



SOTO ZEN JOURNAL

DHARMA EYE

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Number

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March 2012



The 90th Anniversary of Soto Zen Teaching Activities in North America

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The connection between present-day Soto Zen activities throughout North America and the founding of Zenshuji Temple in Los Angeles is apparent to some people, but not so well known for many people who read *Dharma Eye*. This year, we will mark the 90th anniversary of Soto Zen teaching activities in North America, which also coincides with the 90th anniversary of the founding of Zenshuji, so I would like to outline that connection in this article.

The Soto Zen teaching was first formally brought to the mainland U.S. in 1922. Rev. Hosen Isobe was asked by Hioki Mokusen Zenji, head priest of Eihei-ji and Arai Sekizen Zenji head priest of Sojiji, to go to the mainland U.S. to serve as the Soto priest for the Japanese immigrants. At that time, Rev. Isobe was serving as a Soto Zen missionary in Hawaii. He went to San Francisco and Los Angeles and decided it was necessary to do mission work in Los Angeles. He founded Zenshuji in 1922. Its first home was a converted space on the second floor of Mr. Toyokichi Nagasaki's home at 334 2nd Street in the Little Tokyo area of Los Angeles. Thereafter, Zenshuji was moved to a brick building at the present site, 123 South Hewitt Street, through the hard work of the temple members. During World War II, all Japanese on the West Coast of the U.S. were sent to internment camps and

Zenshuji was temporarily closed. Returning from internment camps in August, 1945, temple members including Frank Kuwahara and Toyokichi Nagasaki worked to restore Zenshuji. During this time, the temple served as a temporary shelter for Japanese-Americans coming home from the camps.

In 1934, Rev. Isobe also founded Soko-ji, the Soto temple in San Francisco. At present, there are five temples serving Japanese-American communities in North America, all of them in California: Zenshuji, Soko-ji, Sozenji in Montebello, Monterey Zenshuji in Monterey, and Long Beach Buddhist Church in Long Beach.

Generally speaking, these temples are similar to Japanese temples in that the main functions are the same: to perform funerals, memorial services, and other annual ceremonies. They have also served as places where various forms of Japanese arts and culture are taught and practiced such as: *shakyo*, martial arts, flower arrangement, tea ceremony, and *taiko* drumming.

During the 1960s, there was suddenly a great expansion of interest in Zen Buddhism among the general American population. Young people, the so-called "counterculture", struggled to find a way to build a new society. They were looking for solutions to the problems of the Vietnam War, racial discrimination, poverty, pollution, among others. It was particularly their interest in Zen meditation (*zazen*) and the wisdom of non-duality attainable through Dogen Zenji's teaching of "just sitting" (*shikantaza*) that especially appealed to

this group of people in the 1960s and 1970s. They were also attracted to the emphasis in Zen on living a simple life in tune with nature, the peaceful reputation of Buddhism and the aesthetic of Zen found in many of the art disciplines of Japan.

Rev. Shunryu Suzuki arrived in 1959 to become the resident priest of Sokoji. Originally located on Bush Street in a former Jewish synagogue, Sokoji became a place, under the instruction of Rev. Suzuki, where young Americans could practice zazen and learn about Zen Buddhism. A predominantly Caucasian group who had joined Rev. Suzuki founded the San Francisco Zen Center in 1962. This Center flourished to the point that in 1967 they were able to establish Tassajara Zen Mountain Center. In 1969 they purchased the building at 300 Page Street which became the City Center of the San Francisco Zen Center.

The focus of most Zen centers is first of all offering a place for people to sit in zazen, various courses about different aspects of Buddhism, and many other activities including meditation retreats; sewing *rakusu*, *zafu*, and robes; as well as outreach work at prisons, in hospices, and with homeless people.

Rev. Hakuyu Maezumi is another Japanese priest who founded an important Zen lineage in the U.S., the White Plum Asanga. Sent in 1956 to serve as a priest at Zenshuji, he also worked part time in a factory. In the early 1960s, he began instructing zazen at Zenshuji for American students and this eventually led to the opening of the Zen Center of Los Ange-

les in the city of Los Angeles and Yokoji which is in the mountains near Idyllwild. He left behind twelve Dharma successors who formed the White Plum Asanga. That lineage is now spread across the U.S., a diverse organization which represents a wide spectrum of teachers ranging from socially-engaged Buddhism, family practice, Zen and the arts, and traditional Zen practice.

Another important U.S. lineage was founded by Rev. Dainin Katagiri. He first came to the U.S. in 1963 when he was sent by the Sotoshu Headquarters in Japan to serve as a priest at Zenshuji. In 1965, he was sent to Sokoji to assist Rev. Suzuki in San Francisco. In 1972, Rev. Katagiri relocated to Minneapolis where he became the head teacher of the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center. At the time of his death in 1990, he left behind twelve Dharma successors, many of whom now head their own Zen centers.

On September 8th and 9th this year, we will hold special ceremonies to mark the 90th anniversaries of Soto Zen teaching activities in the U.S. as well as for the founding of Zenshuji Temple. You are all invited to attend.

The 90th anniversary, of course, is a chance to reflect not only on the past 90 years, but also to look ahead to the centennial celebration that will be held in 2022. In 1922, when Japanese immigrants struggled to make a life for themselves in a foreign land, no one imagined that one day Soto Zen would be the most successful of the established Japanese Buddhist schools at spreading among the general population in

America. Presently, our North America district stretches from Canada in the north to Panama in the south. We have more than 360 priests who are registered with Shumuchō. There are 26 temples and centers registered with Shumuchō, but if we counted all the Soto Zen centers in North America, the number would come to more than 300. What began from the humble beginnings of Rev. Isobe's vigorous work at Zenshuji has flowered so that hundreds of Soto flowers are now blooming on the U.S. mainland.



Meeting with Bodhisattvas

Rev. Keizan Shimazaki
Sotoshu Special Dissemination
Teacher

Zen Center of Pittsburgh
Sewickley, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.
May 26, 2011

Good evening, everyone.

In Japan, Soto Zen Buddhism is the largest of the established Buddhist traditions. Our tradition was founded by Dogen Zenji and disseminated by Keizan Zenji, who was the fourth Zen master in the lineage following Dogen Zenji. We have two Head Temples, Eiheiji and Sojiji, and at each one there is a Head Priest (*Zenji*). Every two years, these two Zenjis exchange the position of Head Priest of Sotoshu (*Kancho*). This year, the Kancho is the Head Priest of Sojiji, Egawa Shinzan Zenji. Each year, the Head Priest of Sotoshu sends out a message to the 8 million members and 15,000 Soto temples in Japan, and, to Soto Zen practitioners around the world. I will read this message. Please listen to this message from Egawa Shinzan Zenji.

*Words of Wisdom from Egawa Shinzan Zenji,
Head Priest of the Sotoshu*

Society around us is in disarray. We are faced with various large-scale problems such as global warming, war, and poverty as well as problems within Japan including "an unequal society" and a "society with no human bonds". More than 30,000

people take their own lives each year. We often hear of bullying and various forms of cruelty, and so forth. The dignity of human life has been lost and people live their lives with distrust and disquiet.

The Soto Zen tradition has aspired toward “respect for human rights, establishment of peace, and preservation of the environment”. We have now furthered our work towards deepening these “bonds.” This year, to develop this work concretely in our daily lives, we have established three pillars—Facing One Another, Transmitting Together, and Mutually Supporting—and have announced a focus on Beneficial Action, one of the “Four Integrative Methods of Bodhisattvas.”

Dogen Zenji wrote, “Beneficial action is one principle. It is universally benefiting self and others.”

To this, Keizan Zenji added, “Dwelling always in great compassion, you should offer the limitless merits of zazen to all beings.”

Let us straighten our posture, let our breathing be in order, and, with a quiet mind, sit for a while. Zazen based on great compassion will naturally lend us the strength to perform beneficial action.

In “facing you, transmitting the teachings with you, and joining you in mutual support,” we open the way to a society in which each life is fully valued.

Every day, let us keep practicing beneficial action by thinking and living harmoniously with others.

Namu Shakamunibutsu (Homage to Shakyamuni Buddha.)

Now, I'd like to talk to you about this message.

The expression “beneficial deeds” appears in this greeting. Beneficial deeds are one of the practices of a bodhisattva. Dogen Zenji realized that the best way for the person who is born as a human and lives in the saha world of much suffering is to live a life as a bodhisattva. In Buddhism, we are qualified as Buddha's children. What sort of person is a Buddha? A Buddha is a person who doesn't drown in greed, who wishes for other people's happiness, who thinks of how other people's happiness can be accomplished, who is truly bright in spirit, who gets along well with others, and who smiles quietly. What sort of image do you people have of a Buddha? I think of my mother as a bodhisattva. There are four practices of a bodhisattva.

The first practice is generosity. Generosity is to give freely to others, whether it is material or spiritual things or teachings. When it is time for a mother to breastfeed her baby, she happily gives her breast to her child even if she herself is hungry. Then, when she sees her baby's satisfied face, she feels spiritually nourished. Or, when a father thinks his child is walking somewhere that is dangerous, he will single-mindedly fill in the hole in the garden. And, it is said that building a bridge over a river for people we do not know is also a form of generosity. The second practice of a bodhisattva is loving speech. Thinking of the other person's happiness, we say gentle, friendly things to others that cheer them up. Loving speech is also words scolding someone to help their behavior in the future. Beneficial deeds are to put your own happiness behind first doing everything you can for

others. A mother, for example, changes her baby's diapers and cleans her baby, but there is no mother who says at the time she has done this the 101 times, "When you grow up, you must repay me 101 times with acts of devotion to me." The final practice of a bodhisattva is "sympathetic identification" which is to do all these practices of generosity, loving speech, and beneficial deeds with humility as a human being equal to others, not doing them from above. There are some people who say that they were not loved very much by their mother. Yet, at the moment he or she is born into this world, a baby is unable to see and can only cry. If a mother were to stop watching her baby for even an hour, the baby would not be able to live. A baby horse or a cow is able to walk within thirty minutes of birth, but it takes a human baby a very long time to be able to walk. Without a mother's love, no one would be born into this world nor would it be possible to survive. The practice of a bodhisattva isn't only pouring your love onto your children. A true Buddha is a person who practices generosity, loving speech, beneficial deeds, and sympathetic identification, wishing for the happiness of all sentient beings and not only for human beings.

When I came into this room to make three prostrations, there was a big dog lying here. Her name is Maya. Maya was the name of Shakyamuni Buddha's mother. Maya was on her way back to her home country to give birth to her child. But when she was passing Lumbini Gardens, labor pains began, and Shakyamuni Buddha was born there. Since she gave birth outside, there wasn't any water. There is a custom of giving a newborn baby its first bath.

Since there wasn't even enough water to do this, it is said that two dragons descended from heaven and from their mouths came sweet water which was used to bathe the baby. It is also said that the baby who had just been born then took seven steps and with one hand pointing to the sky and one hand pointing to the earth said, "I alone am holy above and below heaven." Buddhism is a very scientific and methodical teaching, so I think this can be understood as a parable. As you know, society in India at the time of Shakyamuni Buddha had a strict caste system. Regardless of ability or effort, a person was unable from birth to death to get out of a particular caste. At the time of the Buddha, there were many, many people who suffered from this system. Leaving his wife, the Buddha underwent ascetic practice for six years. From the time at the age of 35, when he became the Tathagata, until he died at the age of 80, Shakyamuni Buddha walked through all parts of India for 45 years endeavoring to help as many people as possible be free of the caste system. So, I think the story of the newborn baby pointing at heaven and earth saying "I alone am holy above and below heaven" is pointing out the holiness of all lives including human beings' lives, which is perfectly in accord with the Buddha's teaching. Baby Buddha's seven-steps, I think, was taken after that fact that the Buddha walked all over in India wishing to save all forms of life.

As I mentioned, Maya, the Buddha's mother, gave birth outside. For this reason, she died from illness seven days after the Buddha's birth. Shakyamuni Buddha's mother had a sister. Following the custom at that time in

India, her sister married the same king. For this reason, Maya's younger sister, Prajapati, raised the Buddha. Prajapati died at 100 years old. At the time of her death, it is said that Shakyamuni Buddha helped to carry her coffin, an indication of how much he cherished his stepmother. Shakyamuni Buddha had his great awakening at the age of 35. When he returned to his home country, the very first things his stepmother asked him was, "Please make me your disciple." Prajapati became the very first Buddhist nun. The Buddha had one son, Rahula. Rahula asked the Buddha, "Are you my father? Did you bring me a good present?" Shakyamuni Buddha said to Ananda, "My son would like a gift from me." Ananda had Rahula put his hands in gassho (putting palms together) and then shaved Rahula's head. Rahula became the Buddha's disciple.

Rahula was a very cruel name which means "hindrance" in the ancient Indian language. The Buddha had given him this name because Rahula was a hindrance to his spiritual practice due to his love to his son. Later, nevertheless, Shakyamuni Buddha made his son his disciple. Just before Shakyamuni Buddha's death, he called his son near to him and said, "You have been truly an outstanding disciple as a disciple. You have been truly an outstanding son as a son. In the next world as well, we will eternally be father and son." The Buddha's wife Yasodhara also asked the Buddha, "Please make me your disciple like Prajapati. I also want to be a nun." It took many years before the Buddha fulfilled her wish. In this way, the Buddha had given the biggest treasure to his stepmother, his wife, and his son.

Why did the Buddha leave his wife and child, as well as his countrymen, and enter the forest to undergo spiritual practice? At that time in India, there was the idea of "rishi (sage)". Since there was the notion that if a person practiced and became a rishi, it would be possible for that person to control all things in the world freely. The Buddha had resolved to bring an end to the sufferings caused by old age, sickness, and death through spiritual practice. Then as a result of six years of this practice, on December 8th at the age of 35, Shakyamuni Buddha finally experienced awakening. He realized that all phenomena in this world change and disappear. He understood that no matter how much effort we make, death is certain. Shakyamuni Buddha taught that "all things are impermanent."

Dogen Zenji, the founder of the Soto Zen Buddhism, truly experienced with body and mind that all things are impermanent and that this change never stops even for an instant. He resolved that, "If there is even one person who is suffering in this world, I will continue my practice. And, I will live taking Shakyamuni Buddha's vow as my own by helping as many people as I can." Dogen Zenji's mother died when he was eight years old. He dearly loved his mother and so he always lived with the anxiety of wondering when he himself would die. His mother had told him, "You mustn't become a politician. I want you to become a monk, a person who can save the people of the world." In order to fulfill her request, Dogen Zenji made great effort. He went to China where he had a great awakening under his teacher, Nyojo Zenji. Dogen Zenji realized, "Essentially, we

are all disciples of the Buddha. We are the Buddha's children." He taught that from the time we get up in the morning till the time we go to bed at night, and then until the day we die, the most important thing is that we live as if we are Buddhas. So, for Dogen Zenji washing our face upon getting up in the morning, brushing our teeth, using the toilet, and so on all activities are we as Buddha doing a Buddha's practice. In the Shobogenzo, we find chapters such as "Washing" and "Washing the Face", as well as works such as "Instructions for the Cook". Thus Dogen Zenji taught extensively about the way of how to live a day as a disciple of the Buddha.

The Soto Zen practice of zazen is single-minded sitting, giving up even the idea of becoming a Buddha as well as letting go of the conceit of thinking that it isn't necessary to practice because we already are a Buddha. Zazen is not ascetic practice. It is also not a matter of becoming a superman-type of person by enduring lots of pain. By throwing oneself into the Buddhadharma, letting go of all obsessions and calculations, wholeheartedly performing the practices of a Buddha, the form of a Buddha is realized.

Nevertheless, when we sit in zazen, it seems as if 30 minutes is more like an hour. We sit in zazen while wishing that the time would pass quickly. However, it is still a precious shape of a Buddha even thinking such thoughts. By sitting zazen, it becomes possible to look intently at our own life as well as the life of all living beings. When we are grateful for our own life, which lives together with many things, and we

are grateful for the many lives that support our life, we also become more appreciative and gentle to others. This is the best thing about zazen.

In Japan, there was a great master of zazen named Rev. Kodo Sawaki. He was a great man of zazen who remained unmarried throughout his life and who never had his own temple. One of his disciples was a priest named Rev. Tokugen Sakai. When I was an infant, I contracted polio and I wasn't able to walk until I entered elementary school. I had an operation to straighten my crooked leg and so from the time I was in fourth grade, my left leg didn't grow at all. While I was at university, I sat in a sesshin at which time my legs became extremely painful. At that time, Rev. Sakai told me, "Shimazaki, you have trouble with your legs and that's why you have so much pain. But you know, even the great zazen master, Rev. Kodo Sawaki, also had much pain in his legs at the age of 80. When zazen was over, he would say, 'It hurts, it hurts. Tokugen, massage my legs.' I wondered if even a person who had sat so much zazen still had pain in his legs. Rev. Sawaki said, 'Tokugen, at 80 years of age, I now understand what kind of pain Shakyamuni Buddha had at the age of 80.' I feel grateful when I think of what he told me." It is seven years since my master passed away. When he was dying of cancer, he resolved to stop eating, just as his own master had, at the end of his life. As he was dying, I told him, "This is a very good year to die." He said, "Is there a good year to die?" I said, "One reason is that your master died at the age of 79 and you are now 80. You have lived one year longer than he did, so this

is an act of filial piety. Another reason is that the great saint Shakyamuni Buddha died at the age of 80.” My master was happy when he heard this. He died two days later. All people will die. This is a sad thing, but we must all leave. Yet everyone, in this way, when we learn the teaching of Dogen Zenji and practice zazen, we can become one with Shakyamuni Buddha who lived over thousands years ago and can realize that our life is one with the life of the great universe. It is my heartfelt prayer as a priest coming from Japan that you will endeavor to live your everyday life, giving your love and affection to many lives and wishing for the happiness of all living things.

You are now sitting in zazen. This is to be one with the great universe. That is zazen. Then, without being aware of it, you are living within the same mind as Shakyamuni Buddha. You awoke this morning. I hope that the awakening is not only the one of the physical body but the awakening of the joy caused by the discovery of the preciousness of your life. That is the message of my talk today.

Thank you for your listening.



Dharma Talk



Soto Zen Buddhism International Symposium Keynote Lecture

Speaker: Associate Prof. Noriyuki Ueda
Graduate School of Decision Science and
Technology Tokyo Institute of Technology

This Keynote Lecture was held at Tokyo Grand Hotel on October 4, 2011. This is a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation.

Thank you very much for your kind introduction. My name is Noriyuki Ueda. It is a pleasure to be granted the opportunity to speak at such a grand event. Dogen Zenji, eight hundred years ago, sowed the seeds which have spread and made their way to Hawaii, North America, South America, and Europe, far and wide across the globe. Those who have dedicated themselves to this dissemination have now gathered here in Tokyo to share the fruits of their efforts, and I have been given this formidable task of presenting the keynote lecture. I am very honored; furthermore, I am excited to think of what might be exchanged today. This is indeed a learning process for myself as well.

I suppose I must introduce myself. I am a person who has explored Japanese Buddhism in terms of its potential and opportunities in the twenty-first century. I am also someone who wishes to re-invigorate Buddhism and has directed his activities to that end. Therefore, today, in this symposium, I would like very much to raise the discussion of Buddhism in the twenty-first century here in Japan and the direction in which it is headed. I've been given

the task of speaking as a keynote lecturer. Some of what I say about the state of modern Buddhism may seem quite severe; I will not advocate for the continuation of the status quo. There is no room in this discussion for complacency. At this moment in time, Buddhism here in Japan is standing on the edge. At this pace, will we be able to sustain Buddhism for another fifty years? A hundred years? That is the extent to which the crisis prevails. Recognizing this, seven years ago I wrote the book "*Gambare Bukkyo*", which could translate to "Hang in There, Buddhism!" Really, it should be Buddhism which offers us encouragement, yet here we are, in a situation in which we have to encourage Buddhism. We have arrived at such a moment. Some of my remarks today may seem awfully harsh, but I hope that you will receive my words with a generous and open mind.

I am not someone who is observing the world from within the context of Buddhism. Speaking as a cultural anthropologist, I have frequently used the word "*iyashi*," which might be translated as "healing"—in fact, I am the principal proponent of the term. Why is it that Japanese society has prospered, we remain, in our hearts, so unsatisfied? For the past thirteen years, there have been more than 30,000 suicides per year. For these years, we have had the highest suicide rate in the world. And there is no foreseeable end to that trend. Given the current state of our society, what role can Buddhism play? That is, looking at Buddhism from the outside, what can we ask of it?

This evening at 10 p.m., I will participate in a televised panel discussion, to be aired on

BS11. Our discussion will last one hour. The theme is this: the indiscriminate homicides of youngsters. These days we are seeing indiscriminate killing—a young person goes into a store, pours gasoline all over, and just lights a match. Another, at a station, tries to kill whom-ever he can with a kitchen knife. And you may recall, in Akihabara there was an incident in a pedestrian haven. A young person charged in with a vehicle, killing numerous people. He said he didn't care whom he killed. To discuss why we are witnessing such events in a prosperous country as prosperous as Japan, I will be joined in tonight's discussion by a suicide expert and Cabinet advisor, Mr. Yasuyuki Shimizu, and also by a Christian missionary, Mr. Tomoshi Okuda who has been engaged in activities of supporting homeless people in Kitakyushu.

So, my interest is this: Why is it that Japanese society is now heading in this direction? What are the causes? And we have 76,000 Buddhist temples here in Japan. Just from the station to this hotel, there are so many convenience stores—the number of Buddhist temples in Japan is double the number of convenience stores. But are those temples actualizing their real potential? This is the overriding question that I have in my heart. This is indeed the juncture at which Japanese Buddhism should be able to play a part and to break through the current stalemate that we see in Japan and abroad. That is what I sincerely hope might happen. Seven years ago I wrote the book "*Gambare Bukkyo*"—"Hang in There, Buddhism!" and thereafter, at a Sotoshu temple in Shiba called Seishoji, I opened the seminar

titled, “A Buddhist Renaissance.” I submit that no less than this—a renaissance, a rebirth of Buddhism—is what is expected here in Japan. Even more, I believe that the twenty-first century must be led by young Buddhist priests. However, today, regardless of sect, priests in Japan are bound by strict hierarchy—the young priests’ role is to unfailingly say “yes” to their seniors. If the youth are to bear the next generation, across sects and schools of Buddhism, it is important that we see a coordination, an exchange, among young priests. To that end, I am serving as a coordinator and the name given to this project is, “*Bozu*, Be Ambitious.” *Bozu* means a priest in Japanese. Of course you are familiar—at least, those of you who are Japanese—with what Dr. Clark said: “Boys, be ambitious !” So I have tried to borrow this and coin the phrase, “*Bozu*, be ambitious.” With this theme in mind, we hold a conference twice a year—this December, at Seishoji, we will gather for the fourteenth time. How can we revive Buddhism’s potential strength? This has been my driving question. Today we see the many representatives who have been part of disseminating Buddhism beyond our borders. For all of you to gather, and for your experiences to be shared—I am confident this exchange will serve as a major step forward. I do sincerely hope that we can find the strength we need to advance this work.

This concludes my self-introduction. What is the significance of holding this symposium now, in 2011, and here, in Tokyo? I’ve thought about this, and I would like to identify three points of significance: First, given the advent of globalization, it is said for the past ten years or

more that borders are dissolving, and within the wave of globalization we are all becoming more deeply connected to one another. Given this situation, there is the thought that there are centers in the world. For example, in the case of Sotoshu, the thought is that the center is here in Japan. If this were a company, this would be likened to a head office where there are branch offices around the globe, and Sotoshu doctrine—the true dharma—has its headquarters here and is distributed, so to speak, to locations around the world. I think this has been the past, or conventional thought. However, with the advent of globalization we must realize the truth. It is not as if the center is here and we are merely disseminating what we have here in the center. There are centers not just here, but in multiple locations around the globe. Here in Tokyo, where we are believed to be in the center, we need to reflect upon the realization that there is much to be learned from around the world. There needs to be a change in mindset. This will contribute primarily to Japanese Buddhism, and that is why it is the point of significance that I raise first.

The second is that within this one world, there are various developments of Buddhism and also of Soto Zen. For those of us who are Japanese, what are we to learn from the developments abroad? What are we to acquire from them? This is the second point of significance.

And the third point of significance is this: as has been mentioned by the President of Sotoshu Shumicho, we have seen the advent of the Great East Japan Earthquake on 3-11; six months have transpired, and today we are

asked to think of “Advance One Step Further.” What are the implications, what is the significance that it holds? Three months after the disasters, I issued a publication, “*Jihi no Ikari Shinsaigo wo ikiru kokoro no manejimento*,” which means, “Anger Motivated by Compassion: The Management of the Heart to Live after an Earthquake Disaster.” So the earthquake and tsunami and the nuclear incident that followed—why did all this have to happen? We really need to think about this because it is quite significant for Japanese society. But if people choose not to look at that, and I do see that trend happening, it would be a very big opportunity lost, and so I am using this concept of compassion—that’s why I wrote this book using the Buddhist term “*jihi*”, or compassion, to call people to show their anger out of compassion. I think this disaster and nuclear accident revealed the vulnerability of the Japanese society. In the context of “advance one step further,” I would like at this symposium to be thinking, also, what significance this might have. This is what I would like to talk about with my remaining time today.

Now, first, back to the point about globalization. “Globalization” and “globalism” have been buzzwords for the past ten years or so. And there are pros and cons. Global capitalism has been subject to criticism by many people in Japan who say that it is an American-style, superficial system that seeks only profit. From that perspective, the capitalist view of valuation is spreading to every corner of the world through information technology. So, the critics say, for Americanized capitalism to cover the whole globe is a kind of standardization of the

world. But at the same time, globalization could also mean that more light is shed on various corners of the world with different cultural backgrounds and different types of properties, so actually, at least from a cultural perspective, globalization has led to multilateralism or multicentrism, so that’s a positive side. Here we should think about what Buddhism is. Is it more like unification/centralization, or is it more like multilateralism and multicentrism? For example, there is a religion that is centered in the Vatican, where they decide what is right, what is wrong, what is heathen, and what the only correct form of Christianity is to be spread in the world. Would that apply to Buddhism? I don’t think so. Buddhism is really about being diversified and being multilateral or multicentral, because in Buddhism there is the core concept of “*engi*,” or “*pratitya samutpada*” or dependent co-origination—for example, we don’t think that only what Shakyamuni Buddha said is right. If we did, then we should just go to India to hold a symposium like this and praise Shakyamuni Buddha and that would be the end of it. But we don’t see things in that way. After Shakyamuni Buddha’s death, there were various schools—Theravada, Mahayana—and there were Northern and Southern forms of Buddhism spreading along different geographical routes; most of Japanese Buddhism was actually more influenced by Northern Buddhism. So does that mean that Japanese Buddhism is not really true, authentic Buddhism? Some teachers in Komazawa University actually argue that way—they say Japanese Buddhism is not authentic. But even in Theravada Buddhism or Tibetan or Chinese or Japanese, they are within this “*engi*”, depen-

dent co-origination, and, depending on the locality and depending on the era, they were all successful, and they are centers of Buddhist culture in their own right. Take for example this Sotoshu—can we believe that here, Japan, is the center of that particular teaching? If you consider the history, Dogen Zenji went to China, he learned the ways of the Soto Zen Buddhism in China, then founded Sotoshu in Japan. So that may mean we have to quickly change the location of this symposium to China. But if you think that way, then here in Shiba is the center of Sotoshu. What we're doing here is the center. We have priests, ministers, who went to Hawaii, North America, South America, and Europe. If we believe that those regional offices are merely branches, that would mean that Japanese Buddhism would also be only a branch of Chinese Buddhism, which is also a branch of Indian Buddhism, so we can only just go back to India and declare that the Buddha's teachings are the only true teachings. In this way of thinking, we are just something that is at the very end of a long chain. But that is not really the case. Buddhism has many sects and they may seem slightly different from one another, but they are flowers in their own right. There are many flowers blooming.

I understand that Soto Zen has been spreading internationally for over one hundred years. So now I think it's an opportunity to really think about all the successes overseas—all the flowers that are blooming outside of Japan—and to learn from that. We should not simply be satisfied that Japanese Buddhism has spread all over the world, though that may have been the way of thinking in the past. Now that Bud-

dhism has become global and there are various changes, variations, various trials and errors that have taken place, hasn't the time had come for we Japanese to start learning from those experiences? I think it's time to change our mindset and think that way. That's my first message. I think we are gathered here, at this symposium, for that purpose. And looking at the fact that despite busy schedules, there are so many attendees that it exceeded the expectations of the organizers, it really speaks to strong interest in exploring the possibilities of Buddhism. That is my first point.

Now, the second point. We need to be aware that Japanese Buddhism is really at a critical juncture and is in a crisis. I do have to say something that may not be very nice for the priests here to hear. In Japan, there is a saying that Buddhism is for funerals. Funeral Buddhism is something that people say sarcastically about Buddhism, but these days even funerals are not really conducted in a Buddhist way, so if Buddhism is losing even funerals, what's left? And another important issue is whether the temples or priests are really commanding respect from society. Do people appreciate the temples as great places to be? Do people appreciate the priests?

I go to many places and deliver lectures—many related to Buddhism—and for the past two years I've been asking this question to members of the audience. It was at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto that I posed this question for the first time: "How many of you have a good image of this term . . . ?" —and I asked them to raise their hands if they think "yes." Maybe I should try this today. I should—I will.

So—I am going to say a term and if you have a good impression of it, raise your hand, OK? I'm going to say four terms. The first is "Buddhism." Do you have a positive image of Buddhism? Raise your hand, please. All right. Well, I believe it's almost one hundred percent. The second: "Japanese Buddhism." Buddhism in Japan. Does that evoke a positive image for you? Oh, so you see the scarcity, even here. The third: "Japanese temples." Does the phrase "Japanese temples" give you a positive impression? Thank you for being very honest. The fourth word: "Japanese priests—Buddhist priests." So, do you have a positive image? Thank you very much. Here, you have the highest confidence in priests. I've never had an audience so positive. I tried this at Ritsumeikan University, then again at Koyasan University for a public audience, and another time at a Jodo Shinshu gathering in Sapporo, Hokkaido, and yesterday I actually tried this in Hiroshima. This was a very depopulated area. Again, it was a Jodo Shinshu gathering and I tried it again: on average, 95% will have a positive image of Buddhism. Japanese Buddhism—that goes down to 60% or so. Japanese temples? 25% would have a positive image. And Japanese Buddhist priests—initially at Ritsumeikan there was 10% support, but in other locations—at Koyasan University or at the Jodo Shinshu gathering—the rate was only 5%. So they probably like Buddhism, but they don't really like temples, or they don't like Japanese priests. What should we think about these responses?

When I speak at workshops with young priests, many of them are so vulnerable these days that they hear these results and feel

deflated. But I tell them, "This is an opportunity. Now is the opportunity. And you may not like me talking about Buddhism in economical terms, but suppose you have a share in a company. There is so much expectation of this company, but the stock price is extremely low. So—there's expectation but the share is low. Do you want to buy it or not? Do you want to sell it? You would want to buy it, right? You would want to buy it now because if the company can meet that expectation, then stock prices can only rise. It's an opportunity – a golden opportunity – for Buddhism right now.

Another thing: young priests now, when they look at senior priests, or at their father and mother, they are very subservient. I think the previous generation was much more rebellious. The current generation seems quite naive. I remind them that in their mothers' or their ancestors' days, society's appreciation of Buddhist priests was only going down, and so I say to them: "Do you want to follow what your fathers and mothers did or your grandfathers did when they let the appreciation of Buddhist priests deteriorate? You should really change this." That's what I tell them. And that's about "Advance One Step Further", changing something. You can't just blindly follow what your teachers said, what your mentors said, what your father said, what your mother said. You might be thinking you're playing the good, smart boy or smart girl, but that wouldn't change Buddhism for the better.

So, what should you do? That's the question. In particular, the presence of Buddhism in the lives of young people is declining, so for

the leaders of the next generation to teach them about the spirit of Buddhism, to make them appreciate what's good about Buddhism, the big question is, what can we do? I am sometimes asked to give lectures for very elderly priests, and then they would say that they don't understand young people at all. They say, "Young people these days look at the *butsudan*, or altar, but they don't put their hands together in *gassho*. If you mention the Buddha, they don't seem to have any sacred feeling about that. We don't know how to disseminate or conduct any kind of missionary work." So I say to them, "Why don't you retire soon? Why don't you transfer or delegate things to the younger monks and priests?" The young generation today, for those great priests, they are like foreigners. Teaching to young Japanese people is like teaching to foreigners, not like the conventional Japanese of the past. Here we have all these people who have been engaged in dissemination work overseas. We should learn from them. They are working in foreign cultures where they have no Buddhist history, or where the Japanese community is made up of people who are in the third and fourth generation—in other words, those people who are not historically Buddhist but are attracted to the Buddhist teachings and gathering at Zen centers and feel an attraction to the spirit of Soto Zen and Buddhism. Towards those people who are working in such environments, we need to be very humble. We need to listen to them. There's so much to be learned.

Now, myself, as I was introduced I had been staying at Stanford University. I was there just a short time, but anyway, I was teaching

there and it was the shock, the great surprises that I experienced there that had led me to this idea. I went to California and I found that there are so many people attending or visiting or coming to these Zen centers. Many seemed to have money and to be part of the intelligentsia. They were attending Zen centers in California and their knowledge was so abundant, so much deeper than the average Japanese. I am an associate professor at Tokyo Institute of Technology—it's like MIT in the U.S.. So I am teaching at a university that is among the top of universities in Japan, but if I ask Japanese students there, "What is Buddhism?" probably about 95% will not be able to answer at all. They might answer with something like, "Oh it might be like putting incense in front of a Buddhist altar." If I ask them, "What did Shakyamuni Buddha say?" I think they would answer, "Oh, he talked about enlightenment." Then I ask, "What is enlightenment?" Then they would say, "It's a very difficult thing, something we should be grateful for." And that's all. They probably have no other knowledge of Buddhism beyond that. But if I went overseas, outside of Japan, when I taught at Stanford University, even among those in the sciences, some students were so interested in Buddhism that they were reading books about Buddhism and about Shakyamuni Buddha, and they have learned some working definition for enlightenment. Compared to the Japanese, I thought the people residing in California had much more knowledge about Buddhism and I found that shocking.

Another astonishing thing was that at the many Zen centers in the U.S., there were so

many female priests, and they played such an active role. In Japan, this is something rarely seen. If I go to any kind of Buddhist lecture, I always find middle-aged men, and that just discourages me because I feel like, here I am again, preaching to middle-aged men. Somehow, the assumption is that Buddhism is for men—female sensitivity is neither being incorporated or sought out in this realm. Actually, if you look at Japanese priests, not many women are there. Male priests are esteemed, and in temples, priest's wife's function is to support the male priest, in a helper role. But in the U.S., female priests are playing the same role or standing in the same position as male priests, and this was so impressive for me. I became very skeptical of why women in Japan have no place or have less place to be active. It's very important to have these women play a vital role in Buddhism.

And the greatest astonishment that I experienced in the U.S. was the discovery that Buddhists in America and the Buddhists in Japan are facing completely opposite directions. For Japanese like us, Buddhism is a family religion. My family of Ueda belongs to the Jodo Shinshu Otani sect and so we always ask for priests to come over to conduct any kind of Buddhist rituals; therefore, I automatically am a member of the Otani sect of Jodo Shinshu. In fact I don't have any other options. So, for Japanese people, Buddhism is more community-like, or maybe it's the family religion. That's the way it's been defined conventionally or historically. However, in the U.S., when I met these Buddhist people, they may originally have been Christian. And in California it may be very

loose, but in an election, for example in the states where Former President Bush may easily win, like in the middle or maybe in the Southern part of the U.S., Christianity is much more like a community, so if you don't go to church every weekend, that means that people doubt if you are a real human or not. So, if you go to a church—someone laughed so I forgot what I was going to say. It seems like a joke, but it's not—every weekend if you're not going to a church it's like you have lost any connection to the community—are you really a human being belonging to this world? That's the question being asked. So this kind of community-like Christianity is there, but my self, my personal spirituality or my personal way of life—someone who seeks or pursues that path will come to Buddhism, will be attracted to Buddhism.

That was my finding in the U.S. This is totally different from Japan in terms of thinking. Like the Christians in Japan, this family system—being bonded there—this family system was the foundation of Japanese society but it also killed individuality in Japan. Because of that stress, or because of those limitations, some went to Christianity. American Christians, very conservative Christians, may be very close to ordinary Japanese Buddhism; meanwhile those people residing in California are going to Zen Centers. Those people who resisted custom and who wanted to pursue their own spirituality and converted to Buddhism may be more like the Christians residing in Japan. Seeing that gave me a fresh perspective. In Japan, family religion is collapsing. You are a member of the Ueda family, so you need to follow and believe in Shinran Shonin. It is

like a compulsory course. You're already enrolled in it, so you should take it. However, in Japanese society, which has become more individualized and personalized, you start thinking about what you are, what you are seeking, where you're from, where you're going. People are seeking relief at an individual, personalized level. The question is, can the family system of religion answer to those types of needs?

And as for the priests, I participate in various priests' seminars and I ask them "what their motivation was in becoming a priest?" They often answer that it was just to inherit the family temple, or family business. No Japanese would be astonished by that answer, but if you asked the same question overseas and heard that answer, people would be astonished. If you say "resident priest(*jushoku*)," we understand that as a position in a temple, an occupation. However, if you say "Buddhist priest(*soryo*)," that's someone who is really surrendering to the Three Treasures and following the Buddha teaching; Buddhism or Buddha Dharma is at the center of their life. So this is truly religious life that you refer to when you say "Buddhist priest." You can become a resident priest of a temple as one step in your Buddhist-priestly career, but a lot of people in Japan become a Buddhist priest because they have to become a resident priest, to succeed their family business. That way of thinking, which is the standard in Japan, is totally contrary to the perspective overseas. As I mentioned before, when asked about Japanese priests, people have a positive image of only about 10%. I think this is all related. Does this priest really believe in Buddhism? I participate in various seminars and

symposiums, and the greatest problem I find is that the priests do not believe in Buddhism. Because in your life, for instance, if everything starts from suffering, if that's the Buddha's teaching, then in your life, suffering that cannot be solved – when you encounter such suffering and when you want to solve that, then you encounter the teaching by Shakyamuni Buddha and you see that you have encountered a wonderful thing, and that is the "*en*" or "*engi*," or dependent co-origination, and then finally the teaching becomes real. However, when you ask most of the priests, "What kind of suffering have you experienced?" they might answer, "My greatest suffering in my life was that I had to succeed my father's job." So, in Japanese society, where there are those who just want to kill someone, or those who feel so small and insignificant that there's no meaning in living—those people who feel this total emptiness, or the younger generation who are suffering in such agony. If your only suffering is the suffering that you had to become a priest to succeed your father, can you really be persuasive to people who are in real pain? I think I should stop myself – otherwise I may be killed or assassinated. But I have to say it.

When we think about this "Advance One Step Further," let's consider that for the future of Buddhism we've got two axes: The first axis is the individual spiritual pursuit or maybe, the question of myself—how do I live? This is a personalized level. The second axis is the community aspect of Buddhism—how should Buddhism function in the community, or how should it support the community? There is this social aspect. Japanese Buddhism focuses on

the social, community-supporting role, and that has encompassed the entire Japanese society. But what surprised me overseas was seeing how Buddhism addressed the first level, the personal level. I was astonished to see the difference in these two directions.

Unless this “Advance One Step Further” is influential in both directions, I don’t think that there can truly be a step forward. I do believe that the community is important, and therefore reconstructing the community is critical. We talk about “*Muen Shakai*” in Japanese society as a popular concept. Without any connection, we find the elderly living alone and forgotten; this, by the way, is a phenomenon that is not just limited to the elderly. This is a view that crosses the minds of the young and that is why we see the youngsters who have committed crimes, for example driving a vehicle into a group of people in the streets of Akihabara. We find that not only the elderly have been so disconnected from society, but also the youth, the young, who are going to school and always encounter many people, do feel disconnected. Today in this room there are about two hundred people—so many people in this room. However, if I feel that no one understands me, then that is solitude and disconnectedness within a mass of people. Even though I’m surrounded by so many people, no one understands me and no one cares whether I am alive or dead. This is the type of young person that modern-day Japanese society is producing. This is the juncture at which we need to reflect back on and also reconstruct bonding and connectedness. And here, I believe that the community should be revived—this is

important. But we must also understand that the community as it has existed here in Japan cannot be merely reborn as it was. To move in that direction would be meaningless, and would only cause further damage.

Time is running out, so I have to make my story short.

There has been a nuclear accident and almost six months have transpired. So what is the significance, again bringing this question to mind—the nuclear power accident has exposed the vulnerability of the community of Japan. In another book, I have written about Japan as being engaged in a third loss—losing our third war. Of course, the first is the defeat in World War II, after which Japan re-emerged as an economic power and was praised as being number one. However, in the early 1990s, the bubble burst, and we suffered a defeat in the economy. This is followed by the third defeat—in 2005—which is a defeat in terms of faith, or trust. Back then, Prime Minister Koizumi said that all people are disposable. He also said that lawmakers are disposable beings. That is what he said. So people are disposable. Of course, referring to an object as being disposable is not acceptable, but here we hear the phrase, “people are disposable.” At Tokyo Institute of Technology I stand before a group of young students—about 200—and I ask them, “How many of you believe that people are disposable?” and half of them raised their hand in the affirmative. People being disposable—half of the students before me felt that way. I was shocked to see what they believed. And when they bear the next generation they might say, “Son, I’m so happy that you’re born, but—” Is

he going to say, “but after all, you’re disposable?” I think that now, in the face of defeat, we are at a serious crisis. That was shocking in itself, but later, talking about this in front of a circle of priests, the priests said, “But think of us and the ordeals that we face day in and day out trying to disseminate Buddhism to such young people.” Here, the priests are thinking of themselves as the victims. The children—the young—are looking at how the adults are behaving and now they believe that they are disposable. So we, including those priests and myself, have a responsibility to educate them and also deliver the message that they are not disposable, that they have value. However those priests are claiming that they are the victims and they are facing ordeals without reflecting what they have done to the young people. I thought this is the real cause of the problem. There is a similarity between the cause of the first defeat and what caused the nuclear power accident. And I wrote about it in my book “*Jihi no ikari*.”

What I would like to express, what I have expressed in the book about the anger motivated by compassion is this: the defeat in the war. Of course we were defeated by the U.S. in terms of military power, and of course, when we entered into World War II, those in the top echelons understood this. However, even then Japan entered into war. At the Tokyo Tribunal, those who were stamped as A Class criminals were compelled to speak in Tokyo. It is said that Koichi Kido, the Minister of Imperial Household Affairs, an aide to the Showa Emperor, when asked about the alliance, said that personally he was opposed to the alliance and

also Shigenori Togo, the former Foreign Minister of the distinguished family, and also his grandson who also entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He said that he was against the alliance on a personal level. But against that backdrop, once it becomes national policy, such personal views cannot be expressed in public speech. However, he delivers a famous speech in the Diet, and he says on that occasion that it was not appropriate to express one’s personal views in a public speech, and as a former minister he was in a position in which he had no choice but to express the words. And now we are to see the words of the former Prime Minister—he says that for Japanese law, we have our views, and views are views, and discourse is discourse, but inasmuch as national policy has been decided, we’re in a position where we will have to implement the national policy. This is what is to be expected of us, what is to be honored—this is the way, this is the Japanese way. And having heard this, those on the Tribunal, the judges, foreign judges, were shocked. Here is a Prime Minister who says that he was against it. However, because he was Prime Minister, he was unable to express his views. The question is, Where is the responsibility? Of course, this puzzled the foreign judges who sat in the Tokyo Tribunal. And seventy years later we have this accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant—there were discussions about the dangers involved and many pointed them out. There were risks in the advent of a tsunami that would spawn some dangers. However, once there is a myth in place, that evolves, and once there is a tacit understanding, it is very difficult for anyone to speak out—to speak up. Because once one does

speak up it means that one will be in denial of the so-called safety myth of nuclear power and generation. This will mean that this will expose some people to criticism—even though they had guaranteed safety, there are elements that will overturn that argument. So this is what we have seen in the nuclear power plant incident. This is about an atmosphere of tacit understanding, and this is about tacit understanding in society. This of course really boxes in the individual in Japanese society. There needs to be a commonality or community that is created to go beyond this. Otherwise we will not be able to “Advance One Step Further”; otherwise, it will only be a drawback.

I am thinking of the world of Buddhist priests. They are more sensitive to the public gaze than ordinary people. They are very conscientious about what others will think of them, and what their sect will think of them, and what experts and priests will think of them, and what their parents or their teachers will think of them. Again, we see the dynamics of tacit understanding here in Japan, and there's always this conscientiousness, this attention paid, and therefore it is very difficult to take that step forward. It's not about what is best for the society or the world. It's more about fear about what others will think, and this drives priests to their choices, to their decisions, which are unconditional.

You all are familiar with the *Sutta Nipata*, in which we read, “Walk alone like the horns of a rhinoceros,” that is a singular way to proceed ahead without thinking about or being distracted by other people's views. Dogen Zenji

also expressed a similar sentiment. The priests are very conscientious about what others will think of them. However, when it comes to the truth and pursuit of truth—this is what is prime and important, first and foremost and I think that this is a message that comes across. So I have come to question this. It's no longer a joke. If we had left the nuclear power plant in the hands of the Buddhists here in Japan, I'm sure that it would already have exploded thirty years ago.

That's what I would like to say and, in all seriousness, does it mean that we just need to have the individual and individualism? When I went overseas and I viewed people engaged in the practice of zazen, I found it very curious because there didn't seem to be an emphasis on connectedness. It appears as if meditation is about enhancing oneself and seeking harmony between mind and soul in one's life. It appears to be fulfillment on a very individual basis—is it about achieving enlightenment and proceeding ahead? Indeed, that is what it is. However, is there any regard for what one's neighbor is doing? In U.S. society there is certainly a gap between the rich and the poor, and there are those who are in suffering. Of course, wisdom and compassion are the two pillars that construct the foundations of Buddhism. What has happened to compassion? One can engage in meditation and may achieve a better psychological state, attain enlightenment and also free oneself of stress. It appears as if—well, I do—come across as such a person once every now and then. I'm not saying that this is generally true. However, in the face of individualized religion, so to say, how is it that we are able to

construct a community? This is also something that I have come to bring into question.

And I would like explore another topic. Of course, there has been criticism that Japanese Buddhism is, after all, a funeral-based Buddhism. However, with the Great East Japan Earthquake, the Tohoku area has been shaken, and this is a region where there have been many Sotoshu temples. And here people have lost their loved ones. Young children have been washed away by the tsunami waves. Their parents, those around them—what do they want? What do they seek? They sought to have a proper funeral for the lost ones, to have a proper ceremony, a funeral ceremony for the deceased. And another thing: the temple, deeply rooted in a small community, a village—even though it is cut off from help from the outside, even if it is cut off from food supplies—around the temple, with the temple as the center, people were helping each other and they were sleeping in the main chamber of the temples. Even cut off from help from the outside for one or two weeks—there are many such villages.

So Japanese Buddhism was sarcastically referred to as funeral Buddhism and not really a religion, just a custom or convention. That was the criticism that Japanese Buddhism had long suffered from. But this experience actually showed that when the community is challenged, that conventional function could really be a source of strength. That was shown in this experience of the March 11th earthquake and tsunami.

I'm running out of time so I need to wrap up my presentation. So, to go back to the theme of today's symposium, "Advance One Step Further," obviously, it really goes back to the initial idea of Shakyamuni, which is *engi*, or dependent co-origination. It's about bringing this to life. It shouldn't be just part of the doctrine. It should be part of the way people live. It is frequently said that Japanese priests talk about "*engi*" but really don't live that way, or that priests often talk about compassion but don't show that in real life. They often talk about generosity but they don't actually practice it for others. And many people witness this. But I think we need to change that. Japanese Buddhism has suffered from a lack of imagination as to what dependent co-origination is, probably because the priests really didn't think about how dependent co-origination has made them become priests. For example, I'm here, standing here talking to you—you just think some university professor is saying something here. When I was two-and-a-half years old, my father went missing, and so I grew up with a mother-and-son family, and the two of us really had to work hard through hardship. Then I became a teenager and it was really unbearable to be living with my mother, and I said, "I would even kill people if I could be free from you." That's what I really said to my mother and that obviously just destroyed the family. I was sent to a counselor and then my mother said, "OK, if you're not leaving, I'm leaving." And then when I was twenty years old, she moved to New York and that was the end of my family. And that actually really disturbed my psychological mind. Through that experience, I turned to healing and I turned to what could

really help my soul and that's how I encountered Buddhism. That's why I'm here. So that means that the father who deserted my mother and myself when I was two and a half years old, he's probably here because the fact that he deserted my family has led to me being here. So his presence is also felt by you, or should be felt by you. And that's the way you should think of it. The fact that I'm seeing you today and speaking to you today isn't just about me being a professor. There are so many people and people's suffering, people's joy, and people's sorrow—everything behind all that—that leads to the origination of this moment. We need to think about that. And Buddhism is really about imagining those things and thinking those things. So this idea of *pratiya samutpada*, dependent co-origination, is really the essence of Buddhism.

But perhaps you think you're a resident priest just because you happened to be born into a temple family and have this temple that you need to take care of—there are temple families and there are priest families who seem to think that the temple is a family temple. If you think of everything as just fixed and given, then you forget to really think imaginatively and creatively about dependent co-origination. That doesn't really serve society. There are people who are cornered, who think they're deserted, who think they're isolated, who think there's no place in society for them. You can't really help them, and that's really the problem and the concern that I have.

So, going back to this idea of dependent co-origination, the question is whether Bud-

dhists and Buddhism can really demonstrate that, and for that I think Buddhism needs to go beyond its perceived borders. Buddhists have probably created an artificial fence around themselves. For example, if your father's a priest and you become a priest, people may praise you in Japan—at least, that you're a good child—but maybe you need to break through what is trapping you. I think you need to break out of the entrapment of established norms. Dogen Zenji, if you remember his teachings, maybe the final and ultimate word was “just sitting,” but he went to Mt. Hiei and then he was disappointed. He went down and then he tried to seek various masters, and he went to very many masters, and then he goes all the way to China and again meets a lot of masters, and then his original teacher was dead and he was all alone, but he still continued to seek the truth, crossing borders. And that's how he sought the truth, and finally he met Soto Zen and he came back. So you need to move out, you need to break out, you need to cross borders, the borders that you have built in your mind. Otherwise you won't be able to explain why the teaching was able to spread to the world—you don't just look at the conclusion or the final word or what came out at the end. Don't take anything as a given. That mindset—taking things as given and enclosing yourself into a closed world—that's what's causing the problem. You need to get out of that, to be freed of that entrapment. I think that's really about understanding dependent co-origination. So, that means we also need to cross borders. Here, we do have a multilateral, multinational meeting, so we shouldn't be stuck in the idea that Buddhism is about being Japanese, or that it's Japa-

nese Buddhism. Whoever the founders—Denkyo Daishi Saicho, or Kobo Daishi Kukai, all the great priests that have left their name in the history of Japanese Buddhism—they always broke out of what was established before them. And so they moved and they were different from others, and that's really about making Buddhism relevant to the time and the challenges that time offered to people. Buddhists need to think about that. Buddhists always need to challenge the border, and that's what our masters did. And I understand that's what you are doing and we are going to hear from such masters. So I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have been doing this, and I would also like to tell you that I really have great expectations for Buddhism.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.



Keynote Lecture



Project Dana: Caring for Our Temple Elders

Rev. Jiko Nakade
Daifukuji, Hawaii, U.S.A.

Like other Buddhist temples in Hawaii, Daifukuji Soto Mission has a large number of elderly members – 81 members over the age of 80 to be exact. Over ten years ago, I began thinking about a program that could be started at Daifukuji, one that would address the social, spiritual, emotional, and educational needs of our honored elders, whom we call *keirosha* in Japanese or *kupuna* in Hawaiian. Years ago when my husband was attending graduate school in Berkeley, California & our daughter attended a preschool on the grounds of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, I became affiliated with the church's social outreach program called The Caring Circle and provided home visits for an elderly member of the church who lived alone. Touched by this sweet woman's suffering and by her church's concern and compassion for her, I thought of starting a similar program for the seniors of my home temple in Kona, the Daifukuji Soto Mission when I returned.

My husband, children, and I returned to Kona in 1996 to take care of my aging mother who had become very frail, yet wanted very much to attend services and remain connected with her Sangha friends at Daifukuji. For years, she had dedicated most of her free time to participating in temple services and activities and taking an active part in the Fujinkai Women's Organization, Zazenkai, and Sunday School.

As she progressed from using a cane to a walker, and finally a wheelchair, her need for assistance steadily increased and my family was faced with the challenge of providing her with 24-hour home care, which we were able to do for six and a half years. She was then admitted to a care facility for the last four months of her life. During those years, I experienced first hand the importance of keeping Mom connected to what she valued most in her life -her family and her Sangha. Caring for my mother also made me aware of the isolation faced by many ailing seniors, particularly those who were homebound. I learned about the social services available in our community that were there to help if needed: home health services, Lifeline services, and Hospice. I even found support services for myself, a caregiver on the verge of burn out. I joined a caregiver's support group and learned about self-care and respite care, which saved my own health from being ruined. When Mom was no longer able to attend temple services, the president of my temple's *Fujinkai* women's group who was a retired nurse offered to stay with Mom for a few hours on Sunday mornings so that I could take my children to Sunday Dharma School, an act of kindness for which I am grateful to this day.

By taking care of my mother, I learned about the hardships faced by aging seniors and their needs for compassionate elder care and connection to their sangha. I spoke with Rev. Ryuji Tamiya, the minister of Daifukuji at the time, who agreed that it would be good to start a program for seniors at our temple. I enlisted the help of Joyce St. Arnault, the woman who watched my mother on Sunday mornings, and

she was enthusiastic about starting such a program. Thus, Daifukuji's Caring Circle was born and we needed to figure out how to proceed.

We turned to our Dharma friend, Mary Katayama, who was one of the coordinators of a program called Project Dana at the Kona Hongwanji Mission, a Jodo Shinshu temple a few miles away. Mary, a retired nurse, came to Daifukuji to speak to a group of us about Project Dana, a Faith in Action program which was started in 1989 by Shim Kanazawa and Rose Nakamura at the Moiliili Hongwanji in Honolulu, Hawaii. Project Dana's mission was to provide a number of services to the frail elderly and disabled and serve them with care, sensitivity, and compassion, while helping them maintain their sense of dignity and independence.

"*Dana*." We were familiar with this Sanskrit and Pali term, meaning "generosity" or "giving," *fu-se* in Japanese. We learned that if Daifukuji joined this statewide interfaith program, our volunteers would receive training and continual guidance from trained Project Dana coordinators who would help us not only start a program, but advise us when needed. With the blessing of the Daifukuji Board of Directors who provided us with a start-up fund, we joined Project Dana and held our first gathering on October 10, 2007. Temple member Vivian Ontai, a licensed massage therapist and *lomi lomi* practitioner who volunteered to be Daifukuji's first coordinator of this program, named our temple's program *Lei Wili O Na Kupuna*, a Hawaiian phrase that means "The Intertwining Lei of Our Elders." We decided upon a once-a-month senior activity

morning and invited temple seniors age sixty and above to come to the temple for a morning of fun and fellowship that would begin at 8:30 a.m. in our social hall and end at noon. We offered to pick up and take home those who needed transportation, whether from their own home or a private care home. They came, happy to be amongst old friends in an environment set up just for them, happy to be at their temple Daifukuji.

As the number of participants in the program increased, so did the number of volunteers. A strong, committed core group of volunteers was formed. It was made up of temple members who were willing to provide transportation, cook, lead activities, and assist the seniors in various ways. Some of the volunteers themselves were senior citizens.



Licensed massage therapists volunteer their services

Since its inception, Project Dana has become one of the most successful programs at Daifukuji and its success is due to the loving-kindness that goes into each month's gathering. Daifukuji's current Project Dana coordinators Joyce St. Arnault, Elaine Fernandez, and Reiko Sekine make sure that every gathering is spe-

cial, that birthdays are celebrated with leis, cakes, and candles and that nutritious snacks and lunches are cooked with care, often using fresh vegetables and fruits from members' gardens. Volunteer licensed massage therapists walk around the room giving loving shoulder, neck, and back massages while the kupuna are playing their favorite game – bingo.

Representatives from various community organizations such as Hospice of Kona, the American Cancer Society, and the Community Police are invited to make presentations on senior-related issues such as identity theft, cancer prevention, nutrition, home safety, and end-of-life considerations. Others teach lauhala weaving, origami, corsage making, cooking, and chair exercises. Coordinated Services for Seniors representatives update Senior I.D. cards and provide information on Medicare and shopping and medical van transportation services. Through these programs, we have been able to identify seniors who qualify for food stamps, Medicaid, and discounted utility services. Some volunteers provide additional individualized services such as housecleaning, transportation to medical appointments, friendly visits, and home safety assessment and education.



Chair exercises

Project Dana is fun. In the spring, there is a spring hat parade; in the autumn, there is a Halloween costume contest and Thanksgiving lunch. Decorations and seasonal foods make each gathering special. Our temple seniors who have worked hard in service to our temple all their lives come to Project Dana and enjoy being greeted with hugs and smiles and being pampered a bit. They know that they are loved, honored, and appreciated by their Sangha.

Project Dana has brought joy to Daifukuji's seniors and volunteers alike, a joy that is reflected in a song called "This Gift Called Life" that is sung at the opening of every gathering. Sitting in a circle, *kupuna* and volunteers joyfully sing these words: "Our lei of life is beautiful with intertwining strands, woven all together, made up of helping hands. Life is wonderful. We live this present moment. Peace in our hearts, we live this day. We live this precious gift called Life." With their hands in gassho and heads bowed, they recite the *Fueko*, sending waves of love and aloha to friends who are ill and unable to attend, as well as to all beings everywhere.



In December, a holiday party was held and everyone made ornaments

Taking care of our *kupuna* and treating them with love, care, and respect is an integral part of Buddhist Sangha life and practice. We hope to continue offering this program at Daifukuji and keep our seniors closely connected with the Three Treasures.

Project Dana is an interfaith volunteer caregivers program comprised of an ecumenical coalition of about 30 churches and temples across Hawaii. For more information on Project Dana, go to (www.projectdana.org.)





The 22nd Chapter of Shobogenzo: Zenki (Total Function) Lecture (2)

Rev. Shohaku Okumura
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“Alive or Dead” continued

In the last issue, I introduced several different versions of the same story of Daowu’s “alive or dead.” It is interesting to read all of the available variations of one same story. From the 9th century when Daowu Yuanzhi (Doge Enchi, 769-835) and his disciple, Jianyuan Zhongxing (Zengen Chuko, ?-?) lived until the time the final version was made in 13th century, Chinese Zen people continued to revise the story for about five hundred years to make the story more interesting and meaningful; not only this story but also thousands of other stories. Are the events and conversations taking place in the stories historically true? Do they reflect at least some of the actual incidents? Which version should we rely on as the most authentic story; the earliest one, the latest one, or the one discussed by most authoritative Zen master? Such questions are not meaningful. It seems that, for Chinese Zen practitioners, the events actually happened in those people’s lives were more or less just materials they could use to make stories that express their understanding of Dharma and nothing more than that. I don’t think it makes sense to choose one story and stick to that version. Rather we should see the process of the development of the story as one story and consider the basic ideas and concerns in the minds of the people who made various versions of the story.

I think there are three important points in these versions of the story. (1) What is the meaning of Daowu’s saying, “I won’t say alive, I won’t say dead.” (2) What is the meaning of the realization Jianyuan experienced while staying at a village temple and hearing the *Kannonkyo* (*Avalokiteshvara Sutra*)? (3) What is the connection of Jianyuan’s question of “alive or dead” with the conversation between Jianyuan and his dharma brother, Shishuang Qingzhu (Sekisho Keisho, 807-888) regarding their teacher’s relics.

(1) “I won’t say alive, I won’t say dead.”

When Daowu and his disciple, Jianyuan visited a family for condolence call, the disciple tapped the casket and asked, “Alive or dead?” Since they were at the funeral, of course, he is not questioning if the person in the casket was still alive or actually dead in the common meaning.

All living beings are born, live and die. Our life is the process of coming, staying for a while, going through the process of changing, and passing away. What is the meaning of being born, living and dying in its true sense? What is it that is born, lives and dies? Is there something besides the five aggregates (our body and mind) that are constantly changing? If so, what is that thing that is born, lives and die? If there is nothing that does not change, does the word “to change” mean anything? I can say that I was born in 1948 and since then both my body and mind have been constantly changing. I became an elementary school pupil, a high school student, a university

student, a Buddhist priest in certain year; I was a teenager, a young adult, a middle aged person and now I am an old person. We usually think that when I was born, the baby was “I” and 63 years later, this old person is the same “I” though my body and mind are so different. In this process, is there the “I” that does not change and is yet going through the change? If “I” does not change, what will happen to this “I” after death? Does the “I” continue the process and will it be born with the new five aggregates, and continue to live and die? Or does this “I” disappear? If so, what is the meaning of life and death for the “I” that does not change? If there is no such “I” that does not change, then what is the meaning of “change”? Who is changing? Who is it that thus comes and goes? When the five aggregates disperse, is the “I” alive or dead?

Daowu replied, “I won’t say alive, I won’t say dead.” The disciple was dead serious and asked repeatedly, “Why don’t you say?” Then the teacher repeated the same answer, “I won’t say. I won’t say.”

Jianyuan thought that his teacher refused to give the answer to his important question. He became angry and beat his master. But as it is said in one of the later versions, Daowu did not dismiss the question, but “I won’t say, I won’t say,” was his precise answer to the question. This is one of the essential points of the story.

When we read many koan stories in the lineage of Shitou - Yaoshan- Daowu and Yunyan, and their descendants, we can see that this “not-saying” is one of the methods those

Zen masters often used. A paradox here is that Daowu is saying, “I won’t say.” Here is an example,

When the Layman P’ang visited Shitou, he asked a question: “Who is the man who doesn’t accompany the ten thousand dharmas?” Shitou did not say anything and covered the Layman’s mouth with his hand. In a flash the Layman realized.¹

In this question, “the man who doesn’t accompany the thousand dharmas” refers to the “I” that does not change with the conditions of the ever changing ten thousand dharmas. If we say there is such an “I” that does not change, then we go against the Buddha’s teaching of *anatman*, no fixed-self that does not change and that can exist without relation with others. If there is no such fixed-self, then what is alive and what is dead?

Shitou covered the Layman’s mouth. This means we should keep silent. In a sense, this silence is the same as Shakyamuni’s silence toward fourteen kinds of metaphysical questions. We need to keep silent about the reality beyond thinking.

Another example is the conversation between Shitou’s disciple, Yaoshan Weiyan (Yakusan Igen) and his two major disciples, Daowu and Yunyan Tansheng (Ungan Donjo).

Yaoshan said, “We should avoid to speak about the place where wisdom cannot reach. If we speak, horns will grow on our heads. Monk Zhi, what

would you say?”

Daowu immediately went out.

Yunyan asked Yaoshan, “Why my elder brother, Zhi did not respond to your question?”

Yaoshan said, “Today, I have a back pain. He understands the meaning. Go and ask him.”

Yunyan came to Daowu and asked, “A little while ago, why didn’t you answer to the master?”

Daowu said, “Go ask the master.”²

In the section on Daowu in *Jingde Chuan-deng lu* (*Keitoku Dentoroku*), a conversation about this story between a monk and Unju Daoying (Dongshan’s disciple and Yunyan’s dharma grandson) is introduced.

Later, A monk asked Zen master Yunju Daoying, “What does it mean that you should avoid speaking?”

Yunju said, “It is a most poisonous phrase.”

The monk asked, “Why is it most poisonous?”

Yunju said, “This phrase kills both the dragon and the snake with one strike.”³

From these stories, we can understand the meaning of Daowu’s response to Jianyuan’s question. Yaoshan said that we should keep silent regarding the ultimate truth that is beyond discriminative, conceptual thinking. Whatever we might say using words and concepts cannot reach the absolute reality before being processed in our minds. Because Daowu

understood this, he just went out without saying anything. But Yunyan kept thinking about what Daowu meant and asking Yaoshan and Daowu why his Dharma brother did not say anything. Common understanding of this story is that because Yunyan did not understand why Daowu went out without saying anything, he kept asking.

Yunju’s saying, “killing both the dragon and the snake,” means that this not-speaking negates both the ultimate truth and the conventional truth, and yet simultaneously it expresses the reality of the middle Way including both.

Another story which points to exactly the same thing appears in the Case 73 of the Blue Cliff Record. This is a story about Shitou’s contemporary, Mazu and his two major disciples.

A monk asked Great Master Ma, “Departing from the four propositions and going beyond the hundred negations, Master, directly point out to me the meaning of [Bodhidharma’s] coming from the West.”

Mazu said, “I’m tired today and cannot explain for you. Go ask Zhizang.”

When the monk asked Zhizang, Zang said, “Why don’t you ask the Master?”

The monk said, “The Master told me to ask you.”

Zang said, “I have a headache today. I can’t explain for you. Go ask Brother Hai.”

When the monk asked Brother Hai, Hai said, “Coming to this point, I don’t understand.”

When the monk reported [his conversation with two Brothers] to Mazu, he said, “Zang’s head is white, Hai’s head is black.”⁴

“Departing from the four propositions and going beyond the hundred negations,” means that the monk is asking the ultimate truth beyond any concepts, logic and language. To transmit that truth is the intention of Bodhidharma’s coming to China.

In the case of Daowu’s answer to Jianyuan regarding alive or dead, Daowu did not reject his question but, pointing the reality of life and death beyond the dichotomy between life (positive) and death (negative), and further beyond the dichotomy between the cycle of birth, living and dying and the ultimate reality of no-arising and no-perishing. This answer also shows the reality of life in which we are born, live and die is exactly the same with the reality of no-arising and no-perishing. And also, the reality of non-arising and non-perishing manifests itself as arising and perishing. The first point of this story is that we can say we are born, live and die within time and space as a conditioned being. So it is OK to have funeral ceremony. However as for the ultimate reality, nothing is born, and nothing dies. We need to keep silent when we face the ultimate reality. And yet, we have to say that we cannot say anything to share the understanding with others.

(2) Hearing the *Kannonkyo* (*Avalokiteshvara Sutra*)

One version of the story says that, after

Jianyuan left Daowu’s monastery, once he stayed at a temple, he heard someone’s chanting the *Kannonkyo* (The Sutra of Avalokiteshvara). When he heard the phrase, “To those who can be conveyed to deliverance by body of *bhikshu*, [Avalokiteshvara] appears in the body of *bhikshu* and expound the Dharma.”

The *Kannonkyo* refers to the twenty-fifth Chapter of the Lotus Sutra. In that Sutra, there is the famous repetition.

A Bodhisattva Inexhaustible Intent (*Mujin’ni*) said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World’s Sounds (*Kanzeon*, Avalokiteshvara) – how does he come and go in this saha world? How does he preach the Law (Dharma) for the sake of living beings? How does the power of expedient means apply in his case?”

Then the Buddha said, “Good man, if there are living beings in the land who need someone in the body of a Buddha in order to be saved, Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World’s Sounds immediately manifests himself in a Buddha body and preaches the Law for them.”⁵

And the similar sentences are repeated for many times about other forms. It is said that Avalokiteshvara manifests her/himself as thirty-three different forms; the body of “*bhikshu*” is one of them. The number “thirty-three” is not a limited number, but it means infinite number of forms. From another side, we can say that all different forms in this world are manifestations of Avalokiteshvara and Avalokiteshvara her/himself has no form. Each and every living

being is the form of Avalokiteshvara that appears to us in order to enable us to see, hear and study the Dharma and attain liberation. All living beings including the person in the casket are manifestation of Avalokiteshvara. We are born, live and die, come and go, arise and perish. All these finite and conditioned beings are manifestations of formless life of Avalokiteshvara. This is also called the dharma-body of the Buddha, or the eternal life of the Buddha. These finite beings and infinite reality are different but the same, both Two and One, neither Two nor One. Conventional, concrete, phenomenal, finite, conditioned beings and the ultimate reality beyond any discrimination are completely different and yet at the same time, completely penetrating each other. These are like five fingers and one hand. Dogen Zenji describes this as a flower of emptiness that blooms as five petals in *Shobogenzo Kuge* (Flower of Emptiness). Another example I often mention is the old lady and young lady in the painting entitled, "My wife and my mother in law." When we see the young lady, the old lady disappears and when we see the old lady, the young lady disappears. They are always together but never meet each other. These are not two different entities but one and the same reality viewed from different perspectives; discriminating eye and beyond-discriminating eye.

There is another *koan* story of Daowu and Yunyan about Avalokiteshvara.

Yunyan asked Daowu, "What does the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion use so many hands and eyes for?"

Wu said, "It's like someone reaching

back groping for a pillow in the middle of the night."

Yan said, "I understand."

Wu said, "How do you understand it?"

Yan said, "All over the body are hands and eyes."

Wu said, "You have said quite a bit there, but you've only said eighty percent of it."

Yan said, "What do you say, Elder Brother?"

Wu said, "Throughout the body are hands and eyes."⁶

In this *koan*, Yunyan and Daowu are talking about how we should live and practice as a hand and an eye of Avalokiteshvara. What Jianyuan awakened to is the reality in which all living beings that are born, live and die, are interconnected each other and completely penetrating the ultimate reality of oneness about which is beyond the reach of words, concepts, and language.

(3) The flooding water spread the entire sky

At his dharma brother, Shishuang's monastery, Jianyuan 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, "Vast waves spread far and wide, foaming billows flood the skies."

Jianyuan 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.”⁷

In the older versions, it seems that this conversation and Daowu’s “alive or dead” are two separate stories. But later versions try to connect this with the incident of Jianyuan’s hitting his teacher. To do so, they killed Daowu before Jianyuan’s awakening. In that way, original question of “alive and dead” and the story of Daowu’s relics are connected as the question of Daowu’s life and death, not the person in the casket at the funeral. And the story raises another point, that is, how they can continue their teacher’s life that was penetrating entire universe as the dharma heirs.

In the *Sutra of the Buddha’s Bequeathed Teaching* (*Yuikyogyo*), when he was dying, Shakyamuni Buddha said,

“From now on all of my disciples must continuously practice. Then the Thus Come One’s Dharma body will always be present and indestructible. You should know therefore, that everything in the world is impermanent. Meetings necessarily have separations, so do not harbor grief. Every appearance in the world is like this, so you should be vigorous and seek for an early liberation. Destroy the darkness of delusion with the brightness of wisdom. The world is truly dangerous and unstable, without any durability.”⁸

The Buddha’s eternal dharma-body manifests itself within our practice in the reality of impermanence. However, when we don’t practice, there is no such thing called Buddha’s eternal body. Is such a dharma-body really eternal? Not in our commonsense usage of the word. Dogen Zenji also said the same thing in *Shobogenzo Hotsubodaishin* (*Arousing Bodhi-mind*),

“Our lives arise and perish within each *ksana*. Their swiftness is like this. Moment after moment, practitioners should not forget this principle [of impermanence]. While being within this swiftness of arising and perishing of transmigration in each *ksana*, if we arouse one single thought of ferrying others before ourselves, the eternal longevity [of the Tathagata] immediately manifests itself.”⁹

This does not mean that there is something eternal called the Buddha’s dharma-body existing beyond this phenomenal world and that appears within this world when we practice. Rather this is about the quality of our activities. When we let go of self-clinging, arouse bodhi-mind, the vow to live together with all beings, each action is nothing other than the eternal dharma-body.

In his final days, Kodo Sawaki Roshi often said, “It is not meaningful to live a life that lasts only seventy or eighty years.” This does not mean that we can live longer than the seventy or eighty years of our lives. But we should live with a selfless attitude moment by moment, being free from self-centeredness together with all beings. Then in each moment, the eternal

life of the Buddha manifests itself within each of the activities.

In *Bendowa*, when Dogen describes his zazen as *jijuyu-zanmai*, he says,

“When one displays the Buddha mudra with one’s whole body and mind, sitting upright in this samadhi even for a short time, everything in the entire dharma world becomes Buddha mudra, and all space in the universe completely becomes enlightenment.”¹⁰

This also points to the same thing. When we display the Buddha mudra our practice belongs to the Buddha, not to our ego-centered self. Then the separation between the self and myriad dharmas drops off. Nothing mysterious happens, but the way things are is transformed in our zazen. The vast boundless moonlight is reflecting itself on each and every drop of water that is tiny and impermanent. We see eternity within each and every instances of impermanence.

Then Daowu’s life is one with all beings within time and space like “Vast waves spread far and wide, foaming billows flood the skies.” Jianyuan said that he needed to make effort to continue his teacher’s way of life in order to manifest his life penetrating the entire sky. Shishuang said that, exactly because Daowu’s life was penetrating the entire universe there was nothing to succeed and continue. We just have to live our own life. When we say we have to practice in order to manifest the Buddha’s dharma-body and make efforts, we have already missed our own life right now, right here. Such an “idea” is simply an extra “idea” therefore an illusion. In Shishuang’s life, there was no such

extra ground even to stick a needle. Simply and wholeheartedly living one’s own life right now, right here without even thinking such extra things called “the eternal dharma body,” or “continuing his teacher’s dharma.”

These are the three points we can study in the development of the story of Daowu and Jianyuan.

Yuanwu’s “Life and Death is Manifestation of Total Function”

The expression, *zenki* (total function) appears in Yuanwu’s comment on this *koan* of Daowu’s “alive of dead.” Since the self and myriad dharmas are always together, whether the self is alive or dead, total function of life and death are always manifested. *Zenki* is the total function including self and myriad dharmas. From one side, the self is total function itself; only the self is there - no myriad dharmas. Myriad dharmas are simply part of the self. From another perspective, only myriad dharmas are there, there is no such thing called the self. Or we might say, there is only total function, there are neither self nor myriad dharmas. Self (0ne) is no-self (zero), and completely penetrating the universe (infinity). We can write it “ $1=0=\infty$.”

In *Shobogenzo Inmo* (Thusness), Dogen says,

“What he said is that one who wishes to attain the matter of thusness must be a person of thusness, and because the one is already a person of thusness, why does he have to worry about the matter of thusness? The essential point

of this saying is that “directly heading toward the unsurpassable awakening,” for the time being, is called thusness. As for what the unsurpassable awakening is like, even the entire ten-direction world is a small part of the unsurpassable awakening; this awakening is greater than the entire world. We are also the furnishings existing within the ten-direction world. How do we know that we are thus?

We know that [the reality] is thus because our bodies and minds appear within the entire world, and yet they (our body and mind) are not our selves. Even the body is not our personal [possession]; our life is moving through the passage of time and we cannot even stop it for an instant. Where have our rosy cheeks gone? Even if we wish to find them, there is no trace. When we carefully contemplate, we understand that there were many things in the past that we can never see again.

The sincere red heart does not stay either—bit by bit, it is coming and going. Although there is sincerity, it does not stagnate within the boundary of individual ego-centered self. Although it is thus, there are some who arouse awakening-mind without any particular reason.

From the time that this mind is aroused, we throw away everything we have been toying with. We wish to listen to what we have never heard, and we wish to verify what we have never verified. All of these are not simply our

personal activities. We should know that we are thus because we are persons of thusness. How do we know that we are persons of thusness? We know that we are the persons of thusness precisely because we wish to attain the matter of thusness.”¹¹

Inmo (thuness) is the ultimate reality. And we are a tiny part of thusness exactly because we are impermanent and without a fixed, independent self. Therefore we are a person of thusness; a drop of water in which the boundless moonlight is reflected. The pivotal point of this transformation from living our life that lasts only seventy or eighty years to living the life together with all beings is our practice of zazen and daily activities as the practice of bodhisattva vows. Dogen describes the same reality as the interpenetration of the ultimate reality and the concrete phenomenal worlds in this fascicle, *Shobogenzo Zenki*.

¹ Translation by Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Yoshitaka Iriya, and Dana R. Fraser; *A Man of Zen: The Recorded Saying of Layman P'ang* (Weatherhill, 1971). P.45-46

² This is my translation. Another translation is in *Zen's Chinese Heritage: The Masters and Their Teachings* (Andy Ferguson, Wisdom Publications, 2000) p. 149

³ Ibid.

⁴ Another translation by Thomas Cleary is in *The Blue Cliff Record* (Shambhala, 1977) p. 401.

⁵ Translation by Burton Watson, *The Lotus*

Sutra (Columbia University Press, 1993), p.301.

⁶ Translation by Thomas Clearly, *The Blue Cliff Record*.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Translation by The Buddhist Text Translation Society Dharma Realm Buddhist University Talmage, California, USA.

⁹ This is my translation.

¹⁰ Translation by Okumura & Leighton, *The wholehearted Way* (1997, Tuttle) p.22.

¹¹ This is my translation



Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma Book 18



**Avalokiteshvara
Kannon**

Translated by
Prof. Carl Bielefeldt with
Ms. Sarah Fremerman

INTRODUCTION

This fascicle was composed in the spring of 1242, soon after the start of the summer retreat. Although the location is not given in the colophon, we can assume that Dogen was at Koshoji, his monastery in Uji, where, in the week before he composed this text, he had produced the *Shobogenzo kaiin zanmai* and *Juki*. Our work appears as number 18 in both the 75- and 60-fascicle redactions of the *Shobogenzo*, and as number 33 in the vulgate edition.

The *Shobogenzo kannon* is devoted entirely to Dogen's comments on a single anecdote that appears in several Chinese Zen texts, as well as Dogen's own *Shobogenzo* collection of three hundred *koan* (as case 105). It tells of a conversation between two Tang-dynasty monks, Yunyan Tansheng (780?-841) and Daowu Yuanzhi (769-835), who were fellow disciples of Yueshan Weiyan (751-834). The topic of their conversation is the eponymous Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, known in Japan as *Kannon* ("Observer of Sounds"). Avalokiteshvara, perhaps the most popular single figure in the Mahayana pantheon, is represented in many forms; the form under discussion here is that known as the Thousand Armed Avalokitesh-

vara (*Senju Kannon*), whose great compassionate activity is expressed through a thousand arms, each with an eye in the palm of its hand. The question raised by Yunyan is how the bodhisattva uses these many hands and eyes; the answer proposed by Daowu is that it is like someone groping for a pillow in the dark.

In his commentary, Dogen analyses every sentence of the conversation, often finding surprising meanings in the two masters' statements and proposing playful reworkings of the Chinese text. In this, the *Kannon* fascicle is often representative of characteristic features of Dogen's often challenging approach to reading and interpreting the Chinese *koan* literature.

The fascicle ends with an unusual postscript, in which Dogen points out that, while he has focused here on the best discussion of Avalokiteshvara, there are several other references to the bodhisattva in the Chan corpus, some examples of which he simply notes with little comment.

The following translation is based on the text appearing in Kodo Kawamura, ed., *Dogen zenji zenshu*, volume 1 (1991), pp. 213-220. An annotated version will be available on the website of the Soto Zen Text Project: <http://scbs.stanford.edu/sztp3>. Other English renderings of this text appear in Kosen Nishiyama and John Stevens, *Shobogenzo*, volume 1 (1975), pp. 64-67; Yuho Yokoi, *The Shobogenzo* (1986), pp. 251-257; Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross, *Master Dogen's Shobogenzo*, Book 2 (1996), pp. 211-219; Hubert Nearman, *The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching* (2007), pp. 458-466; and Kazuaki Tanahashi, *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Zen Master Dogen's Shobo Genzo*, vol. 1 (2010),

pp. 397-403. The translator would like to express his appreciation to Sarah Fremerman for her work on this text.

TRANSLATION

The Great Master Wuzhu of Yunyan asked the Great Master Xiuyi of Daowu shan, "How does the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion [i.e., Avalokiteshvara] use so many hands and eyes?"

Daowu said, "Like a person groping behind him for his pillow in the night."

Yunyan said, "I understand. I understand."

Daowu said, "How do you understand it?"

Yunyan said, "His body everywhere is hands and eyes."

Daowu said, "You talk big talk, but what you say is eight or nine tenths."

Yunyan said, "Well, I'm just like this. How about my master elder brother?"

Daowu said, "His body throughout is hands and eyes."

Although one hears many voices, both before and after them, speaking of *Kannon*, they are not like those of Yunyan and Daoyu. If we would study *Kannon*, we should thoroughly investigate this talk of Yunyan and Daowu. The "Bodhisattva of Great Compassion" they are speaking of here is the Bodhisattva *Kanzeon* ["Observer of the Sounds of the World"], also called the Bodhisattva *Kanjizai* ("Observant Lord"). We study him also as the parent of the buddhas; do not study that, compared to the buddhas, he has not yet attained the way. He is the past [Buddha named] Tathagata *Shobo Myo*.

Thus, we should take up and study Yunyan's words, "How does the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion use so many hands and eyes?" There are houses [i.e., Buddhist traditions] that preserve *Kannon*; there are houses that have never dreamt of *Kannon*. There is a *Kannon* in Yunyan; he studied together with Daowu. Not merely one or two *Kannon*'s but a hundred, a thousand, *Kannon*'s similarly studied together with Yunyan. *Kannon* is truly made *Kannon* only in the congregation of Yunyan. Why is this? The *Kannon* Yunyan speaks of and the *Kannon* other buddhas speak of are [adequately] "saying it" and "not saying it" [respectively]. The *Kannon* other buddhas speak of [one with] is twelve faces; [the *Kannon* of] Yunyan is not like this. The *Kannon* other buddhas speak of is [one with] just a thousand hands and eyes; [the *Kannon* of] Yunyan is not like this. The *Kannon* other buddhas speak of is temporarily [one of] eighty-four thousand hands and eyes; [the *Kannon* of] Yunyan is not like this. How do we know this?

The words "so many" in Yunyan's saying, "How does the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion use so many hands and eyes?" are not [referring to] merely eighty-four thousand hands and eyes, let alone varieties numbering twelve, or thirty-two or three. [The Chinese term] *xuduo* means "how many?" It is saying, "so many," without limiting the varieties. Since the varieties are not limited, it must not be limited even to a limitless amount. Regarding the number in "use so many," we should study its meaning in this way. It has transcended the limit of the incalculable and limitless. There is meaning in the fact that, in taking up Yunyan's "so many hands and eyes" here, Daoyu does

not say of it that [Yunyan's] words do not [adequately] express it.

Yunyan and Daowu once studied together and were equals under Yueshan. Thereafter, as fellow travelers for forty years, discussing cases past and present, they "leveled what was wrong and confirmed what was right." In this way, today, in saying "how many hands and eyes," Yunyan says it, and Daowu confirms it. We should know that, for both these old buddhas, it is the "how many hands and eyes" that they say together. [The saying] "how many hands and eyes" is clearly Yunyan and Daowu studying together. Now, [Yunyan] asks Daowu, "How does he use them?" We should not equate this question with the questions of the sutra masters and treatise masters, or those on the ten noble and three worthy [stages of the bodhisattva path], and so on. This question has brought up a [significant] saying, has brought up "hands and eyes." When he says here, "how does he use so many hands and eyes," there should be old buddhas, and new buddhas, who become buddhas through the strength of the meritorious deed [of his posing this question]. We may also say, "how does he employ so many hands and eyes?" We may also say, "What does he do with them?" We may also say, "How does he move them? There should also be a saying, "How does he speak of them?"

Daowu says, "Like a person groping behind him for his pillow in the night." The meaning of this [Chinese sentence] is, "it is like a person in the night reaching behind him and groping for his pillow." [The Chinese verb] *mosuo* ["to grope"] means "to search for." "In the night" is a saying about the dark, like saying, "seeing the mountain in the daylight." "Using hands and

eyes” is “like a person groping behind him for his pillow in the night”: by this, we should study “using hands and eyes.” We should examine it as considering “the night” from the daylight and as the time when “the night” is “the night” itself. We should examine it as the time when there is neither day nor night. Even though we may not understand how the behavior of the person’s “groping for a pillow” is like *Kannon’s* using his hands and eyes, we cannot avoid the truth that it is [in fact] like that.

The “person” in this “like a person” — is it solely a metaphorical term? Again, is this “person,” as an ordinary person, not an ordinary person? If we study him as the ordinary person on the way of the Buddha and not as a metaphor, there is something to be studied in his “groping for his pillow.” Of his “pillow” as well, there is [the further question], “what is its shape and size,” that should be asked. “The night” as well must not be the night of the day and night of humans and gods. We should know that the saying is not that he gets his pillow, not that he draws in his pillow, not that he “pushes away his pillow.” When one would investigate Daoyu’s saying that says “groping behind him for his pillow in the night,” do not overlook that the eye must get, must see, “the night.” The hand’s searching for the pillow has not set its hand on its limit. If the “hand behind” him is essential, is it essential to do an “eye behind” him? We should clarify “the night.” Is it a world of hands and eyes? Are there human hands there? Or do the hands and eyes by themselves dart like a thunderbolt? Is it one or two instances of hands and eyes true from head to tail? When we examine its principles like this, although there may be “using so

many hands and eyes,” who is the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion? It sounds as if there is just the Bodhisattva Hands and Eyes. If we put it like this, we should ask, “How does the Bodhisattva Hands and Eyes use so many Bodhisattvas of Great Compassion?”

We should know that, while the hands and eyes do not obstruct each other, [the question] “how does he use” is such use, is using such. In such a saying, while “hands and eyes everywhere” “have never been hidden,” they do not await his saying that they are “hands and eyes everywhere.” While there are those hands and eyes and these hands and eyes that “have never been hidden,” they are not the self; they are not the mountains and oceans; they are not the sun face and moon face; they are not “this very mind is the Buddha.”

Yunyan’s saying, “I understand, I understand,” is not saying, “I understand Daowu’s words.” In making a statement that speaks of hands and eyes that “use such,” [he says,] “I understand, I understand.” He must be using it here for no reason; he must be entering into today for no reason.

Daowu’s saying, “How do you understand it?” is [Yunyan’s] “I understand”; while it does not obstruct its being “I understand,” Daowu has the saying, “How do you understand it?” Since it is “I understand” and “you understand,” could it not be “eyes understand” and “hands understand”? Is it a realized understanding? Or is it an unrealized understanding? Though we take the understanding of “I understand” as “I,” the presence of “you” in “how do you understand it” should be made the object of our concentrated effort.

On the appearance here of Yunyan’s saying,

“his body everywhere is hands and eyes”: when reciting [the words] “groping behind him for his pillow in the night,” there are many *Kannon*’s who study that it says “his body everywhere” is “hands and eyes.” While these *Kannon*’s may be *Kannon*’s, they are *Kannon*’s who have not yet said it. Yunyan’s saying “his body everywhere is hands and eyes” is not saying “hands and eyes” are everywhere in his body. While “everywhere” may be “the realms everywhere,” the body hands and eyes just as such are not where everywhere is. While the body hands and eyes may have the virtue of being “everywhere,” they are not hands and eyes that “dominate the market.” There should be no view, practice or teaching that recognizes the virtue of hands and eyes as [the] “is” [of the sentence, “his body everywhere is hand and eyes”]. The hands and eyes are said to be “so many”; they exceed a thousand, exceed ten thousand, exceed eighty-four thousand, exceed the incalculable and limitless. It is not only “his body everywhere is hands and eyes” that is like this: his delivering beings and preaching the dharma are also like this; his land and radiance are also like this. Because of that, Yuyan’s saying is “his body everywhere is hands and eyes”; we should study that he does not make “hands and eyes” “his body everywhere.” Whether he employs and uses “his body everywhere is hands and eyes,” whether he makes it move or rest, proceed or stop, do not move!

Daowu said, “You talk big talk, but your saying is eight or nine tenths.” The point here is that a “saying” is “big talk.” [The Chinese expression] *taisha dao* means “to say spot on,” “to express,” “to say with nothing left unsaid.” When one finally says what was hitherto unsaid, with nothing remaining that has not been said,

this is “your saying is eight or nine tenths.”

To study what this means, even if it is ten tenths, it is not an [authentic] investigation if it lacks the power to say it exhaustively. A saying, even if it is eight or nine tenths, is saying what should be said eight or nine tenths or saying it ten tenths. At precisely such a juncture — where he should say it with a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand sayings — because his power is so wondrous, he shows a bit of this power and says it just eight or nine tenths. For example, though we take up all worlds in the ten directions with a hundredfold, a thousandfold, a ten-thousandfold power, it surpasses not taking them up; but to take them up with a single power, is no ordinary power. “Eight or nine tenths” here is like this. But, hearing the words of the Buddha and ancestor, “your saying is eight or nine tenths,” [people] understand it to be saying that, where his saying should be ten tenths, his saying is just eight or nine tenths. If the Buddha dharma were like this, it would not have reached us today. We should study [the words] “eight or nine tenths” as like saying “a hundred thousand,” like saying “so many.” Since he says, “eight or nine tenths,” we know that it must not be limited to eight or nine tenths. This is how we should study the talk of the Buddha and ancestor.

On Yunyan’s saying, “I’m just like this. How about my master elder brother?”: he says, “I’m just like this,” to make [Daowu] say what Daowu calls a “saying of eight or nine tenths.” We may say “it leaves no signs or traces,” but it is “a long arm and a short sleeve.” He is not saying, “I’m just like this,” in the sense, “while my previous words have not fully expressed it, I’ll leave at that.”

Daowu said, “His body throughout is hands and eyes.” These words do not say that the hands and eyes, as hands and as eyes, are “throughout the body”; he is calling the body throughout of hands and eyes “his body throughout is hands and eyes.”

Therefore, he is not saying that the body is hands and eyes. When [the act of] “using so many hands and eyes” is the “so many” of “using hands” and of “using eyes,” it is necessarily [the case that] “the body throughout is hands and eyes.” When we ask, “how does he use so many bodies and minds,” there must also be the saying, “the body throughout is ‘how?’.” Still less is it the case that Yunyan’s “everywhere” and Daowu’s “throughout” are saying it exhaustively and not saying it exhaustively. Although Yunyan’s “everywhere” and Daowu’s “throughout” are not an issue of comparison, each of their “so many hands and eyes” can have such sayings.

Therefore, the *Kannon* spoken of by [the Buddha] Old Master Śākya is just [the one with] a thousand hands and eyes, just twelve faces. He has thirty-three bodies, or eighty-four thousand. The *Kannon* of Yunyan and Daowu is [one with] “so many hands and eyes.” But this is not talk of quantity. When they study Yunyan and Daowu’s *Kannon* of “so many hands and eyes,” all the buddhas realize eight or nine tenths of the samadhi of *Kannon*.

Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma
Avalokiteshvara Number 18

Presented the twenty-sixth day of the fourth month, third year of *Ninji*, tenth celestial stem, third terrestrial branch (*mizunoe-tora*) [I.e., May 27, 1242, of the Julian calendar]

Ever since the Buddha dharma came from the west, many buddhas and ancestors have spoken of Avalokiteshvara; but, since they do not approach [the level of] Yunyan and Daowu, we have spoken [above] solely of this Avalokiteshvara. The Great Master Zhenjue of Yongjia, [i.e., Yongjia Xuanjue (d. 723)] has the words, “Not seeing a single dharma is called the Tathagata; again, it can be called Avalokiteshvara. Though we say [in the words of the *Lotus Sutra*] that the Tathagata and Avalokiteshvara “then manifest this body” [according to circumstance], [Yongjia’s words] are verification that they are not different bodies.

There is the encounter of the true hands and eyes of Magu and Linji [I.e., Magu Baoche (d.u.) and Linji Yixuan (d. 867)]: they are each one of “so many.” Yunmen [I.e., Yunmen Wenyan (864-949)] has an Avalokiteshvara of “seeing forms and clarifying the mind; hearing sounds and understanding the way”: what sounds and forms are not the Bodhisattva Observer of the Sounds of the World who sees and hears? Baizhang [I.e., Baizhang Huaihai (720-814)] has the “gateway for entering principle.” In the *Śūra gama* [*Sutra*] assembly, there is the Avalokiteshvara of Perfect Penetration; in the *Lotus* [*Sutra*] assembly there is the Avalokiteshvara of Universal Manifestation. While these are all studying together with the Buddha, studying together with the mountains and rivers and the whole earth, they are still one or two [instances] of “so many hands and eyes.”

Copied the tenth day of mid-summer,
Ninji (*mizunoe-tora*)
[i.e., June 9, 1242, of the Julian calendar]
Ejo



My Footnotes on *Zazen* 2 *Zazen* is not *Shuzen* (2)

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I often use “Magic Eye” to illustrate a difference in quality between *zazen* and *shuzen*.

“Magic Eye” is a picture of a two-dimensional pattern generated by a computer graphics. When you continue looking at it in a certain way, a three-dimensional image emerges out of the pattern. In Japan, it has become popular thanks to a sales pitch - “Good for improving your vision.” Some of you might have already had “Magic Eye experience”.

If you look at a Magic Eye picture in an ordinary way, the three-dimensional image hidden in the picture will never come out. If you stop seeing it in the usual way, tensing the muscles around the eyeballs to focus on the object and find out something – if you relax those muscles, giving up the effort to find something and wait patiently with a soft-focused eye (this kind of eye is called “Magic Eye”), a three-dimensional image suddenly emerges from nowhere. When we try to see the image more clearly, thinking “Wow, this is interesting!” and return to the ordinary way of seeing, the image immediately disappears. The attitude, the way of seeing and what is seen are interrelated. There is no way of cheating this relation.

An interesting thing about this “Magic Eye”

phenomenon is that, depending on how we see the same picture - with ordinary eyes or with “Magic Eye” – a totally different visual world unfolds. I don’t know how we can see a three-dimensional image in a two-dimensional picture, but I am sure it is not just psychological but a matter of the physical way in which we use our eyes.

I think “Magic Eye” is an interesting and helpful metaphor for the whole different world of experience that unfolds depending on whether we sit *zazen*, in the *shuzen* way of using bodymind or in *zazen* way of “dropped-away bodymind.” In an old commentary to *Shobogenzo*, there is a phrase, “When sitting *zazen*, *zazen* becomes the self. It is not the self at ordinary times.” If we replace “self” with “bodymind,” it would go like this:” When sitting *zazen*, *zazen* becomes the bodymind. It is not bodymind at ordinary times”.

By extending the metaphor of the two types of eyes, ordinary eyes and “Magic Eye” and applying it to describe the characteristics and differences between ordinary bodymind and magic-eye-like bodymind, it is possible to say that *shuzen* is done with the former bodymind and *zazen* with the latter. With ordinary bodymind, we first set up the goal, control our body and mind in a certain way to accomplish the goal, and make a conscious effort to make result of our action match with the goal through comparing the two. Whatever we do, there is a basic structure of “I (consciously) operate my bodymind to accomplish a purpose.” In the case of *shuzen*, the purpose is to produce a certain state of mind which can be

clearly described as “*dhyana*” and the practitioner applies a various methods (Dogen Zenji called it “means to brush it clean”), like counting breath, following breath, body-scanning, mental noting, etc.. With these methods, body and mind are consciously and purposely used to make progress toward the goal. It is an act of self-control - “I” control “my body and mind” - and an approach of actively doing something to achieve a goal.

In contrast, magic-eye-like bodymind is an approach of undoing what we do not need to do or what we should not do. Physically speaking, it is a state of deep relaxation with unnecessary tension totally released. Psychologically speaking, it is a state of resting ease in a relaxed way in which the ordinary way of actively running the mind is put aside (Dogen Zenji called it “give up the operations of mind, intellect, and consciousness”). In Dogen Zenji’s “Birth-Death”, he wrote, “Just letting go of and forgetting body and mind, casting them into the house of Buddha, being activated by the Buddha - when we go along in accord with this, then without applying effort or expending the mind we part from birth and death and become Buddhas”. I think this is a wonderful description of magic-eye-like bodymind. Therefore *zazen* should not be a “job done by self-power.” Essentially *zazen* is not what we can “do” directly by exerting our own power. Keizan Zenji wrote, “Just sit *zazen*. Do not fabricate anything. This is the essential art of *zazen*” in *Zazen Yojinki* (Notes on What to be Aware of in *Zazen*).

To give *zazen* instruction, we often say,

“straighten your back,” “keep your eyes half-open, half-closed” to regulate the body, “make your out-breath long,” “do abdominal breathing” to regulate breath, and “do not think anything,” “focus your attention on your breath” to regulate the mind. I think there is a big problem here. *Zazen* should not be something forcefully built up by imposing a ready-made mold onto our body-mind from outside. It should be what is naturally and freely generated from inside as a result of non-fabrication. There is a danger that a rote way of giving instruction is leading us to change *zazen* into *shuzen*.

In *zazen*, the spine should elongate by itself instead of our lengthening it by effort. I would like to briefly touch upon the topic of “outer” and “inner” muscles. When we try to lengthen our spine consciously, we use the “outer muscles” – the volitional muscles. These are designed for purposeful movement. When the spine elongates by itself, the body is using the autonomously-controlled “inner muscles.” These are the muscles of “being” – the non-volitional muscles - designed as a system of supportive movement (Jeremy Chance, “Alexander Technique”).

In many cases the natural function of inner muscles is blocked by unnecessary tensions of outer muscles. We must reactivate and fully develop the intrinsic functions of inner muscles by undoing unnecessary tensions in the outer muscles. The fundamental problem of human beings is that the outer muscles tend to take every chance to intrude where the inner muscles are supposed to play a main role. I think this is closely related to saying that *zazen*

(inner muscle dominant) is not *shuzen* (outer muscle dominant).

Anyway, the principle of “it is good to spontaneously become so but not good to artificially make it be so” should be applied not only to spine but also head, eyes, hands, arms, legs and the all other parts of *zazen* posture, breath, and the mind. In *zazen*, we should not perform a special breathing method to control the breath but leave everything to the natural breathing, which is a life-sustaining activity of the body sitting with a correct posture. Dogen Zenji never tells us to breathe this way or that way. He just says, “breathe softly through your nose” or “your in-breath and out-breath are not long nor short (leave them alone).”

The idea of outer and inner muscles is about the body but I think we can also apply this idea to the mind. When we are absorbed in our thoughts, thinking of this or that - as usual - it is a function of “outer-muscle mind.” In everyday expression, we say “use your head.” In contrast, “inner-muscle mind” functions to support the appearing and disappearing of thoughts at the basic level. It enables intuition, awareness, and mindfulness to arise. Here again in *zazen*, we can say that we are calming down an excessive activity of outer-muscle mind and activating and manifesting the function of inner-muscle mind which has been suppressed. Therefore as Dogen Zenji said, “stop measuring with thoughts, ideas and views.” We should avoid bringing the “side job” of various meditation techniques like the four foundations of mindfulness, Sun meditation, Ajikan meditation and so on, into *zazen*. When we

engage in these meditation techniques, our mind inevitably becomes active and is dominated by “outer-muscle mind.” In *zazen*, the mind is dominated by “inner-muscle mind.” It is not focused on any particular spot. It evenly and softly permeates inside and outside the body, calmly receiving sensory inputs (including all kinds of thoughts) with equanimity. It suspends any reaction and control against the inputs whatever they may be.

So far I have been using strange metaphors like “Magic-Eye-like bodymind” and “outer muscle, inner muscle.” I did this to help you become familiar with the *zazen* approach in which we practice *zazen* as *zazen*, not as *shuzen*. For us the *shuzen* approach is much easier to grasp than *zazen* approach and we are much more familiar with it. Because it’s difficult to understand and unfamiliar, we often lose sight of *shuzen* being totally different from the *zazen* Dogen Zenji recommended so highly.

As a result, we are actually doing *shuzen* very hard believing it is *zazen* or *zazen* becomes “a dead letter,” a matter of appearance, or just an imitation of the form. I think something has to be done to change such a sad situation. It is the main reason why I started writing this article.

Of course, I do not have an ultimate answer to the problem. As I quoted earlier, “when we sit *zazen*, *zazen* becomes bodymind.” I am now exploring one step further to discover what kind of bodymind arises during *zazen* and what we should do in order to have such a bodymind.

Zazen is not just a training or exercise for us to attain some preferable goals but a spiritual practice of “immediately entering into Buddhahood.” I really hope that we can open up

the way we, today, can practice such *zazen* as a template of following what the buddhas and ancestral teachers practiced .

NEWS

September 1-November 24, 2011

A Sotoshu Training Monastery was held at Yokoji, Ishikawa, Japan. 14 priests attended.

October 14-16, 2011

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

October 31-November 4, 2011

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

November 4, 2011

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

February 18, 2012

Hawaii spring minister's meeting was held at Shoboji, Honolulu, Hawaii

February 22, 2012

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

March 9-11, 2012

8th U.S Soto Conference was held at Alamoana Hotel, Honolulu, Hawaii

SOTO ZEN JOURNAL is published semiannually by the Soto Zen Buddhism International Center
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