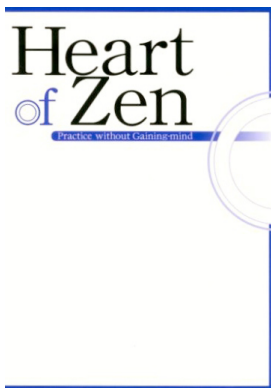
Hawaii Soto Zen Conference and Workshop was held at Shoboji, Honolulu, Hawaii

**October 4, 2011**

Soto Zen Buddhism International Symposium was held at Tokyo Grand Hotel.



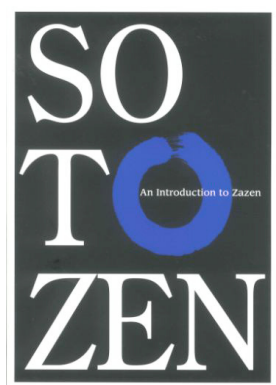




## Heart of Zen

This book has three sections: English translation of Dogen Zenji's *Gakudo-Yojinshu*, Menzan Zenji's *Jijuyu-Zanmai*, and Uchiyama Kosho Roshi's *Dogen Zen as Religion*. It is a book that can be used both by beginners as well as experienced practitioners to understand Dogen Zenji's thoughts about zazen.

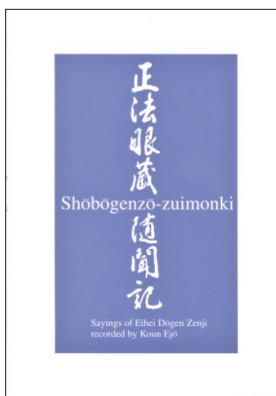
(Size 182mm×128mm Pages 133)



## SOTO ZEN

This book, comprised of three parts, is an introduction to Soto Zen. It includes a translation of Fukun Zazengi and translation of portions of Shobogenzo Bendowa, Shobogenzo Zuimonki, and Zazen Yojinki.

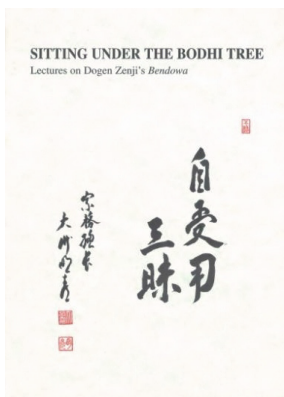
(Size 180mm×128mm Pages 103)



## Shobogenzo Zuimonki

This book was written by Ejo Zenji, the second abbot of Eihei-ji. "Zuimonki" means "Record of Things I Have Heard". It is the written record of the teachings Ejo Zenji received from his teacher Dogen Zenji.

(Size 183mm×128mm Pages 223)



## SITTING UNDER THE BODHI TREE

This book is a collection of lectures on Bendowa, made by seven Soto Zen teachers at Tassajara Zen Mountain Center (California, U.S.A.) in 1998. It is highly recommended to those who are interested in Dogen's thoughts about Buddhist practice.

(Size 184mm×132mm Pages 97)



## Shakyō Kit

Shakyō is a buddhist practice of tracing the sutras.

By mindfully doing Shakyō in quiet and serene enviroment, you can reflect on yourselves and attain mental well-being.

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**If you are interested in these materials, please contact your closest regional office or International Center.**

Soto Zen Buddhism Hawaii Office  
1708 Nuuanu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96817 U.S.A.  
Tel: 1-808-538-6429

Soto Zen Buddhism North America Office  
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Tel: 33-1-4633-7738

Soto Zen Buddhism International Center  
1691 Laguna Street, San Francisco, CA 94115 U.S.A.  
Tel: 1-415-567-7686



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Please address all inquiries or comments to: Soto Zen Buddhism International Center  
1691 Laguna Street, San Francisco, CA 94115 Phone: 415-567-7686 Fax: 415-567-0200